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CREATING INFLUENCER MARKETING CAMPAIGN IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Bachelor's thesis

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I declare that I have compiled the paper independently

and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors

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ABSTRACT

The marketing field is changing simultaneously with digitalization. There is so much advertising noise nowadays that consumers are starting to ignore it. Big companies and brands are losing their credibility, and they need to find new ways of reaching people. Influencer marketing is a modern way to reach consumers. Influencers are providing trustful and authentic content for their own loyal audience, who are following their posts in a daily routine.

The aim of this research is to gain knowledge about influencer marketing in social media, find the logic behind the process of a successful influencer marketing campaign, and reasons why should brand use influencer marketing. The research problem of this thesis is that not all of the influencer marketing campaigns in social media are successful. The research problem will be solved through two research question. The author uses semi-structured interviews with Finnish social media marketing agencies to gain qualitative data and collects secondary data from books, articles, and online sources.

Based on the results of this research, creating an influencer marketing campaign in social media is a logical process, but it requires a lot of hands to make it successful. Reserch resulted that influencer marketing is highly cost-efficient, consumers are trusting influencers, and it is a modern way to reach out to customers.

Keywords: Influencers, influencer marketing, campaign, social media

INTRODUCTION

With the digitalization, the consumers have become much more talented social media users and judgemental towards commercial messages. One of the essential questions for marketers is how to reach the customer's mind in a way that the marketing message has been seized. Nowadays, it is almost impossible for a brand to stand out from the mob of advertisers, and for this reason, more and more turn into influencers (Newman 2015). Because of digitalization, we all are being exposed to influencer marketing every day, whether we are aware of it or not. When content is genuine and natural, it is often also interesting (Suojalehto 2017). This is where influencer marketing steps up and make brand's content more interesting to the public.

When creating an influencer marketing campaign on social media, one of the most crucial part is to choose the right influencer and right channel for brand's target audience. There are multiple factors affecting the process, such as how big the campaign is going to be, what are the goals, influencer's itself, and content, but when all is planned well, it is a quite simple process. In this thesis, the author will explain the concept of influencer marketing in social media and will concentrate on it from the brand's perspective, so the focus will be in paid influencer marketing because here the company is participating actively in the marketing process.

The primary data will be collected via a personal and email interviews, so it will provide qualitative data about the subject. The interviews will be held with different Finnish social media marketing agencies who are utilizing influencers. Interviews will produce information about influencer marketing and detailed outline how to create an influencer marketing campaign, and they will help the author to answer his research questions. Secondary data will provide an overview of influencer marketing as a whole, and it will be collected from articles and books. Secondary data can be applied to multiple cases.

The aim of this bachelor's thesis is to gain knowledge about influencer marketing in social media, find the logic behind the process of a successful influencer marketing campaign, and thus, reasons why should brands use influencers as part of their marketing strategy. The motivation for this

research is the author's personal interest towards influencers on YouTube, who are providing entertaining and exhilirating content about products and services, such as humorous videos about video games.

The research problem of this study is that all of the influencer marketing campaigns in social media are not successful. The purpose of this thesis is to answer following research questions. The central question where this thesis is concentrating is; How to create a successful influencer marketing campaign in social media? Sub-question is; Why should a brand use influencer marketing in social media? The sub-question considers the possible benefits of influencer marketing.

On the first chapter of this thesis is a theoretical framework, where the author is going to introduce the concept of influencer marketing and influencers as well. The first chapter also includes the idea of the Four M's of influencer marketing, which will explain how influencer marketing campaign can be created, managed, monitored and measured by following these guidelines. The second chapter is about the research methodology and results of this study. It includes how the data is collected and analyzed and is followed by the results of the interviews, which are represented together with the findings from the theoretical framework. The last chapter is the conclusion of this thesis. References and appendices are collected to the end.

First and foremost, the author has to thank his thesis supervisor, Iivi Riivits-Arkonsuo for her unwavering support and guidance through this whole writing process. The author would also like acknowledge my gratitude to all the marketing agencies for having the time to answer my interview questions, and so the author could gain their expert knowledge about this topic, and therefore was able to complete this research.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the author is describing the concept of influencer marketing. First, influencer as a person is specified. Then the origins of influencer marketing are introduced, and the way how influencer marketing works. After that, the following sections will review up- and downsides of influencer marketing. Afterward, the model of Four M's is explained thoroughly and the key points to take into account when planning to execute an influencer marketing campaign. Finally, the nature of influencer marketing in social media is covered, and the last part focuses on current trends and future aspects of influencer marketing.

1.1. Who is an Influencer?

Business dictionary defines influencers as individuals who have the power of affecting others purchase decisions, because of their knowledge, position, authority or relationship. (businessdictionary.com-Influencers). Influencers can usually be mixed up with celebrities, but influencer can be anyone who has audience or followers. Influencers are seen as more accessible, and compassionate than celebrities, and because their content is more intimate, it is smooth to relate to them (Veirman, Cauberghe & Hudders 2017). Engagement is more important than the size of influencer's audience because it does not matter how large audience a person has if no one engages after hearing your message (Carmody 2016). The *word* influencer can occasionally be mingled with the word advocate, but they do not necessarily have the same purpose. Typically, influencers are noncustomers incentivized to recommend a brand's product or service. Advocates then are already existing customers who are voluntary endorsing the brand or the product. (Brown & Fiorella 2013). Moreover, an influencer is someone who presents proper opinion which is sufficiently significant to acquire action from others. Brands can also use celebrities as their influencers, but it might be much more expensive than collaborating with for example rising YouTube stars, who also have enormous follower amount and, therefore they can have significant reach for specific target groups. Influencers endorsements are more authentic and relatable to ordinary people than endorsements from celebrities (Bladow 2018). Freberg states that; "Social media influencers (SMIs) represent a new type of independent third party endorser who shape

audience attitudes through blogs, tweets, and the use of other social media." (Freberg 2011). Using social media sites like YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook, influencers try to create a content that promotes certain brands with the goal of getting awareness and followers for the brand.

