Followers Ratio on Instagram Affects the Product’s Brand Awareness

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Abstract

In this era of technology, social media influencers through Instagram has become an asset for certain products and services which can give huge revenue stream for the company. This social media influencer will get paid to promote a brand or its products to their followers on the platform in many cases, for thousands of dollars per post (Milnes, 2016). Social media influencer is the new term for celebrity endorser which this particular person will endorse and promote the product that has been assigned by the respective company. Apparently for social media influencers’ who have large follower counts will become more valuable which can guarantee the amount of viewers that will see their content through Instagram. Similarly, this routine can boost the brand awareness if the number of “likes” on their posts increases (Milnes, 2016). Accordingly, higher numbers of followers may result in larger reach of the message (Talavera, 2015). Therefore, having thousands of followers through Instagram apparently increase the likeability of the products (Dobele, et al., 2016). Apart from that it will effect higher perceptions of popularity because this higher perception of popularity leads followers to contribute more critics and perception from the social media influencer toward the brand of the products and services (Milnes, 2016). A high number of followers may lead to higher perceptions of popularity, and subsequently higher likeability Cheong, B. (2017). Contrast to that followers are without doubt important as they will interpret the content, but quantity does not equal quality and a small audience of engaged users is worth more than a large audience of less active users (Anger and Kittl, 2013). Findings from this research, it shows that Instagram influencer with high numbers of followers is considered more likeable and has the chances to transform the potential customer to customer. Therefore, for this research, two Instagram profiles that have different ratio followers have been analyze for the purpose of this research. Instagram “A” has 7112 followers and 826 following, whereas Instagram “B” has 874 followers and 734 following. The ratio for each instagram followers ratio are 7112 followers: 826 following for Instagram A and for Instagram B is 874 followers: 734 following.

Keywords: Brand Awareness; Instagram; Social Media; Instagram Followers

1. Introduction

Social media has become the platform for a company to promote and increase the sales of their product. This social media has become a medium to reach the potential customer Leskovec, J., Adamic, L.A., Huberman, B.A., (2008). In these generations, there are lots of social media that can be access easily by almost everyone around the world.

Instagram has become one of the most viewed social media and according to the statistic, last updated total number of monthly active Instagram was 700 million with total number of daily active integral by 400 million (Aslam, 2017). Instagram outreach users of Facebook from between Fall and Spring of 2014, the number of teens using Facebook fell from 72% to 45%. The same study also found that 38% of teens said that Instagram is a favorable marketing channel versus 21% for Facebook (Jackson, 2015). Instagram is one of the social media that easy to access by any medium such as smartphone or laptop Levy, S.J., Luedicke, M.K. (2013). In addition to that person behind the success of Instagram is the viewers.
Apparently most of the users on Instagram has become an online ambassador for certain products and they are named as social media influencer (Aslam, 2017). Social media influencer is a person that actively on Instagram and having the ratio of followers higher than the following Lekhanya, L.M. (2014).

Over the past several years, social media have emerged to redefine the digital media landscape and, in the process, have changed the way we think about the dissemination of marketing messages (Akyol, 2013). In particular, Facebook has facilitated two unique consumer experiences of interest to brand marketers: The ability for consumers to identify brands of interest and connect with them has enabled sharing between brands and consumers in new ways (Datta et al., 2008).

Brands and their consumers can now create two-way relationships and share content, news, and feedback (Jackson, 2015). Social media also have facilitated innovative ways of sharing information about brands between friends Leskovec, J., Adamic, L.A., Huberman, B.A. (2008). Whether consumers are voicing their affinity for certain brands or their experiences with products and services, Facebook not only encourages this type of sharing but also can accelerate its reach and virility Ellison, N.B., Boyd, D. (2013). Brands increasingly are interested in establishing the social presence and engaging with their fans, helping shape their customers’ experiences, and even leveraging their voices for greater marketing impact (Scissons et al., 2015).

2. Literature Review

2.1. Instagram usage and social capital

Instagram usage is defined as the activities in which users are engaged on Instagram. Instagram features are leave a “comment” on friends’ posts, “like” friends’ Instagram post, upload photos, upload videos, tag friends on Instagram posts, and also the most common activity on Instagram is by typing a #Hash tags on posts. The use of “#hash tags” is to search for things and “view online shop pages” (Scissons et al., Instagram marketing strategy e-Book, 2015).

