

## Influencer Seeding

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## Abstract

"Consumers use user-generated content (UGC) networks to serve a range of purposes in their day-to-day lives, e.g., to share and consume information—in some cases to form preferences and make purchase decisions. With the emergence of UGC networks, influencer marketing has become an increasingly important tool for marketing managers to influence consumers' preference formations and purchase decisions. Along these lines, this special session focuses on research projects that explore how to capitalize on different types of influencers. "Influence Corridors: A New Path to Seeding Targets in User-Generated Content Networks" by Jacob Goldenberg (IDC Herzliya and Columbia University), Andreas Lanz (HEC Paris), Daniel Shapira (Ben-Gurion University), and Florian Stahl (University of Mannheim): In this work, we demonstrate that using the first-degree followers as influence corridors to target the second-degree followers allows an unknown content creator to much more quickly expand the follower base, because the responsiveness of seeding targets that are second-degree followers—i.e., "friends of friends"—is substantially higher. "Mechanisms and early signals behind predictive users in online communities" by Manuel S. Mariani (University of Zurich), René Algesheimer (University of Zurich): Recent works have found that in social systems, a minority of "discoverers" predict future popularity trends via their early adoptions. Using data from large-scale online communities, we validate potential social and preference mechanisms behind their emergence. We find that the discoverers are not highly influential, but highly representative of other users' preferences, which enables their detection from their earliest actions in the community. "Influencer Follower Count and Social Media Engagement" by Simone Wies (Goethe University Frankfurt), Alexander Bleier (Frankfurt School of Finance & Management), and Alexander Edeling (University of Cologne): Influencer follower count is a key criterion firms use to select influencers for their social media marketing campaigns. We show an inverted U-shaped relationship between influencer follower count and a wide range of engagement metrics along the social media engagement funnel, highlighting the value of "mid-tier" influencers. "Who to Target? Low- Versus High-Status Seeding in User-Generated Content Networks" by Maximilian Beichert (University of Mannheim), Andreas Bayerl (University of Mannheim), Jacob Goldenberg (IDC Herzliya and Columbia University), and Andreas Lanz (HEC Paris): To shed light on the question whether it really pays off to engage highstatus influencers as opposed to low-status influencers, we conducted two (supply-side) field experiments in which we find that high-status ones perform better regarding views, however, they seem to be less effective in terms of engagement as well as concerning sales."

## Keywords:

## Track: