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Analysis of Digital Influencer Characteristics in Building Digital Engagement Through @byu.id Instagram Account

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Abstract
The existence of digital influencers in the past years has grown very rapidly due to changes in the characteristics of social media users. Social media users prefer things that are collaborative, original and community. This is due to the variety of social media platforms available and by presenting tools that make users more creative. This provides opportunities for various brands to collaborate with Digital Influencers to increase engagement on social media that can affect sales. by.U as the first all-digital provider in Indonesia took advantage of this opportunity to build engagement on social media. The selection of KOL is based on the Pillars of Influence theory which includes Reach, Relevance and Resonance. This study aims to find out how the role of digital influencers in building digital engagement for the @byu.id account. The results of this study indicate that digital influencers have a role that can build digital engagement with these three aspects which are supported by content creation & personal branding that results in audience participation so that digital engagement is formed.

Keywords: Interaction, Personal Branding, Campaign

1. Introduction

The existence *of digital influencers* in the past three years has grown very rapidly due to changes in the characteristics of social media users. Social media users prefer things that are collaborative, original and community. The characteristic of digital users today is to make messages as a commodity based on *user generated content* where the content spread on social networks is user-generated and distributed to fellow users. On social media, the content is entirely owned by and based on the contribution of the user or account owner. UGC is a symbiotic relationship in a new media culture that provides opportunities and flexibility for users to participate (Prasetyo, et al., 2022, p. 317).

The growth of digital influencers is also caused by other factors, namely the increasingly diverse social media platforms available and by presenting tools that make users more creative. Thus, paving the way for those who are smart to take advantage of opportunities to become digital influencers. Digital influencers have various categories, starting from discussing content about food, make-up, comedy, gadgets and automotive. This provides

opportunities for various brands to collaborate with Digital Influencers to increase engagement on social media that can affect sales.

Business marketing in the digital world is increasingly diverse. From using advertisements on social media to using *Key Opinion Leaders*. A *Key Opinion Leader* is a person who is considered credible in leading public opinion, is fairly active on social networks and can attract public attention. The marketing phenomenon using the *digital influencer* has the same concept as the *word of mouth*.

As reported by the We Are Social in 2022 (datareportal.com), social media users in Indonesia have reached a total of half of the total population, namely 191.4 million active users of social media out of 277.7 million total population. The use of social media is not only limited to self-existence and information dissemination, but its use can be used as a business medium. The owners of the company or business see this opportunity as a promising prospect because most potential customers must have social media. Therefore, many companies are starting to build their social media. The reason is to build digital engagement and brand awareness of potential consumers on their social media. Social media is a marketing communication media that uses online media to attract consumers or companies in various forms (images, writings, etc.) to increase awareness, corporate image and to increase sales. (Indika & Jovita, 2017).

By.U is a subsidiary of Telkomsel Group in the provider industry. Released in 2019, by.U was developed specifically with the target audience of Gen Z and adapting Gen Z characters who are independent, creative, constantly online, and prioritize freedom. These characteristics underlie the three main values of by.U development, specifically in digitization, personalization, and transparency.

In the concept of digital influencers, there are three aspects that can be categorized as successful when working with digital influencers, namely reach, relevance and resonance, known as Pillars of Influence (Solis, 2012). These three aspects are closely related to digital engagement on social media. Digital Engagement is a measure of the interaction that results from managing content on social media, because the value of having a social media platform lies in the participation of its users. In this study, 3 aspects of the role of digital influencers in building digital engagement will be investigated in collaboration with by.U in marketing products in a creative campaign..

2. Conceptual Framework of The Study

2.1 Digital Communication

Digital communication focuses more on the use of text, both in its actual form and in the form of symbols. This computer and internet-based communication is also known as CMC (Computer Mediated Communication) which is a communication process that includes audience participation, has a certain context that uses media to achieve certain goals (Nasrullah, 2014).

2.2 New Media

The new media environment or known as cyberspace has brought new ideas to the media that are not only focused on messages alone, but have begun to involve communication technology itself. Not only can it be seen as a media in terms of technology alone, but also other meanings that arise such as culture, politics and economics (Meyrowitz, 1999). The presence of new media gave rise to a new era in communication, namely the presence of social media. The use of social media is not only limited to self-existence and information dissemination, but its use can be used as a business medium. There has been a shift in the method of marketing a product since social media has become phenomenal. The owners of the company or business see this opportunity as a promising prospect because most potential customers must have social media.