1.2. Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is not a new phenomenon since it has been around for decades. The first steps in influencer marketing were taken in the late 18th century, when marketers started to utilize public figures to promote, for example, food products and tobacco products. In the 1950s, Marlboro created the Marlboro Man, which was performed by many different public figures. This was meant to affect consumers and give them a picture of a "macho" man who smokes. In the 21st century began a new era of influencer marketing. The Old Spice brand, which manufactures men's perfumes and other toiletries made one of the most successful influencer marketing campaigns in 2010. Old Spice made 180 different advertising videos that were sent to public figures and who were allowed to make videos on their own channels. Even in the first day, this campaigns audience reached six million, and after one week the views rose up to 40 million (Davey 2016). After this, influence marketing has moved to online, and even the smaller companies are able to use this marketing tool because of its low costs.

Influencer marketing is a highly effective marketing tool for brands and companies to promote their products and services to a greater extent. Usually, when influencers are utilized, the advertising agencies contact influencer agencies, who are specifically working with influencers (Woods 2016). Moreover, brands do not market directly to consumers but use influencers to spread the word for them. In influencer marketing brands can use for example YouTubers, bloggers or Instagrammers to advertise their products in the influencer's own channels. (Tapinfluence 2017). As the whole marketing field has changed and developed during years, so have the audience. Consumers dislike to be marketed directly, and the marketing messages are losing their credibility every day (Gerardo 2017). As the consumers have become more cautious towards traditional advertisements, so have they become more talented users of internet and tools for searching information about products and services.

The term "influence" has always been the key concept in marketing since the brands want to affect their customers' behavior and sellers try to impact on customers purchasing decisions. For

example, a salesperson who tries to sell a house, they can spray fresh odors around the house or maybe even bake pastries so they can create friendly and welcoming mood inside the house before the customer enters the building. These little factors can have a great effect on customers mind and even have a push towards the purchase decision. "Influence" as a word can be defined as the power to affect a person. Influence marketing is a quite similar concept to word-of-mouth marketing, which began to be famous in the 80- and 90th centuries (Brown & Fiorella 2013, 1-2). Word-of-mouth marketing spurs consumers to spread the word and tell their satisfaction or experiences for others, mostly to their friends and families. Power of word-of-mouth marketing is there that, when the message is received from a fellow customer it is seen as more credible and authentic than the message from traditional advertisers, and same applies in influencer marketing (Veirman, Cauberghe & Hudders 2017). Influencer marketing can also be described as activating and identifying people who have an impact on a particular target audience so that they become part of the brand's attempts to grow their engagement, sales or reach (Sudha & Sheena 2017).

1. 3. Pros & cons of Influencer marketing

There are multiple things that make influencer marketing positive from the brand's perspective, but there are also some factors that need to be taken into account. It has been said that trust towards brands and typical advertisements have decreased, but the power of influencers are growing, so this can fix the credibility of the brand. Return on invest (ROI) might be the most significant decisive factor there is when doing influencer marketing since the study conducted by Tomoson shows that companies are making $6.50 for every $1 spent on influencer marketing. (Tomoson 2016). Compensating influencers can enforce a strong relationship between brand and influencer, and this can lead to contracts and long-term partnerships. These contracts are a win-win situation for the brand and influencer. Hence, the agreement help influencer to stay motivated with the guaranteed payment what was agreed, and keep the influencer creating required content for the brand. The contract also allows brands to review and check the content before it is published on the influencer's channel (Patel 2017). There are many other benefits in influencer marketing such as, it is quite easy to execute, it is very cost-effective with great ROI possibilities as previously mentioned, brand awareness is much likely to increase, and the list goes on.

Like other marketing activities, there might be some downsides to influencer marketing as well. Because of the influencer's power on others opinions, he/she can easily produce unwanted response

about the product or service, if the influencer was not pleased with the items on a question. This is a reason why previously mentioned contracts are important for brands so that they can decide if the content is acceptable to publish. Another thing for marketers to consider is that the results are not guaranteed. Furthermore, even if the influencer has hundreds of thousands of followers, it does not ensure the wanted results. If the results are poor, then the company ends up paying for "nothing" for the influencer (Patel 2017). There are many influencer marketing campaigns that have failed miserably, and one good example of those is campaign launched by Electronic Arts (EA). When EA had launched their new game Star Wars: Battlefront (2015) they approached few different influencers to promote this game, but one of them was a huge mistake, since he was not interested in promoting the game, and didn't even like it. So, when the wrong influencer posted a picture of the game disc what he had broken, including rough words expressing his anger, it probably damaged the brand image. (Barker 2017).

1.4. The four M's

The foundation of marketing was built of The Four P's: Product, Price, Promotion, and Place. Nowadays the famous Four P's have been joined by the Four M's, which explains the core steps in reaching influencers within the business, and when used in right way, the Four M's can widen brands reach and turn chances into sales. When applying influencer marketing, marketers need to master the four M's of influencer marketing, and those are described by Danny Brown an Sam Fiorella in their book "*Influencer Marketing: How to Create, Manage, and Measure Brand Influencers in Social Media*." The four M's comes from words: *make, manage, monitor and measure.* As any other business practice, influencer marketing also needs goals, metrics, and focus, and they are called the Four M's in the concept of Influencer marketing.

With the first of the M's, **make**, the consumer's position should be in the middle of your influence marketing attempts. Therefore, companies can create profiles on the grounds of where the customer is in the purchase lifecycle currently. Three main stages of the Buyer's journey are *research stage, awareness stage,* and *purchase stage.* The need for tactic and surpass for each stage is diverse. Thus, the company must to recognize in which step the buyer is, in order to link with people and *"make influencers"* which moves the customer to the next step. With this template, brands can identify the exact moment of promotions or campaigns that caused the impact of the ripple.

Brown and Fiorella (2013) state that every influencer campaign has two key stages: the Trickle and Ripple Phases (Figure 1). First, the message is distributed in the Trickle Phase, and the successfulness of the campaign is determined from the direction of the message. There are multiple distractions created by social media, which makes the path of the message through influencer difficult. Brands need to cooperate with influencers to get through this Trickle Phase and to recognize the essential information about the audience, such as when they'll be online, on what platforms they'll be, with who are they having conversations and about what topics, and also the actions they'll be generating.
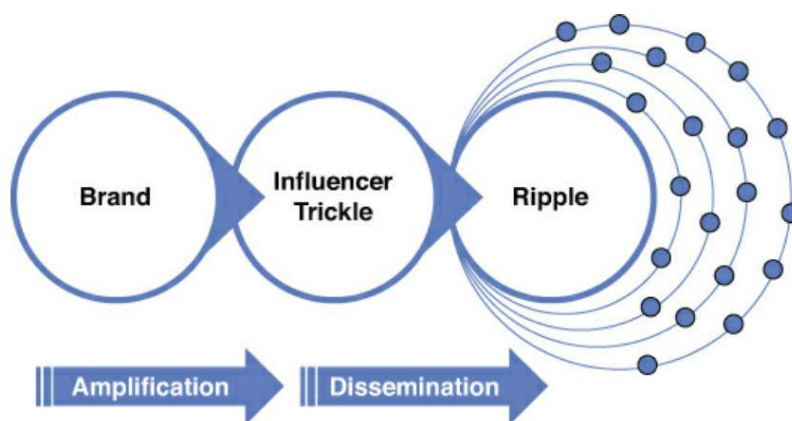

Figure 1: The Trickle and Ripple Phases of influence marketing
Source: Brown & Fiorella (2013)

For transforming the influencer marketing campaign from possible to probable, the influencers need to be segmented into final personas and separated, so that their communities presumable react to a specific message. When the campaign moves from possible to probable, it also runs from Trickle Phase to the Ripple Phase, and the community of influencer has noted the message, and then it's spread through their own communities, which will produce promotional messaging and fundamentally the ripple of brand awareness. After brand has recognized their primary audience for each of their campaigns, it's time to trigger the right influencer for the message. When brands are figuring out the right influencer for their campaign there are some factors and filters to consider, and they are introduced in the next paragraph:

Choosing the right *influencer* is the main problem in influencer marketing that brands stumble on, they are trying to connect with only influencers who have high-profiles rather than those who are truly essential for customers. The critical part of successful influencer marketing campaign right from the start is to identify the top influencer for any specific campaign. For making sure that the message is implanted at the right time with the right influencer, the brand has to be aware of the

audience's *reaction history*. Reactions of customers can be likes and shares on Facebook or Instagram, subscribes or comments on YouTube videos, etc. Fundamental *demographic* factors such as sex, location, and age of the audience are crucial to identify for creating the brand message in a right way. The right *timescale* is vital for building really compelling campaigns, and brand should focus on keeping the influencers as part of longer-term marketing strategy rather than trying to hit for a short-term buzz. Then, choosing the right *platform(s)* with the right influencer combined with the target audience is also a crucial part of the campaign's success. Because of the incredible size of social media, there are maybe several hundreds popular channels and thousands of not so famous. Every group of platforms in social media has their attraction to certain demographics.

The second of the M's is **manage**. When a company finds the right influencers for their specific audience, they need to consider about managing the impact, which is their view of your brand and what they can pass on to their superiors. For succeeding in the marketing campaign, influencer marketing has to be managed like any other marketing strategy from before the start to the end and beyond the campaign. By associating with influencers, a company might believe that customers would be more compliant to make the decision for purchase, but it is possible that influencers may create an opposite or zero effect. The company can think several factors about its influencer marketing efforts to keep a record of the potential impact they have on buyers. The company can believe that, did their efforts cause an increased positive or negative view of the product or service in question or did the efforts move the customer along to the next stage of their purchase life cycle? Furthermore, the company might consider that, did their marketing efforts enhance or disrupt the brand message? These are some examples of actions that influencer might cause, and company can map each one of them to how they approach the customer with their messaging.

Relations with the influencer is essential to maintain, and it can continue for future outreach and promotional activities. By pursuing the relationship with the influencer, there are benefits to gain such as solid trust, mutual knowledge, existing customer base, and the ability to change the brand influencer to brand advocate. Managing influencer relationship for brands includes seven core steps introduced in the following picture (Figure 2).
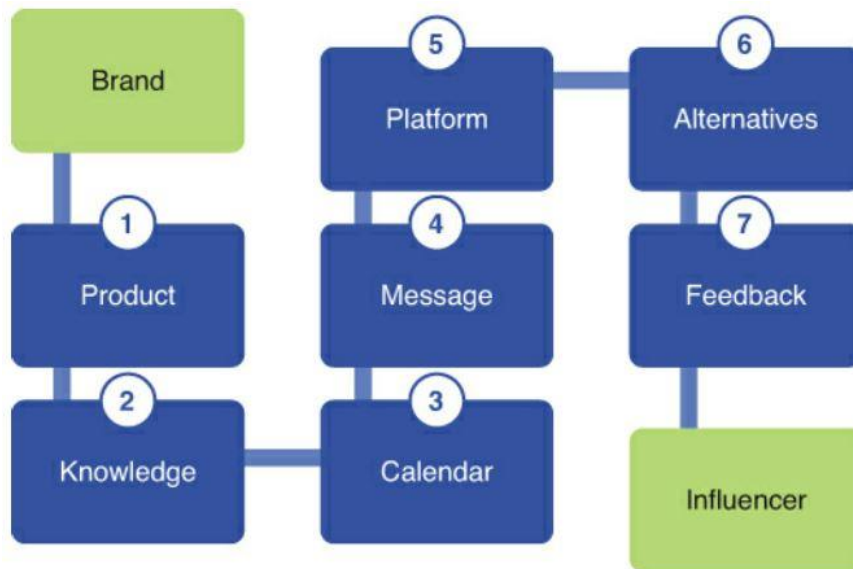
Figure 2: The seven steps for influencer management
Source: Brown & Fiorella (2013)

The critical component of the flowchart above is the **product**, because it is as important as the whole message in influencer marketing campaign, and trust is the core currency of the social networks. For strengthening the relationship with the influencers, the brand needs to provide all the tools required for their influencers concerning about the products that are being promoted and make sure the product is worthy of promoting. The next step is **knowledge**, because of the limitlessness offering of information and easy access to it, the internet has made consumers savvier than ever before. Influencers need the experience and knowledge of the product they are promoting, and the brand has to ensure that their influencers have the required expertise by providing hands-on training and fact- and worksheets. The third step is **a calendar**. It does not matter if the campaign is short-term or long-term, either way, what's crucial for its success is to mapping out the content and the promotion calendar of the campaign. Usually, influencer marketing campaigns are formed of short-term outreach and longer-term marketing attempts from the brand to create the buzz the influencer has generated. Thus, the primary way is to build a long-term vision that will make the influencer as a key part of brand's marketing team and later on the influencer can become a brand ambassador.

Implementation and wording the **message** is one of the core factors behind every influence marketing campaign. The message has to be adapted in a way that it fits to influencer's natural tone and still maintaining the vital promotional points at front and center. The company should discuss with their influencers what they are willing to say as well as closing out any language they

do not want to use, and then modify their message with these pieces of information. This area is highly essential for successful communication with influencing people and their communities. Then comes the choice of **platforms**. Different platforms attract a variety of people. Some platforms attract a more male audience, and some are more interesting among females. Leading operating environment should be decided by brand, and which are the supporting networks. Furthermore, demographic trends need to be analyzed in this part.

Afterward comes the consideration of **alternatives**. Adaption for the unexpected reactions is also crucial for success when working with social media because poor reception or negative response can occur even with the most carefully planned campaigns. This is the reason why multiple alternatives should be reserved so that the inefficient promotion does not continue for too long. Alternative influencers, which can react to negativeness and help the campaign move in a positive way are a good example of preparation. Last but not least step of this flowchart is to analyze the **feedback**. Trust is built with the influencer and their audience, so the influencers are the ones who will share their view of what has worked and what could be done in another way. The post-campaign feedback analysis is a crucial part of the future campaigns.

The third M comes from the **monitor**, and this phase is about monitoring the influencer campaign and tracking relationships and conversations between influencers and potential customers for gaining valuable feedback. The brand needs to concentrate on results and not efforts when monitoring the influencer marketing campaign. This enables for a much more systematic framework for meeting targets and reaching goals. As with the social media monitoring, the influencer marketing campaign monitoring is designed to evaluate positive or negative conversations around the brand, and how influencers talk about your offering to customers. Marketers can understand with the help of listening tools, search analytics, landing pages and committed messages for who and what offers the most significant return on invest (ROI) where they need to adjust the brand message, and which influencer is influencing customers and their decision-making process at any time. The three key objectives that each brand should build its own strategy and track how each campaign proceeds on the basis of these following goals (Figure 3).
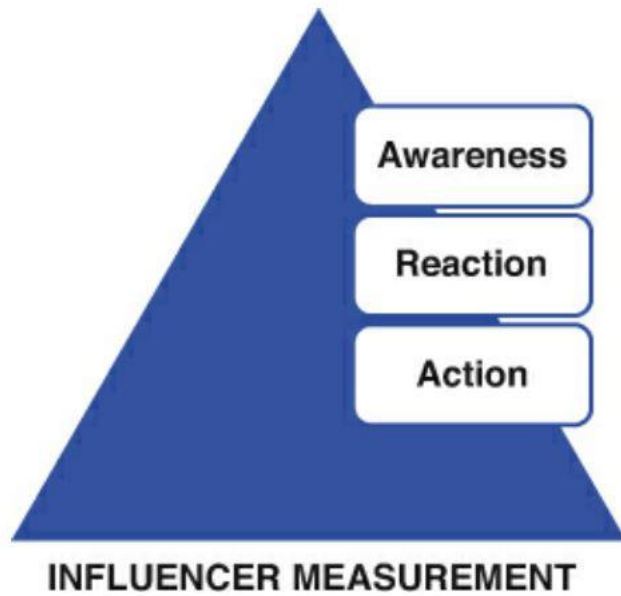
Figure 3: Three essential influencer statistics to measure
Source: Brown & Fiorella (2013)

Awareness is the first statistic to measure, and this includes posts on blogs about the campaign, news articles, social shares and updates, media interviews and or pitches and mentions of the company brand or products. After measuring the awareness, it's time to measure the second influencer statistic, *Reaction*. Reaction targets count in visits on the company's website or landing page, a growth of newsletter subscribers, increased traffic to offline features, improved search queries, peer reviews and social followers. The last statistic to measure is *Action*, which means the white paper downloads, participation in a seminar and or webinar, affiliate sign-ups, and purchases.

The measure is the last stage of the four M's model, and it is the most critical piece of information for performance marketers. For a successful campaign to succeed in the future campaigns, it is crucial for brands to measure why something happened and who created it. Because of social media, it is possible to build highly targeted campaigns connected with various platforms that enable companies to measure which network and content generate the most exceptional ROI, and the same factors go for measuring results of influencer. Brands need to measure two key metrics in every influencer marketing campaign, and the first is the brand metrics.

Brand metrics includes *investment, resources*, and *product*. The *investment* factor comprises the campaign costs before the campaign of which influencers are suitable for the company. The company needs to figure out what are the costs to set up the program and use it as a barometer for

how much return the brand experiences as financial or awareness. Next one of the brand metrics is *resources*. The influencer marketing campaign requires more investment than just pure financial costs, such as labor and training, so the workforce also needs to be measured and added to the more prominent business investment. Final brand metric to measure is *the product*. To combine influencer's audience with company's brand from a lead generation or purchase decision angle, the brand needs to place free samples of products to the audience and also for the influencer. It may also be necessary to create test or demo areas for technically more advanced products or software. Costs of the amount of sent items together with the hosting costs of the demonstration network web service must be taken into account in the overall funding of the campaign.

