

How to Become a Successful Influencer as a Positive Opinion Leader on Social Media

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Micro Social Media Influencers are people who are just starting to be active in social media, especially Influencers on Instagram. More and more Influencers are popping up, but not all of them have the right tips for delivering messages on Social Media. Influencers also really need help and support from platforms that bridge with clients (brands). For example, a fashion e-commerce platform in Indonesia, Berrybenka, which last June-November held a project called Berrybenka Project 2017 (B-Project 2017). This project gives room for start-up selected Influencers to have the opportunity to work with clients who join under the Berrybenka platform. This article aims to describe how to make the work of a Micro Social Media Influencer and its clients optimal, taking the example of the B-Project 2017. The method used is a literature study, reviewing the characteristics of a good Opinion Leader and emphasising the things that Influencers must do to influence audiences positively. It can be concluded that in becoming an Influencer, you must have a complete package in interacting with others, as well as having creativity in creating the content.

Keywords: *Micro influencers, Social media, Instagram, Opinion leader, Positive influence, Community interest.*

Introduction

What makes it easy to get hooked on social media is the extent to which new centres of influence emerge in societies that have no regulations, no governance structure, no standards and no hierarchy. You can say or do whatever you want on a blog, podcast or web video, and you can publish it to the world. Nothing can stop you, at least not at this time (Gillin, 2007). The abundance of content available on the web allows us to analyse the way people interact and the roles they play in large-scale conversations. One such role is that an influential person or what can be called an Influencer can be useful for a successful advertising strategy (Rosenthal, 2014).

Blogs give individuals a way to express their voice in a very personal and controlled way. Blogs are revolutionary because they allow people to publish quickly and easily with their own names. Today many people use Instagram as a new form of blog. The dynamics of social media today are rooted in competition between Influencers to achieve greater influence on their personal viewpoints, which are inherent in their names and identities. They are the evolution of discussion groups (Gillin, 2007).

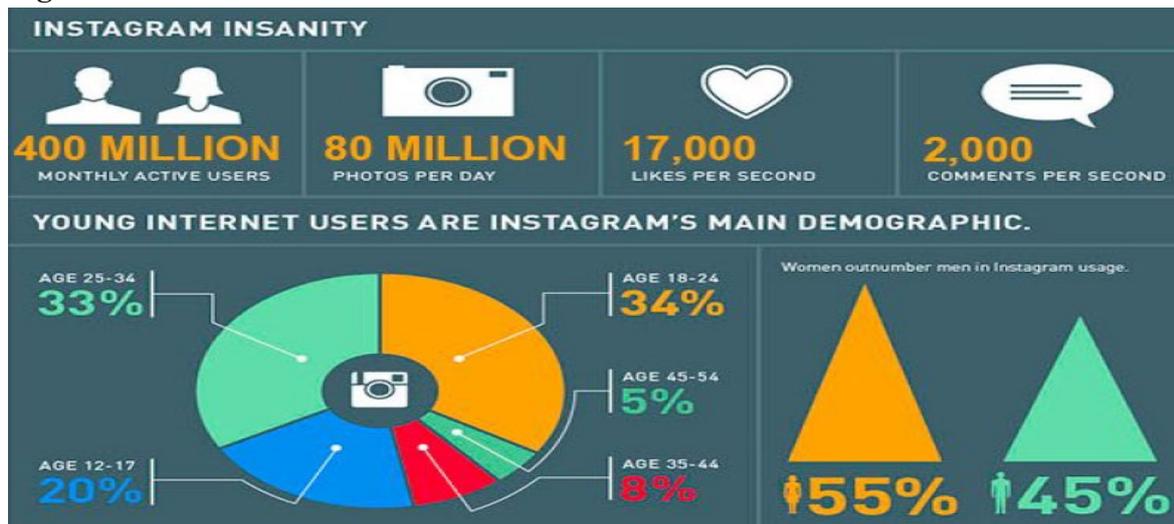
From this competition, the prospect is very influential on the interests of the people themselves, as well as how an Influencer creates new things in influencing his audience. This is especially the case for Micro Social Media Influencers, which means that in terms of numbers they are still relatively small compared to well-known Influencers, actually for relative numbers, so let's say they are beginners as Social Media Influencers. Like most beginners, sometimes the tips are not in accordance with what an opinion leader should do. Therefore Micro Influencers need direction as a start to be a good opinion leader for their audience (followers on social media).