2.3 Social Media

The presence of social media raises new characteristics that occur with its users, including the emergence of the term user generated content where social media users share their experiences when consuming something. The review will be distributed to their circle of friends where this content can be expanded to be even wider outside of the circle of friends. The second characteristic found in social media is related to interactions between users. The interactions that occur on social media are at least in the form of commenting on each other or giving signs. (Nasrullah, 2015). This interaction is a form of simulation of communication that exists in the real world, what determines it is that this interaction occurs in new media.

2.4 Instagram

In managing social media, there is content that can at least make the audience understand the product information offered by the company/business. Content on Instagram is not only produced in terms of text, but also includes audio, video, and audio-visual. The costs incurred in managing Instagram accounts for businesses can be minimized rather than promoted by the traditional way. The level of its effectiveness can also be continuously monitored by the company. In terms of audience, the use of business social media will also reach wider audiences and can be accessed anytime and anywhere.

2.5 Digital Influencers

Digital influencers are those who have a great influence on social media and their opinions can have an excellent impact online (Ryan & Jones, 2009). Digital influencers are divided into three categories based on the number of followers on social media (1) Mega Influencers with more than one million followers; (2) Macro Influencers with 100,000 – 1 million followers; (3) Micro Influencers with 1000 – 100,000 followers. There are 3 factors that a social media influencer must have, namely Reach - Ability to deliver content to the target audience. Relevance - the connection to the brand or topic. Resonance - The ability to direct the desired behavior of the audience. (Elli, 2017).

These three aspects can be used as a reference for choosing digital influencers who will work with brands, namely reach, relevance and resonance. Reach means how far digital influencers can reach an audience when conducting a collaborative campaign. Popularity and uniqueness of a digital influencer are one of the main factors that become an indicator of reach and are shown by the number of followers on social media. The second aspect is Relevance, compatibility of personal branding of digital influencers with the concept of a brand, because it can affect the target audience. The trust factor from the audience is also an important part of relevance, this can be obtained by digital influencers by having a competence, uniqueness and special expertise in their field. Finally, Resonance represents the engagement that digital influencers can generate with audiences similar to the brand. A large number of followers is meaningless if those followers are not actively providing feedback or are interested in the content shared by digital influencers.

2.6 Digital Engagement

Digital engagement is the involvement formed by internet users towards content that exists in cyberspace. There are three interaction features on social media (Kaushik, 2011), namely (1) Conversation signifies conversational activity between users; (2) Amplification signifies the spread or expansion of the message and; (3) Applause as a short response through features such as like, love, emoji, and click. In addition, Digital Engagement can be measured through 5 types of measurements, namely; follower growth, Engagement rate, top & worst post, sentiment and top issue/ FAQ (frequently asked question).

3. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. The case study research method is a research design that is comprehensive, intense, detailed, and in-depth, and is more directed as an effort to examine contemporary problems or phenomena (limited by time) (Herdiansyah, 2015) The data in this study were collected using interview techniques, observation and case studies. Interviews were conducted with key informants from the

marketing team by.U and also three influencers with different categories, namely @alfysaga, @dzawin_nur, @oomleo and the Instagram account @byu.id

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Digital Influencer

A digital influencer or also often referred to as a Key Opinion Leader is a person with the ability to influence, change opinions and behavior online, generally through social networking. The Marketing Team from by.U also chose the Key Opinion Leader as a marketing strategy by objectively looking at the value to be achieved.

The characteristics of digital influencers to influence people's opinions also had a great impact on the dissemination of information related to the products owned by the brand. In one of the campaigns in February 2022, which about the promotion of TikTok Everyday which got the best engagement rate for 6 months, by.U used the concept of viral communication in which they collaborated with Ghozali Everyday, an NFT animator who had gone viral and use him as a brand ambassador. This makes the Instagram account @byu.id get an engagement rate of 7.88% in February 2022.

In choosing digital influencers or key opinion leaders as liaisons between brands and consumers, digital influencers must have a personal branding relationship with the company's brand identity. This is in line with the Pillars of Influence theory which includes aspects of Reach, Relevance and Resonance of a digital influencer. Similarities and differences between your results and the work of others should be used to contextualize, confirm, and clarify your conclusions. Do not simply reformulate and repeat points already made; each new statement should contribute to your interpretation and to the reader's understanding of the problem.

4.2 Reach Aspect

Reach means the capability of digital influencers to reach an audience when conducting collaborative campaigns. In this aspect, the popularity of digital influencers plays an important role in growing digital engagement on social media. The use of Mega Influencers is considered wider to reach the audience, but engagement with the audience is weak. In contrast to Macro and Micro Influencers who also have a strong community base, the engagement will increase further. The use of Macro and Micro Influencers is considered more effective for recall and reach audiences that are not reached by Mega Influencers.