The second crucial metric along with the brand metric is the influencer metric which includes following factors; *ratio, sentiment,* and *effect*. Poor results are guaranteed when there is a lack of differentiation. The key is in the *ratio* of the community to followers, so prosperous, an interactive society that responds to the influencer is way more meaningful than a just high volume of the followers. Businesses have to measure how many responses an influencer receives when the brand message is broken down as a percentage of the influencer's total following in order to get a more precise return on that particular influencer. *The sentiment* is the second factor of influencer metrics to measure. For understanding the feeling around the brand's message and how the target audience sees the campaign and the brand itself, businesses need to measure the buy-in of the audience of the campaign. By measuring this, it allows the company to quickly react and modify the message if the message has received negative feedback or it upsets a particular demographic. Moreover, businesses can see which influencer get a positive reaction and approval so that they can raise awareness around him or her. There are a variety of platforms that allows company's social media team to monitor the behavior of different activities around the influencer's audience. The final part of the influencer metrics to measure is the *effect* factor, which is the most important barometer to measure to see if the influencer marketing campaign has worked for a brand. The company needs to observe the traffic generated on a website or landing page for measuring the effectiveness of the campaign. It is also meant to look at the number of times a brand or product has been listed on the web and how many people identify the brand including new fans, followers, newsletter subscribers, and how many white papers or data sheets are downloaded from the company's homepage. The customer's purchase cycle might be longer than the campaign duration depending on the product or service. (Brown & Fiorella 2013).

1.5. Influencer marketing in social media

Word-of-mouth marketing has been stated to be one of the most distinguished marketing tools, and it has a powerful influence on consumers purchasing decisions. Consumers have become more cautious towards traditional ads and messages from huge corporations; therefore, they are more receiving when a family member, friend or person who they trust, provides their recommendations. The rise of the internet and social media has brought the most significant impact to many things as well as it did for the whole marketing field, and this enables the word-of-mouth to extend from person's inner circle into the zone of influencer marketing (Newberry 2017). Continuous development of social media creates new opportunities for marketers all the time. Social media platforms are ment for individual internet users to interact with each other but, it obviously allows the interaction between companies and consumers (Yosra & Romdhane 2012).

Social media gives consumers the ability to hear about the criticism or read about the good things about products and services. Hence, it is getting harder for businesses to have power over their customers, what they can learn and hear about their products and/or services. Thus, the role of social media should not be underestimated. Businesses often come to the same stumbling block when they try to choose the channel of social media they would like to use for marketing. Companies often are trying too hard, and they blunder with using as many social media channels as possible. This difficulty of choosing can make it impossible for the company to fully exploit the potential of social media (Brown & Fiorella 2013). Hence, companies should think about which channel the target audience is and which channel is best for reaching them.

Popular social media platforms for influencer marketing are YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram, and Snapchat is uniquely well-suited platform for reaching out the younger generations. Facebook and Instagram have great reach for consumers and is often used with sponsored content, but Instagram is concentrating highly on visually engages. YouTube is also very good for providing visual content, but it is more expensive since its all about videos unlike Instagram uses pictures and short clips (Wheeler 2017). Influencers in social media have announced to be more trustworthy than paid celebrities, and 70% of teenagers claim that YouTubers are more comfortable to relate than celebrities. Recommendations from close friends and family members are usually the most trusted, but 88% of people also trust online recommendations equally as much as they trust to their inner circle (Wallace 2017). Since people have started to follow the lives of their favorite characters online, for example in YouTube or Instagram, so when brands use these influencers in a right way

for marketing, it does not look like advertising, but more like a natural part of the followers' lives. Furthermore, when these influencers are promoting a particular product on their posts, the message from the brand are seen more trustworthy and credible.

1.6. Current trends and future of Influencer marketing

Research done in Finland by Indieplace (2017) declares that influencer marketing works, and one of the main reasons is that, influencers can create authentic and exciting content for their audience and, they reach the right target groups instead of big masses. It is still kind of new marketing tactic in Finland, but it has caught the eye of marketers and brands, and 82% of the respondents believe that they will increase the role of influencer marketing as part of their marketing strategy (Indieplace 2017).

The research reveals that in Finland the most effective models of influencer marketing are more concentrated and short-term cooperations with influencers, such as short campaigns, product evaluations and promotion of the brand in influencers own channels. Long-term ambassador programs did not get significant support at the research, unlike in the United States, a similar study showed that over 70% of respondents kept brand ambassador programs highly important. Reasons for these differences in results can be simply the lack of experience in influencer marketing in Finland, and therefore, the short-term cooperations are preferred, and influencers can avoid pledging to long-term programs. Of course, it would be better for brands to make more extended contracts with influencers who are well suited for them, and later on, make these influencers to their brand ambassadors. Well executed influencer marketing campaign always starts from the specification of goals. When goals are clear and placed, it also makes it easier to measure the results if they were successful or not. Choosing the right influencer can be tricky, and it is one of the core parts for succeeding in influencer marketing campaign. There are many factors that affect to choosing the right influencer, but one central element is the brand's target audience. Marketers have to think who is their target audience and then figure out what kind of influencer could reach out to them and deliver the message. (Indieplace 2017). Instagram seems to be the number one social media platform for executing influencer marketing campaign, and the reason for that is; it is easy, cheap, quick and through right influencer, brands can reach out to millions of people even in short period of time (Jackson 2018). Even though Instagram is dominating channel, marketers should not forget about other channels, YouTube, for example, is an extraordinarily great channel

to create influencer marketing campaign. There are many influencers on YouTube that have millions of people following them and subscribing their content. Gaming videos have massive popularity among boys and men, and makeup tutorials attract teenage girls and women.