Instagram is a photo and video sharing site where images are shared with users' followers. Filters can be added to change images and turn cell phone shots into something amazing (Goodwin, 2017). Instagram is not only for individuals to share moments in their lives but is now used by many people to sell products. People are turning their Instagram accounts into online stores where business people use features to grow their businesses online (So, King and Sparks, 2014). Many companies choose Instagram as a social media sale (Agung and Darma, 2019). Instagram exceeds 300 million active users with an average of more than 70 million photos uploaded per day (Ridgway & Clayton, 2016). Even, Hochman and Schwartz (2012) states that Instagram can increase sales significantly.

Instagram is a social media site that is very much loved, and has broad business prospects. Starting from selling via an online shop account, paid endorsement is usually done on Influencers, when someone is paid to promote and give testimonials for goods given in a

post. Prices vary depending on the quality of the content, engagement of Influencers (number of likes, comments, and followers), and much more. This is what creates strata among Influencers, so there are Micro Social Media Influencers (Sutarni, Ramadhany, Hufad, & Handayani, 2020).

Figure 1. Micro Social Media Influencers



Source: Getbusinessgetdigital.co.uk

Brands keep looking for interesting ways to become an integral part of social media conversations and make influencers talk about them automatically. In addition to paid endorsements conducted by a number of online shops, there are also campaigns by well-known brands / e-commerce, for example Tokopedia with the #PemberiHarapanPasti campaign, where Influencers are selected to create content according to the Tokopedia team's brief, segmentation of followers, and the creativity of each Influencer and keep promoting Tokopedia. However, the campaign participants are not Micro Influencers, but have more engagement.

Then another way that e-commerce works in collaboration with Influencers is the content creator competition that is on the rise. An example is the Berrybenka Project 2017. Initially Influencers who were interested in joining were asked to submit an OOTD (Outfit of the Day) photo with the hashtag # bproject2017. Then Berrybenka screened 98 Influencers who were participants of hundreds of registrants. From there the participants were given a workshop three times and a number of projects as an experience to create content for clients under the auspices of Berrybenka such as Jenius, Nivea, Les Catino, Avgal Collection, 3 Second, etc.

In the B-Project 2017, the Micro Influencers who were incorporated in it were given the opportunity to take part in the social media content industry. In that type of event too,

creativity, consistency, and reliability are needed. When given items that are similar or even the same, of course these three things determine how to look more prominent. But not all Micro Influencers, especially those who are really just starting to learn to package content, can defend their audience's opinion.

Literature Riview

In order to be able to influence audiences / followers well, an Influencer also needs to know the characteristics of a good opinion leader. In communication studies, opinion leaders are usually seen as early adopters of new products. Given the fact that their tastes are close to the norms they believe in, their recommendations tend to be considered by other consumers (Mak, 2008).

Opinion leaders communicate most often about the issues that they think are relevant; both in face-to-face communication and mediated interpersonal communication (such as via mobile phones), and are the most frequent users of all types of mass media for information seeking. Interestingly, although the difference in the use of relational, face-to-face and interpersonal media is also statistically significant, the difference regarding the use of information media is far greater. So, even though opinion leaders differ from followers and in-actives in how often they communicate about the topic, they are especially different from this other group so they often tell themselves about the topic by using various types of media (Schäfer & Taddicken, 2015).

