

Sponsored campaign ethicality: the role of brand transparency and influencer motivations

Gwarlann De Kerviler

IESEG SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT LEM-CNRS (UMR 9221)

Raphaëlle BUTORI

ESSEC

Cite as:

De Kerviler Gwarlann, BUTORI Raphaëlle (2023), Sponsored campaign ethicality: the role of brand transparency and influencer motivations. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 52nd, (114523)

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



Sponsored campaign ethicality: the role of brand transparency and influencer motivations

Abstract

Partnerships between recognized brands and popular influencers can be mutually beneficial but can raise ethical concerns. Researchers highlight tensions when influencers regularly promote a variety of products and services, leading consumers to question the motivations of the influencer and/or the sponsoring brands (Jimenez-Castillo & Sanchez Fernandez, 2019). Codes of ethics are still emerging and effects of new practices such as disclosure of sponsorship and compensation rules have been examined (Lou & Yuan, 2019). However, other areas can be investigated to contribute to ethical practices. In this research, we examine the overlooked impact of how the brand and the influencer enter their commercial relationship: are they intrinsically motivated and transparent in their interactions? We uncover that followers have different expectations regarding the brand and the influencer. Specifically, the perceived ethicality of a partnership depends on its authenticity, which is affected by the transparency of the brand (and not the influencer) and the motivations of the influencer (and not the brand) when he/she is collaborating with a few selected brands.

Subject Areas: *Branding, Consumer Behaviour*

Track: Digital Marketing & Social Media