The worth of whole influencer marketing industry was approximate over $1 billion in 2017, and there were no signs it to be slowing down (The Fashion Law 2018). The author believes that influencer marketing is growing to become one of the most important marketing tools for companies and brands. As the technology is developing, it is offering new channels and new ways of implementing influencers. It is possible that influencers might become more loyal to certain brands, and these brands are offering better incentives to their influencers for keeping them happy and supporting them to perform with high motivation.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & RESULTS

Kotler and Keller (2012, 98) define marketing research as "the systematic design, collection, analysis, and reporting of data and findings relevant to a specific marketing situation facing the company." There are two categories of data sources available in research design. The researcher may collect primary data, secondary data or both for conducting research (Kotler & Keller 2012, 100). The data gathered for this thesis comes from both, secondary and primary data collection. The theoretical framework is conducted from secondary data from existing literary and digital sources, and for the empirical part the data are collected from primary data sources, and a qualitative interviews are performed.

Two main types of interviews are formalized and structured. Structured interviews can be unstructured and informal conversations, or there might be standardized questions for every respondent. Three categories of interviews are: structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2003, 320). The research design of this thesis is to use semi-stuctured interviews with different Finnish social media marketing agencies who are using influencers as part of their marketing efforts. Total of six interviews was conducted with face-to-face, phone, and email methods. Therefore, the author believes that he obtained the needed information about the topic for answering the required research questions of this thesis. Interviewee wanted to have the possibility of adding follow-up questions during the interviews, and that is why he chose to use the semi-structured model because it is the most suitable for its flexibility.

2.1. Collection and analysis of data

For gaining additional information to the literature findings, the researcher collects qualitative data with interviewing Finnish social media marketing agencies, who are using influencer marketing. The author of this thesis select to conduct the semi-structured interview for gaining primary data, and it composes of themes and questions to be addressed, which might differ depending on the

interview, and some additional questions could be needed. Semi-structured interview fits well for its flexibility and the ability to add follow up questions.

The interviews start with few background questions about the person interviewed and his/her company. Afterward, the author moves on to general questions about the whole influencer marketing and then to more specific questions about the process of how the influencer marketing campaign is created. The interviews are ended with some check-up and closing questions.

The first part of this thesis, Theoretical data for the framework is mostly gathered from international digital sources, online articles, and from the book: Influence Marketing: How to Create, Manage and Measure Brand Influencers in Social Media Marketing by Brown & Fiorella (2013).

Table 1. Company interviews

Interview method	Company	Field	Length
Face-to-face	Hypement	Finnish social media influencer marketing agency	55 mins
Email	Harva Marketing	Finnish marketing agency specializing in digital marketing and sales promotions	email
Phone	Someco	Finnish marketing agency specializing in: Strategies in content marketing, social media training, and improvement&execution of social media communications	49 mins
Email	Isobar	Finnish marketing agency focusing on digital marketing	email
Email	Splay	Finnish subsidiary of the largest influencer marketing network in the Nordics	email
Email	Troot Network	Finnish marketing agency: YouTube video network offering influencer marketing solutions	email

Source: Salminen (2018)

2.2. Analysis of data

After the interviews, the answers are presented as they are answered, and for avoiding errors a device is used to record the interview, and notes are taken during the meetings. There is no need for technical instruments to analyze the data. When the data is collected from the interviews, it is analyzed using coding method alongside with the information found from the theoretical part, to see which parts are similar and if there are some differences. From the results of data analysis, the researcher will get answers for his research questions, which are presented in results chapter.

2.3. Results

This chapter presents the results of this study, which was collected from the qualitative interviews. The interviews were held for gaining a clearer understanding of influencer marketing and how to create a successful campaign in social media. Author of this thesis analyzes the results from the interviews and compares those to the data collected from the literature sources for getting answers and comprehension for research questions in this thesis. All the *italic* texts in this chapter are comments gathered from the interviews with Finnish social media marketing agencies who are utilizing influencers as part of their marketing efforts. Research questions to be answered in this chapter: How to create a successful influencer marketing campaign in social media, and why should a brand use influencer marketing in social media?

2.3.1. How to create a successful influencer marketing campaign in social media?

Creating an influencer marketing campaign is not too complicated process, but it requires a lot of work, and there are some key factors to take into consideration for making the campaign successful. Here are guidelines presented in the flowchart (Figure 4) to provide clear steps how to make the campaign to succeed, and below the chart, these steps are explained with more details. These steps might vary with different companies, and differences may occur depending on the size of the campaign.
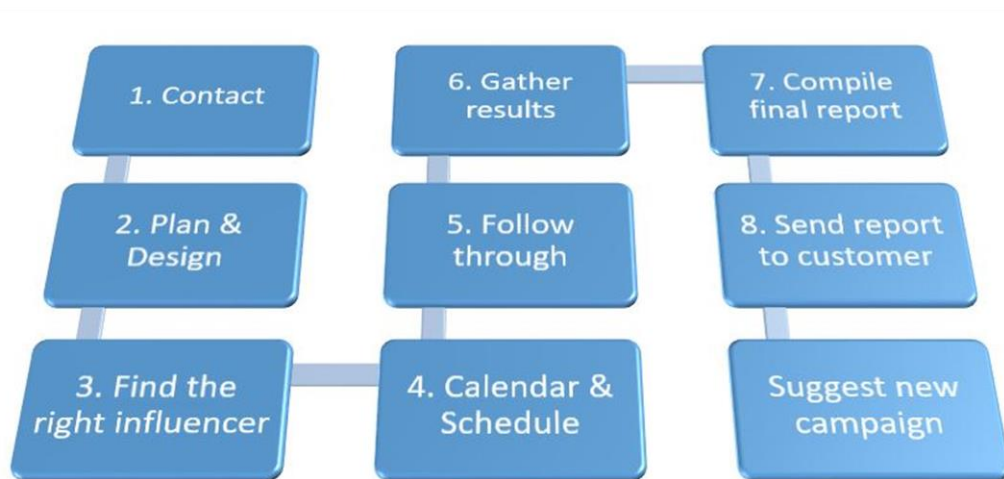
Figure 4: The process of creating influencer marketing campaign
Source: Salminen (2018)