Influencers must be able to position themselves to become an opinion leader in the eyes of their followers. Despite the fact that consumers can get product information directly from mass media or social media, they still depend on opinion leaders who have relatively more knowledge and information about different products on the market. This is especially observed among young people. In this case, a large number of people still depend on the opinions of opinion leaders. Increasingly, the important role of opinion leaders is seen as influencing the decision making process of opinion seekers (Kwon & Ryong Song, 2014).

One approach to measuring opinion leadership is to explicitly ask people to identify personal sources from which they will receive advice and analyse the reasons behind the behaviour, in terms of similarity in personal characteristics. The other is identifying relationships between users on social media where opinion leaders are embedded, and analysing the quality of opinion leadership based on network structural characteristics and social network analysis (Risselada, Verhoef, & Bijmolt, 2016).

Opinion leaders are important figures for consumers. Instagram is the platform most widely used by opinion leaders in the fashion industry, and this trend is expected to continue in the

near future (Casaló et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2013; Chan and Misra, 1990), so it is an important element in marketing communication (Tsang & Zhou, 2005).

Opinion leaders are seen as having public recognition (McCracken, 1989) and, according to (Leal, Hor-Meyll, and de Paula Pessôa, 2014), they must have at least one of these characteristics: considered an expert on a product or service; become an active member of the online community; to participate with a high frequency and make a major contribution; or are considered by other users to have good taste in relation to a purchasing decision. Opinion leaders can be defined as individuals who have a large influence on the decisions of others (Rogers and Cartano, 1962) and in their attitudes and behaviours (Godey et al., 2016).

The root of this concept is the study of Britt (1945), which states that the effect of mass communication on people's behaviour may not be as direct as previously thought. They argue that opinion leaders take information from the mass media, which they then distribute directly to other members of the general public by word of mouth. This process is called the 'two-step flow model'. This was further developed by (Katz, Lazarsfeld, and Roper, 2017), which states that people's reactions to messages in the media are mediated by communication with members of their social environment and, thus, their final purchasing decision is a combination of these influences.

Information flows through the network. The nature of the network and the role played by opinion leaders in it determines the likelihood of which innovations will be adopted. Innovation diffusion research has sought to explain the variables that influence how and why users adopt new information media, such as the Internet (Chaudhry & Irshad, 2013).

Methodology

This study uses the Discourse Networking Analysis method, this method is a way to visualise discourse, such as political or social cultural discourse into a network. Discourse Network Analysis is a combination of category-based content analysis and social network analysis. Discourse networking analysis combines qualitative-based content analysis; that is, discourse analysis with social network analysis to find out the actors' ideas in a relational and systematic manner.

This research was conducted by tracing the sources of writings that have been made around tips for becoming a good Social Media Influencer, and how to get started. Sources of writing taken are the results of research from the community platform for bloggers (Bloglovin'). From the results of research by Bloglovin', then the data needs to be related to activities that must be carried out by a Micro Social Media Influencer, after that the results of existing studies are analysed and then conclusions are developed.

Results

Here are the results of the Bloglovin' Consumer Survey in November 2016. Based on the analysis of more than 20,000 active social media user respondents worldwide, it can be seen how and why people are involved with Influencer content and what can be concluded to improve the quality of Influencers.

Figure 2. Results of the Bloglovin' Consumer Survey in November 2016.

