

# The role of origin of fame in social media influencer marketing

**Michael Schade**

University of Bremen

**Rico Piehler**

University of Bremen

**Julia Sinnig**

University of Bremen

**Christoph Burmann**

University of Bremen

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## **Abstract**

Social media influencer (SMI) marketing represents a strategy that uses the influence of SMIs as opinion leaders to drive consumers' brand image, and brand-related behavior. In SMI marketing, practitioners are confronted with the decision of choosing the type of SMI based on their origin of fame. While non-original SMIs are traditional celebrities that be-came famous outside of social media, original SMIs are "instafamous" celebrities that be-came famous within social media. Drawing on the concepts of similarity and wishful identification, this study investigates the effect of SMIs' origin of fame on social media users. The results of an online experiment with 129 social media users in Russia reveal that non-original SMIs affect social media users' purchase intentions stronger than original SMIs if social media users have low self-esteem. In contrast, original SMIs affect social media users' purchase intentions stronger than non-original SMIs if social media users have high self-esteem.

**Keywords:** *social media influencer marketing; origin of fame; identification*

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