To determine the number of influencers who will work together in a campaign, by.U first specifies the targets and objectives of the campaign. After that, is the determination of the campaign area and the number of target markets or interest points. Estimated viewers of each influencer are one aspect of consideration in determining the number of influencers who will work together. After determining the goals and estimated viewers, the by.U team will create a list of influencers based on the Mega, Macro, to Micro scales that match the by.U brand identity.

4.3 Relevance Aspect

Relevance related to the personal branding compatibility of digital influencers with the campaign concept of a brand. This likeness will affect the communication that will be formed between the brand and the audience assisted by digital influencers as third parties from a campaign. The things to consider in the selection process of key opinion leaders conducted by by.U are personal branding from digital influencers, audience profiles from digital influencers and audience trust in those digital influencers and the strategy for planning messages to be conveyed in the campaign.

The digital influencers studied in this study are @alfysaga, @dzawin_nur and @oomleo, all of them have something in common regarding their personal identity such as being creative, always online, and prioritizing freedom while making content on social media. Audience trust is an important part of digital influencer relevance. This comes together with the credibility that is built from the interactions that occur on social media between

digital influencers and their audiences. This interaction is a form of simulation of communication that exists in the real world, what determines it is that this interaction occurs in new media.

Figure 1: *Digital Influencer Selection Flowchart*
Source: Results of Data Processing by Researchers

4.4 Resonance Aspect

Resonance represents the engagement that digital influencers can generate with audiences similar to the brand. A large number of followers is meaningless if those followers are not actively providing feedback or are interested in the content shared by digital influencers.

In one example of the "MenDUA ke by.U" campaign, Andre Taulany's YouTube channel was chosen to be KOL on the scale of mega influencer. In his YouTube video, he briefly explains the advantages of by.U compared to other providers. This video got high views and managed to become trending on YouTube. In the opinion of by.U's team representatives, this significantly increased by.U's share of voice on social media that week. They mentioned that it is related to the share of voice which is also a form of resonance from the campaign on social media. Share of voice signifies the visibility of a brand on social media.

Based on interviews with informants and sourced from examples of campaign cases, the use of mega influencers who have a large number of followers does not guarantee high engagement and does not guarantee the campaign will be successful. In fact, social media accounts that have few followers are also likely to get high engagement and this can affect sales directly or indirectly. The strategy used when by.U first appeared was to use contributions from Mega Influencers who worked together to spread the campaign message. After that, by.U invited nano-scale influencers to spread information about the product as if it were a form of honest review. This is a form of implementation of the concept of word of mouth. It can be concluded that aspects of Pillars of Influence which consist of Reach, Relevance and Resonance are aspects that are considered in choosing digital influencers by.U which can be seen visually in the following chart,
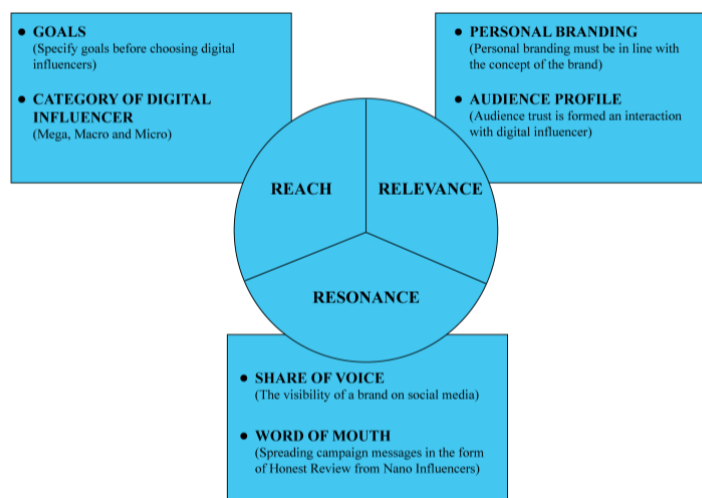

Figure 2: *Pillars of Influence Aspects*
Source: Results of Data Processing by Researchers

4.5 Digital Engagement @byu.id Instagram Account

Followers Growth on the @byu.id account increased drastically in April 2022. This was partly due to the existence of a campaign during Ramadan in the form of a mini-comedy skit which was divided into several episodes with hashtags #parapencaritakjil, #kuenyangbarengbyu, #semuanyasemaunya.

Top & Worst uploads on Instagram by.U accounts for a six months period (January – June 2022) are analyzed based on the calculation of the engagement rate. The post with the best content fell in February which got 42,606 likes and 392 comments. The content message is about information related to the TikTok Quota campaign with the hashtag #tiktokeveryday. Meanwhile, the upload with the worst engagement rate fell in April which got 162 Likes and 4 Comments. This content contains information about tournament leagues hosted by by.U.