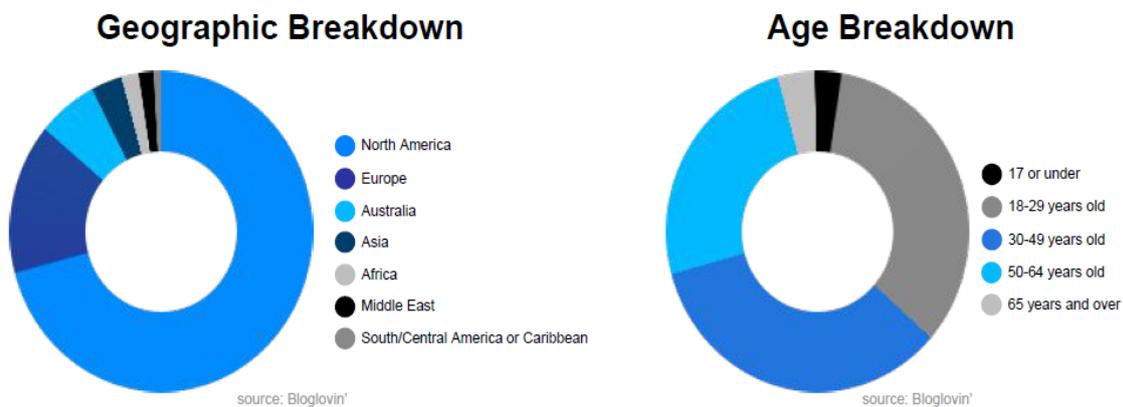
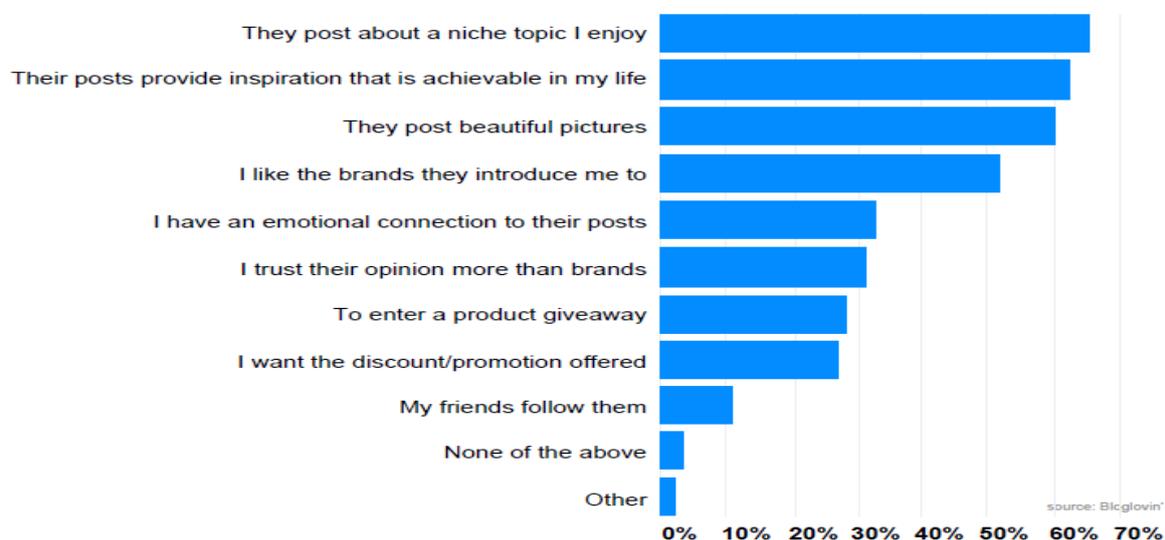


Figure 3. Reasons to Follow Influencers



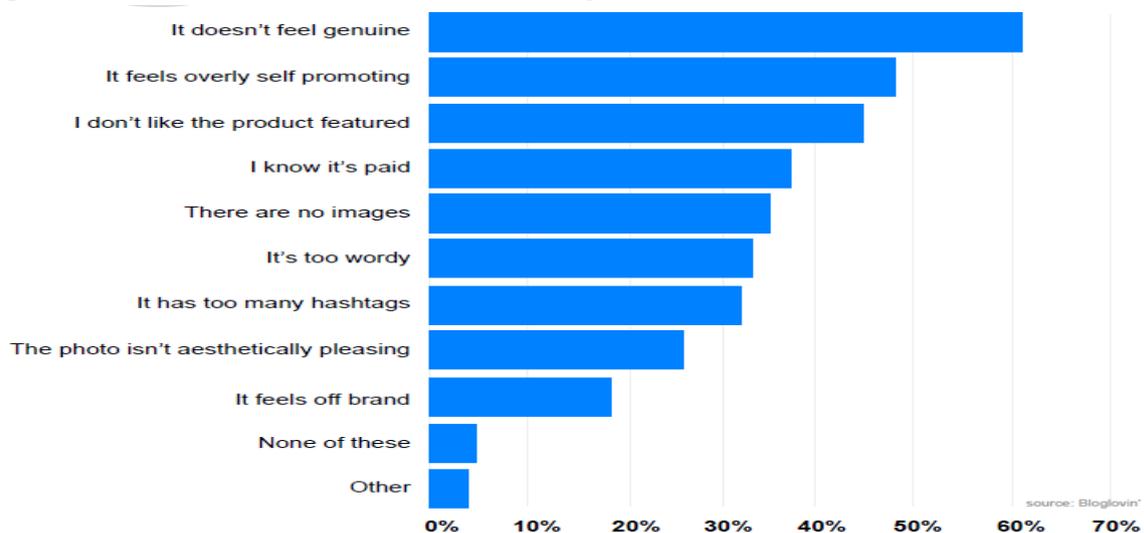
65% of respondents answered that the reason they kept following the Influencer account was when things were posted about detailed topics they liked. Then 61% of respondents revealed that the reason was when the post contained inspirational material that could be used as a motivation for what could be achieved in life. Good image posting had an effect of 60%, interest in the promoted brand had an effect of 51%. Emotional connections turned out to

have an influence of 31%. Then it turned out that the follow requirements to take part in a giveaway were quite effective in increasing followers, because 29% of respondents claimed to follow an Influencer when a giveaway was held. While 28% answered that they were interested in following because they were interested in the offer given by Influencers, and 11% followed because they followed each other with their friends.

Becoming a successful Influencer has at least three things that are the reasons why respondents follow an influencer account, here are three things that must be met: (1) posts must be detailed, (2) posts containing inspirational material that can be used as motivation for what can be achieved in life and (3) pictures/ videos have good quality (Handayani, Hufad, Tukimin, Rochyadi and Nandiyanto, 2020).

Influencers are often left by followers when they do things they don't like. An example of this is the number of celebrities left behind for doing things out of the ordinary habit of posting content. The follower usually follows the account because of the content posted, if the post is unattractive and inconsistent the follower will leave (Hufad, Nabilla, Asyahida and Lampung, 2020).

Figure 4. Causes of Influencer Posts Not Being Well Received



It was proven that making posts as honest as possible was very effective, because 61% of respondents answered when a post did not feel authentic (Diana, Sunardi, Gunarhadi and Yusuf, 2020). 48% of respondents agreed that when posting seemed to promote the Influencer themselves, they were not very interested. Whether or not a follower likes a product also affects the success of an Influencer. Then other reasons, such as followers already know that the post is paid endorsement, the absence of images, captions being too

long-winded, too many hashtags, lack of aesthetic photos, and not being in accordance with the brand identity being promoted also affect the success of the post Influencer.

Consistency turns out to play a big role in authenticity. 59% of respondents said sponsored posts felt fake when the uploaded content was felt to be inconsistent and incompatible with previous influx posts. Then 36% felt this due to the hashtag #paid and 31% due to the hashtag #ad. 34% also began to realise that the post was not a real testimonial, but rather a paid endorsement, when a similar post also appeared on another Influencer's post on the same day. This was followed by 31% of respondents saying that when brand messaging was delivered in the caption, then the post was seen as fake.

To be a successful Influencer, there are things that must be avoided: (1) fake posts, because it is proven that making posts as honest as possible is very effective, (2) posts that don't promote themselves, (3) posts that are paid support, (4) lack of images, (5) information segments are too long, (4) too many hashtags, (5) lack of aesthetic photos, and (6) does not match the brand identity being promoted. Success or failure depends on whether or not the follower likes it or not, so that if you want to become an Influencer, you must determine the target audience, then set the theme of the posts that are adjusted to the target, and of course every post must be made professional from caption, image or video to produce eye-catching posts. Another method it to make a post that is very real / original, so the follower does not use a bulging account (Hufad, Landau, et al., 2020).

