B2B influencer marketing: Typology of influencer profiles, persuasion strategies, and collaboration practices

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Abstract

The use of influencers as mediators of marketing messages has become a popular means to reach and engage customers across industries. Studies have investigated how firms can effectively collaborate with influencers, but almost exclusively from the commissioner firms' rather than influencers' point of view. Especially little is known about the business-to-business (B2B) influencers and their perspectives on influencer marketing collaborations. To address this gap, the purpose of this study is to 1) identify different types of B2B influencers and their unique characteristics, and 2) explore their perspectives on executing influencer marketing. We draw empirical insights from 16 interviews with B2B influencers and present a more granular typology of B2B influencers based on their relationship to the commissioner company (internal vs. external) and key motivations (internal vs. external) and outlining the resulting implications for collaborating with different influencer types. For managers, these findings offer guidance on how to approach and work with various types of B2B influencers to facilitate smooth collaboration and gain business benefits.

Subject Areas: *Business-to-Business Marketing, Electronic Commerce and Internet Marketing*

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