Sentiment is a measurement to see how the audience in one post is divided into negative/neutral/positive sentiments. The comments for the best upload in six months was filled with 392 comments of which 151 were neutral, 118 were positive and 123 were negative.

Top Issues or Frequently Asked Questions filled with comments from audience who had trouble and complaint when using by.U. The problems that are often encountered are regarding the Network, Quota and SIM Card Purchases, Testimonials and Customer Service.

4.6 Digital Engagement Digital Influencer Instagram Account

Conversation is the activity contained in the comments section of an account is a Conversation Engagement that is formed from content that can attract the audience to talk about it to fellow social media users. There are similarities between audiences' comments from 3 different scales of digital influencers, that is audiences who feel connected to the content created by digital influencers. This is the audience 's effort to show their attitude towards a message that has been conveyed by the Key Opinion Leader. This intensifies the role of social media users who interact with new media.

Amplification means that spread and expansion of messages does not depend on visual content alone. In Instagram, there is a caption section filled with text to support the intent and purpose of the visual content. This also emphasizes the function for message distribution. There is an unique feature in the caption section, namely the use of hashtags that are useful as markers so that uploaded content can appear in a group with the same hashtag.

Hashtags also function as branding identities on social media to be known globally. From the results of the research, the three contents uploaded by three different influencers have similar captions, which are both starting with the same little explanation as what has been displayed on the audio-visual content. They use hashtags in the middle and end of the caption. Some of the hashtags used are #EverythingSemaunya, #AnakbyU, and #KuenyaaangBarengbyU.

Applause is one of the Digital Engagement activities consisting of responses from the audience through features such as likes, love, emojis and clicks. From two of the three influencers studied, there is one influencer who indicates that the engagement rate is not good or does not match the indicators.

Based on research conducted by analyzing interview data and social media observations, it is said that the characteristics of digital influencers will always go hand in hand with digital engagement which consists by the content created by digital influencers & the personal branding of digital influencers had result in the participation and interaction of audience and also collaboration between fellow social media users which will build engagement on social media.
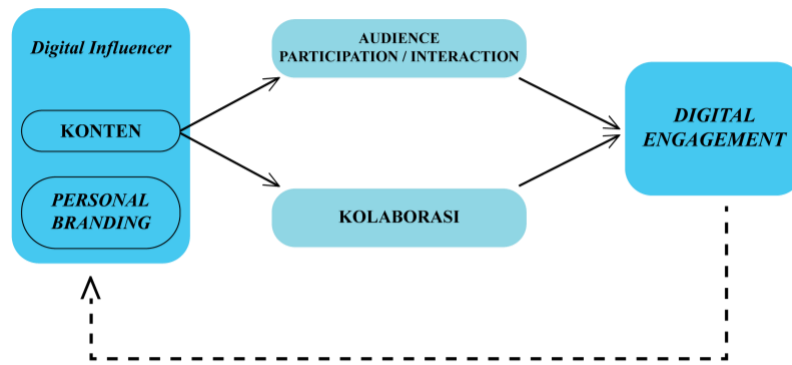
Figure 3: *Digital Influencers in Building Digital Engagement*
Source: Results of Data Processing by Researchers

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of research and analysis conducted by researchers, the characteristics of digital influencers in building digital engagement through the @byu.id Instagram account can be concluded as follows:

a. The characteristics of digital influencers to influence opinions has a great impact on the dissemination of information related to the products owned by the brand.
b. To determine the number of influencers who will work together in a campaign, by.U first specify the targets and objectives of the campaign. After that, determine the campaign and interest points then make a list influencers that match the brand identity by.U
c. The things to consider in the selection process of key opinion leaders conducted by by.U are personal branding from digital influencers, audience profiles from digital influencers and audience trust in those digital influencers and the strategy for planning messages to be conveyed in the campaign.
d. Resonance represents the engagement of a digital influencer with an audience similar to that of the brand. A large number of followers will not be effective if those followers are not actively providing feedback or are interested in the content shared by digital influencers. In fact, social media accounts that have few followers are also able to get a share of voice.

6. Recommendation

From the research that has been conducted by the author, the recommendations that will be given include:

a. Researchers realize that there is still a lack of data related to digital engagement, therefore further research is needed related to sentiment on social media using more detailed quantitative data and with software that is specifically used to calculate sentiment comments on social media
b. To develop audience's interaction, Key Opinion Leaders must be more active in utilizing the features available on Instagram social media
c. For Key Opinion Leaders or Digital Influencers to collaborate more to create more creative content and reach wider audiences

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