Currently there are many ways to increase followers on social media, such methods are: increasing hashtags, following accounts of famous people/figures/artists. Using this method can speed up follower growth, but most followers are fake accounts, and those accounts will immediately unfollow within a few days. In addition, these accounts are more advertising accounts and robot posts. But no doubt there are influencers with random content, not detailed but with many followers, this incident is caused by a lot of unstable young people, who like new things and viral. This is because the age range of netizens is around 12-34 years (Sandy Allifiansyah, 2016). The large number of young netizens requires influencers to create posting content that can appeal to them. Although every young netizen has different tastes, there is one thing that is universally liked, which is honest content that is liked by all netizens.

Conclusion

To expand their prospects in the community, especially in the eyes of their followers, Influencers must be more specific in their content creation. When talking about specifics, it means that an Influencer must have a clear purpose. An Influencer without clear goals is a recipe for failure. They need to describe success metrics, such as: awareness (measured in

impressions, how many times the content is viewed), call-to-action influence (measured in average number of clicks received), fan base increase (measured in average increase in the number of followers), engagement level (measured by the average number of comments per post), and quality of content (measured by number of shares).

The key to a successful influencer is to appear as a positive opinion leader. When the Influencer has succeeded in inspiring others, of course other implicit messages will be more easily conveyed to the public. The effectiveness of a post also influences the honesty, consistency, and efficiency of words in the caption. As a Micro Social Media Influencer, the most important thing is to make everything that is written as honest and original as possible, because that's where the audience will begin to be interested in continuing to listen to the content created. It must also always increase engagement by interacting with followers, and even with fellow influencers.

It is suggested that there are seven tips on how to become a famous Influencer from zero that may be applied from now on:

1. Determine the brand: the initial step that must be considered to become a well-known Influencer that influences lies in determining your own brand that you will later display on your profile on social media.
2. Determine the target follower, so you can determine the right content and be liked by the target audience, so the theme will need to be focused and consistent.
3. Create interesting content: make content that is interesting, consistent and detailed, with a characteristic that is easily recognised by others. Then share it on various social media, such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube.
4. Quality photos and videos must be Instagrammable: content uploaded in the form of photos or videos should not be careless with regard to quality. The term that is currently booming is that photos or videos must be Instagrammable. In the photos to be uploaded, attention must be paid to clarity. Before that, you should know your best angle first so that the photos can be good.
5. Arrange Instagram feeds to be interesting: adjusting the display or feed on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube is easier than for Instagram. This is because Instagram first displays the uploaded photos and videos, when clicking on one of the photos or videos, it is then possible to see the contents of the caption.
6. Come often to the event: if your Instagram account currently looks good and is well managed, it never hurts to frequently come to various events that suit your brand or content. For example, if you like the world of fashion, attend fashion events, if you like make up then go to the make up brands events, if you like the world of music then attend concerts and so on.
7. Interact often with followers on social media: what makes Influencers increasingly popular is that not only are they smart in presenting interesting content, but Influencers



must also embrace their followers by interacting with one another, whether in the comments column or using the story feature on Instagram or Facebook.

Things to avoid, if you want to be a successful Influencer, include: (1) fake posts, (2) self-promoting posts, (3) paid support posts, (4) few pictures, (5) too much information, (4) too many hashtags, (5) lack of aesthetic photos, and (6) do not match the identity of the brand being promoted. Boredom is one obstacle to success. This is the enemy within us that needs to be fought. We usually get bored when doing something but the results are not as expected. Take advantage of various channels to get people to see your content. Don't just dwell on one channel. The more information is spread, the greater the chance to be seen and known.

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