It all starts with the first initial **contact** with the customer. Contact can be received with traditional outbound marketing tactics or probably more likely from effective inbound marketing. Marketing agencies might have contracts or partnership agreements with multiple different influencers, and the influencer might have their own idea of some campaign, then the company must use outbound marketing for reaching out to the customer and pitch the idea of some kind of campaign for them. When the contact with the customer has been made, then it is time to start **planning and designing** the entire process. The planning process includes firstly the description of goals and then the choice of brand and their product, after that it is possible to start figuring out the target audience who they are aiming for. Then, the next step is **choosing the right influencer.**

"Are they trustworthy and professional in their partnership deals? Are their followers real or fake?" (Interview 4)

Finding the right influencer is a crucial part of the success of the campaign. Therefore, depending on how big the campaign is going to be, the company is making a list of influencers with the similar lifestyles and appearances that might be a good fit for the brand's style. Usually, the brand is looking for the highest return on invest (ROI), so they are aiming for influencers who have most substantial follower numbers, but other important things should be considered such as demographics of the audience, and the influencer's intangible values. Even if the influencer has thousands of followers, there is a risk that some of them might be fake because it is kind of easy to buy followers in today (Interview 3).

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"The marketers and the brand wants to seek for the highest ROI for themselves, so they want to look at the follower amount and the engagement." (Interview 1)

"Target group is the first consideration, then reach and of course the influencer's image and whether it matches with the brand." (Interview 2)

Next step is to produce **a calendar** and make publishing schedule. This schedule might be a spreadsheet, which has all the exact publishing times about when the posts are planned to make, in which platforms, and what is the content of the posts. Usually content is provided by the customers in their brief; otherwise, the content is designed by the influencer marketing agency itself together with the influencer.

When all of these has been put together, and the campaign has been launched, the company only needs to **follow through** the campaign and keep monitoring that everything is going well, or if some corrections are required. The company should be monitoring that during the campaign the posts are made on agreed schedule and that they are using the right signs of collaboration with the brand, for example, hashtags.

"We only work with professional influencers who have contracts with agencies and have therefore discussed and agreed to certain standards." (Interview 2)

After the campaign has ended the next phase is to **gather** and collect all the data and numbers that it has generated. Afterward, the results have been collected and analyzed; **final report** needs to be done. This report includes all the important numbers, key performance metrics, and results from the campaign like views on the post, the engagement rate, amount of likes and comments.

"Key performance metrics are determined in the campaign planning phase. Our reports address these key metrics." (Interview 5)

The last step is to send and **deliver the results** to the customer, or if the campaign has been bigger the results may be presented in a meeting with the customer. Results will reveal that has the campaign been successful, and it always depends on what were the customer's goals, to begin with. The final piece of this flowchart is to sell more or **suggests a new campaign** for the customer.

"Goals can simply be such as brand awareness or increased sales." (Interview 1)

2.3.2. Why should a brand use influencer marketing in social media?

There are multiple factors that are showing positive aspects of influencer marketing and supporting brands to start utilizing influencers as part of their marketing efforts. Moreover, the usage of influencers in marketing activities is growing, since it becomes harder and harder for a brand to stand out from the crowd. One of the greatest positive factors of influencer marketing is the return on invest (ROI) it gives, as the study made by Tomoson (2016) reveals that companies using influencer marketing gains $6.50 for every 1$ spent.

"It's a modern and another way to reach out to people, and it's really effective and cost-efficient." (Interview 1)

Consumers' trust towards brands and big companies have been decreasing and, therefore traditional methods such as TV advertisements does not have enough power anymore. Hence brands should find innovative ways to reach their target audiences. This is where influencers step in, and they can revise the credibility issues brands might have, and reach out to customers more trustworthy. Influencers with a large follower audience are sure to increase the brand awareness with their personalized content and messages through their own channels. Consumers are afraid that traditional marketing is not trustful anymore, and it is more believable when a friend or influencer who are more relatable are suggesting something (Interview 3).

"There is so much advertising noise these days that consumers largely ignore it. Consumers distrust brands, but they trust influencers, who they feel like they know." (Interview 2)

By compensating influencers, brands can strengthen their relationship and later on possibly sign a contract and make it a long-term partnership. This can lead to the influencer to become a loyal marketer for the brand and turn into a brand ambassador. These contracts allow brands to proofread the content what is about to go viral by the hands of influencer, and they ensure for guaranteed payments for influencer, so they will stay motivated and keep posting required and good content for the brand. In the future, the companies and brands are focusing on more longer-term relationships and contracts with influencers (Interview 3).

CONCLUSION

The general purpose of this thesis was to give answers to the research questions explained in the introduction chapter. The aim was to gain knowledge about influencer marketing in social media, find the logic behind the process of a successful influencer marketing campaign, and thus, reasons why should brand use influencers as part of their marketing strategy. From the results, the author could wrap-up a step-by-step guide for creating an influencer marketing campaign in social media and point out the benefits of using this innovative marketing method. Fundamental theories of marketing discovered from the books allowed to understand the fundamentals of influencer marketing campaigns, whilst the latest knowledge of the field was found from online sources. Besides the empirical research was vital for ensuring the theories and producing suggestions. The author of this research believes that, by combining the information found from the theoretical part with the gained material from the qualitative interviews of the empirical study, he has been able to cover the answers for the research questions.

Multiple aspects need to be taken into consideration when using influencer marketing and it is a pretty logical process to create an influencer marketing campaign, but it requires a lot of hands to make it successful. The qualitative interviews were an essential part of this study because through those the researcher could get new knowledge about the subject and realization of how to make a successful campaign. The process of creating a campaign in social media could be scattered into smaller and more detailed sections, but the author chose to list up the main steps of the campaign and put them into logical flowchart (Figure 4) with step-by-step explanations. Persuasive arguments were also found for the research question, why should a brand use influencer marketing, such as the audiences trust towards influential people, a new and unique way of reaching target groups, and it is one of the most cost-efficient marketing methods nowadays. Results of this research could be utilized as a guide for new marketing companies, which are thinking of using influencer marketing as part of their marketing activities.