The “like” and “comment” buttons are both available under every post on Instagram. Instagram user can click on the “like” button to show their approval or agreement, and the “comment” icon is to share their feedbacks or suggestion on the particular posts that are put up by the Instagram users (Scissons et al., Instagram marketing strategy e-Book, 2015).

Instagram also allows users to upload photos and videos. When the Instagram users edit a photo or video and upload it on their Instagram post, they can tag their friends in the post by typing their Instagram user names in the “tag people” icon (Scissons et al., Instagram marketing strategy e-Book, 2015).

The “#Hashtag” is a unique function that only appeared on Instagram and could be used to link the Instagram posts with similar characteristics. For example, if the Instagram users take a photo in New York, they can add hash tags such as “#NewYork,” or if the Instagram user have a special project and intentionally to promote the project or event they can use the hash tag such as “#Apple Internal Happiness” or “#ApplePhdJourney” to describe the features of the photo. Social capital can be created with the use of social networking sites (Farooq and Jan, 2012). Social capital is defined as the resources accumulated in the relationships between people through social interaction (Farooq and Jan, 2012).

Social network bonding capital refers to strong cohesive bonds which ties between more than groups of people such as family members and close friends who share common identities or hobbies such as values, religions and interests, and bridging capital links heterogeneous group members who came from different culture such as social status, and generations with a weak and diffuse connection (Milnes, 2016). The activities on Instagram can be seen as building social capital online (Farooq and Jan, 2012).

3. Influential in Buying

Influence of from two parties has some impact on others life which can also be seen in decision-making, either it is of choosing any social media application that has more interest on that particular
person or selecting a career (Datta et al., 2008). Many online shoppers wait for feedback about the product before purchasing anything (Jackson, 2015).

E-commerce companies convince people to give feedback of the products by come up with a write up reviews and stars rating. In addition to that some e-commerce companies have also started to use online social marketing after analyzing the effect on the sales due to online purchasing (Farooq and Jan, 2012). Similarly, the influential factor of friends based on online shopping behavior through social media shows that it gave an impact of this social influence in terms of increase in the sales and revenue. Analyzing the user behavior on the internet is one of the most critical factors that help in making the website successful (Bruyn and Lilien, 2008).

Nowadays, mostly companies are emphasizing creating an attractive user-friendly feature interface of the websites which emphasized organization to understand the user behavior when they login to the social networking website (Anger and Kittl, 2013). Understanding the online consumer behavior would help organization in evaluating the design and performance of the website which these facts could help in placement of the advertising on the website for better visibility with no annoyance to users (Datta et al., 2008).

3.1. Followers on Instagram

Differently from Facebook, the relationship between users was not identified as that of “Friends” but address as “Followers” (Scissons et al., Instagram marketing strategy e-Book, 2015). If another Instagram user want to view other Instagram users’ posts, they need to click the “follow” button on that particular Instagram user’s page to access the photos or videos that posted by that particular Instagram user (Scissons et al., Instagram marketing strategy e-Book, 2015).

3.2. Research Method

In this survey, two types of Instagram profile are involved. Therefore, our survey consists of questionnaire two Instagram profiles that have different ratio followers have been analyze for the purpose of this research. Instagram “A” has 7112 followers and 826 following which has been set up as private account, whereas Instagram “B” has 874 followers and 734 following also which has been set up as private account too. For this particular survey, the ratio for both Instagram post are 7112 followers: 826 following for profile Instagram A and 874 followers: 734 following for profile Instagram B.

In this study, the survey was used as a follow-up to the focus group participants, using questionnaire as the data collection instrument. Apart from that before questionnaire was distributed to 100 respondents, an interview has been done with the owner of Instagram to inform the amount of sales that has been received on 6th February 2017 until 12th February 2017. Both Instagram are using the same quality of post for this survey. The photo was a picture of the wireless Bluetooth microphone, and the quality of the photo is set up to high definition photo.

The questionnaire was the candid feedback from the participants. All the participants who were part of the focus group could be questioned regarding followers ratio on Instagram affects the product’s brand awareness. The focus groups are Instagram followers that are active on Instagram which are involved on the Likes, Comments, and also responded to Direct Message on Instagram from both Instagram profile owner. In addition to that, this respondent has high interest in purchasing the wireless Bluetooth microphone. This focus of the group can be recognized based on Instagram “A” has 7112 followers and 826 following, whereas Instagram “B” has 874 followers and 734 following. In addition to that, this survey was based on the ratio for both Instagram profiles which is for Instagram profile A is 7112 followers : 826 following. Apart from that, for Instagram profile B the ratio is 874 followers and 734 following.

The sample size of the participants of this survey is hundred 100 respondents (Farooq and Jan, 2012).

4. Theoretical and Practitioner Implications

A photo of the wireless Bluetooth Microphone uploaded on Instagram B that have 874 followers a week before the wireless Bluetooth Microphone uploaded on Instagram A that have 7112 followers.
Experiment has been tested in the same month for 2 weeks which is from all respondents prefer Instagram rather than Facebook because of the features of the Instagram profile.

According to the Instagram owner of Instagram B with 874 followers only 1 person that bought the wireless Bluetooth Microphone and received 52 likes and 26 comments only. This was based on interview face-to-face session with the owner of Instagram B.

On the other hand, for Instagram A with 7112 followers, this Instagram profile has received 10 orders with 83 likes and 11 comments. This was based on interview face-to-face session with the owner of Instagram A.

From this interview, it really shows that Instagram A who has 7112 followers really create the product awareness of this wireless Bluetooth microphone since it received more likes and comments compare to Instagram B who has 874 followers only.

Apart from that Instagram A who has more followers compare to Instagram B really shows that from the uploaded post, Instagram A make more sales compare to Instagram B.

From these findings, the research found out that the huge amount ratio of Instagram Followers does affect the product awareness of the products that has been promoted on Instagram. Apart from that these findings found that it also boost up the sales of the products. Based on the comments from both post, most of the followers can directly get more info from the Instagram owners based on all the information that they had regarding the wireless Bluetooth microphone. Both owner are active user of Instagram user which online based on receive the notification from Instagram. This fact based on the interview session and based on the reading of how many minutes the reply session during the Instagram owner with the followers. This can be justifying within the duration times that is stated on the comments session.

Once the interview session has been done, the next session whereby 100 questionnaires have been distributed to 100 active Instagram users which has been directly respond to the post from both Instagrams A and B.

Based on the 100 respondents, 73 respondents agree that the quality of the post do effect the intention to create awareness of the product that been uploaded on Instagram and addition to that 27 disagree with this statement. The quality of the post on this survey was regarding how the post has been uploaded on Instagram. The survey mentioned about the brightness colors of the Instagram and how the photo has been taken for the purpose of promotion on Instagram. Based on this finding, it really shows that the respondents agree if the post or photo is a direct clear photo without too much of wording inside the photo.

On the other hand, based on the 100 respondents, 90 respondents agree that the caption of the post should be fulfill with short details of the products and should state the price of the product on the caption. Apart from that 92% agree that a speed feedback from the Instagram owner on replying their comment on the product is necessary. The consumer involvement is very important in the process of promoting product through Instagram because the interaction between the Instagram owner and the potential customer can transform the potential customer to become actual customer Larson, R.J. (2009).

From all the findings for this research, it really shows that ratio of followers and the way that certain product being uploaded on Instagram does really create awareness of the product. In addition to that with a good quality of the Instagram post it can create awareness and create the existing of the product among the potential customers which is also the active Instagram user.

As the gap for this research, there are few things that might help for the future research which is the viral marketing could be the moderator for the future research on theoretical framework since the variable of viral marketing as moderator influence the classic validation model Klopper, H.B. (2012). In addition to that this moderator variable which is viral marketing can be considered a subset of a class of variables termed in the social sciences or specification variables (Sharma et al., 1981). This particular moderator viral marketing might be influence the Instagram post quality (Bruyn and Lilien, 2008). In the future, this moderator viral marketing can help the future researcher to see either this moderator can help to boost up the sales of the product through Instagram post Larson, R.J. (2009).
5. Limitations

Based on this study, the limitation was based on collecting data from 100 respondents because the input of the data is based on the respondents that directly respond on the particular post from both Instagram owners.

In addition to that the limitation based on technology is complicated because within 3 months, the features of Instagram profile have changing. When this survey was conducted, there is no Instavideo stories featured, but apparently 1 month after, data have been collected and Instagram has upgrading their features (Scissons et al., Instagram marketing strategy e-Book, 2015).

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