

Born with a Nationality Online: The role of country-of-origin in virtual influencer's personal brands

Katie Leggett
Anglia Ruskin University
Minna Lammi
Anglia Ruskin University

Cite as:

Leggett Katie, Lammi Minna (2023), Born with a Nationality Online: The role of country-of-origin in virtual influencer's personal brands. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 52nd, (114253)

Paper from the 52nd Annual EMAC Conference, Odense/Denmark, May 23-26, 2023



Born with a Nationality Online: The role of country-of-origin in virtual influencer's personal brands

Abstract

This study explored the concept of virtual influencers being associated as having a nationality, and the role of this country-of-origin in their social media content and personal brands. This research investigates how five virtual social media influencers, who identify with Asian cultures, use cultural elements in their Instagram posts and reinforce this idea of national heritage. The analysis uncovered seven themes, the main three being posts from a national location, posts related to festivals and national holidays and posts in national dress. The study found that the virtual influencers are self-orientalising cultural products aimed for global consumption, with the country-of-origin also potentially appealing to those with the same heritage and their self-image and patriotism. For marketers these virtual influencers can also be used as national brand ambassadors, with their national alignment providing perceived authenticity.

Subject Areas: *Advertising, Branding, Marketing Strategy*

Track: Digital Marketing & Social Media