

# Effective Influencer Marketing II

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## Abstract

Consumers use user-generated content (UGC) networks to serve a range of purposes in their day-to-day lives. Along these lines, this special session focuses on research projects that explore different aspects to increase the effectiveness of influencer endorsements. “Influencer Branding Over Lifecycle” by Lingling Zhang (CEIBS), Guo Bai (CEIBS), P.K. Kannan (University of Maryland): In this research, we empirically examine the influencers’ branding strategy using a large-scale dataset. Our data include more than 2 million records from over 40,000 influencers on the largest social commerce platform in China. We adopt the Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers (BERT) to analyze the semantic similarity among posts. Our initial findings reveal that influencers can maintain a brand image by sticking to a consistent theme in their organic posts; the similarity between organic and ad posts have impacts on follower engagement of the ads; and influencers can develop a cobranding strategy by choosing which ads to sponsor and determining how tailor the ad content accordingly. “The Dual Role of Engagement in Seeding Campaigns” by Ulrike Phieler (WU Vienna), Florian Dost (BTU Cottbus): Brands increasingly seek to improve marketing campaign performance with thousands of small influencers rather than few large influencers. In such seeding campaigns, planning, management, and measurement focuses on improving the average engagement of influencers. But does engaging influencers really translate into more engaged followers and, consequently, increased sales? Or do engaged influencers shift their efforts back to the campaign instead of reaching out to peers, limiting potential sales? To answer these questions, we analyze a 151-campaign dataset, representing 700.000 nanoinfluencers and about 20th of all EU seeding campaigns. Our campaign-level data includes estimated follower reach (online and offline) and incremental sales. Findings reveal a dual role of influencer engagement: increasing influencer engagement boosts follower engagement, which helps push sales through followers reached offline. However, increasing influencer engagement also decreases the number of offline reached followers, which is not compensated through improving online reach. These findings suggest an optimal influencer engagement level, depending on the number of nano-influencers in a campaign, and offer insights into managing it through seeding campaign planning and design. “The Impact of Physicians’ Short Video Posts on Consumers’ Virtual Visits ” by Yuhua Liu (Renmin Business School), Xiang Wang (Renmin Business School): Our study extends<sup>2</sup> telemedicine marketing literature (Meng et al., 2021; Qiao et al., 2021; Song et al., 2021) by emphasizing external factors and adopting a cross-channel perspective. We provide a comprehensive understanding of how telemedicine companies can effectively reach consumers through an external perspective. Our study offers valuable guidelines for strategically utilizing short video marketing and

optimizing healthcare resources across diverse channels. “Walking the Talk: Leadership Diversity, Influencer Marketing, and Consumer Reactions” by Keran Zhao (Pennsylvania State University), Amy Pei (Northeastern University), and Pankhuri Malhotra (University of Oklahoma): The relationship between a brand’s social media strategy and corporate leadership is an emerging area of marketing research. As influencers increasingly shape a brand’s narrative on social media, it is important to understand how their representations align with the company’s leadership. This research examines the inconsistency between the racial diversity of a company’s board of directors and the influencers hired for their social media campaigns. To comprehensively answer this question, the authors collect and examine data from multiple outlets, including sponsored brand campaigns on social media, corporate board diversity metrics, and company performance indicators. The findings indicate that racial diversity, whether within the corporate boardroom or portrayed on social media platforms via influencers, exhibits a positive association with consumer engagement. However, inconsistency between racial diversity portrayed in a brand’s social media campaigns and the actual diversity within its leadership can diminish this positive association. The findings highlight the need for genuine diversity in corporate leadership that matches with what is shown in social media campaigns, without overstating it. For maximum impact, brands should prioritize increasing board diversity and then engage social media influencers that authentically mirror this diversity.