Suggestions for further research is that this subject can be either narrowed down or extended. This topic could be focused on international levels, or on the other hand specified into certain social media platform or specific fields like gaming or food and health industry.

To conclude, the future of influencer marketing is looking bright; hence the world is becoming more and more technology-based, and the world of online marketing is increasing. There are developing new ways of how brands can utilize this marketing tool with the increasing amount of platforms and new digital devices every year. Marketers need to adapt to these methods and learn about upcoming trends for being ahead of their competitors.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interview with company 1.

Face-to-face interview with CEO of the Hypement
4th of April 2018, at the office of the Hypement
Interviewer: Kalle Salminen
55minutes long

Question 1. What is your professional occupation?
Well, CEO of Hypement and my education is Master of science in information systems science.

Question 2. What does your company do?
Basically, we do *Influencer marketing*, so basically we create concepts and design marketing campaigns for social media or traditional media, like print radio/tv, and all other digital channels.

Question 3. Does your company have regular influencers with who you have signed contracts or do you always find new influencers for new campaigns?
Oh yeah, well we basically have around between 30 – 40 different influencers with a contracts or partnership agreements. They all are different from each others. There are chefs, athletes, artists and so on.

Question 4. How do you reach out to customers or does customers reach out to your company?
Both ways, well we use social media channels and our own websites for inbound marketing to reach customers and clients through there, and also then we do outbound in traditional sales to reach out for new customers, and of course our own social networks.

Question 5. What are the main differences with influencer marketing from other marketing methods?

Well, the biggest difference is to use and utilize some personal brand or a personal influencer as a channel, as a media to reach out to customers. We are also participated in different kind of partnerships and sponsorships for sport teams and other like entertainment events or artists, so basically we kind of like try to create new platforms for influencer marketing.

Question 6. What are the main reasons why a company should use influencer marketing?

It's a modern way to reach out to people, and it's really effective and cost-efficient. People also rely to another people more. Studies show that influencer marketing can be up to 17 times more effective than paid, or traditional advertising. Best way to reach consumers' trust is to relate them to people they already trust. 70 percent of internet users want to learn about products through quality content rather than through traditional advertising. You can also say that influencer marketing is kind of like reference marketing.

Question 7. What are the social media channels your company uses for influencer marketing and why these?

Well, the biggest channel is the Instagram and then Facebook of course, but then again also one of the biggest channels are influencers own blogs and YouTube channels, but basically; Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, if they still have, then Snapchat, or if they are more like business influencers or B2B, then LinkedIn.

Question 8. So, Instagram was probably the most used, for what reasons?

Large user base, the ease of use, the application in general, it's visual, and the backing algorithm works pretty well with the influencers themselves and also for the brands and marketers.

Question 9. What is taken into consideration when choosing the right influencers for a brand?

The right fit of course. I think you can compare it to just traditional endorsement deals, and you have to find the right fit for the brand. Of course, the marketers and the brand wants to seek for the highest ROI for themselves, so they want to look at the follower amount and the engagement. Of course, we always look at those numbers, but then we like to see the demographics of the followers, and what is the target audience, the target group, and then more intangible values like lifestyle, hobbies, what they are exactly doing, does the brand or company support those values.

Question 10. How can you get the information about your influencers' audience?

Mainly the easiest way is to just ask directly from the influencers. There is not too many or any softwares or apps for tracking all the demographics. I think Iconosquare does something similar, but the private security settings are set up, and the API's with Facebook is that you can not get any information from anyone's personal account unless they allow the access to their account, so the only way is to ask directly or if they give you their log in information.

Question 11. How can you make sure that the campaign is going as planned?

Well, of course, you can design the whole campaign, which the influencers actually makes the right posts, writes an excellent caption that everything that is being agreed is said and mentioned, tagging is right. But then, it's still going viral, and popularity of the campaign or the post that's still pretty difficult to predict beforehand. You just basically have the feeling, unless you put some money on those sponsored posts, then, of course, you can measure and predict some of the numbers. But then it's easier with the ongoing campaign, with the multiple post campaigns it's a lot easier to measure the progress just based on the gut feeling of the pictures or stories. The easiest way to measure it is to still use the hashtag and those type of metrics to separate the campaign from all the others.

Question 12. How can you ensure that your influencers are ethical when they are delivering the brands messages?

Well umm, usually it depends on the campaign and the influencers. The most professional influencers, they actually send the post beforehand for proofreading and to check before the post goes online. If that is actually needed, sometimes we ask the influencers to do it, and sometimes we just trust some of the influencers just to do fine by themselves, because we know that they really can do it and they are a pretty pro.

Question 13. Do your influencers use something to let their audience know about the collaboration with the brand, and if yes, what it is?

Well, now there is a governing law about that you need to bring out that it is a collaboration or partnership, so the most common is hashtag to use, and you can make the post with the hashtag add or advertising or partnership or collaboration, and that is something we should require especially in Finnish markets.

Question 14. How does the influencer marketing campaign process look like?

The first step is the initial, the first contact with the customer, either with inbound or outbound and then, well it depends, there are basically two first steps. First, if it is outbound, that we have somekind of influencer's own project or own idea, own concept that we want to get a brand involved, then we need to reach out for the brand and pitch the idea of some kind of campaign, or it's an inbound, then usually it might be like other marketing agency or brand or media agency which calls or reaches us, they are going to give us a brief or maybe hopefully a budget right a way, then we are going to start designing the whole campaign and the whole process. Basically then we need to find the right influencers, and first, we are going to make a short list of different influencers that might be a good fit for the brand, then we are going to send out a short list of names. If it is a bigger campaign, then more is required from us, then we are also going to make some sort of presentation about the different influencers and why would they be a good fit. Then, when the right influencers are chosen, we are going to start designing the publishing plan and the schedule, which can be some sort of spreadsheet where we are going to put all the exact publishing times such as when to post something and on which channels and what is the content. Because usually based on the brief, we are given, or we are just going to design the content by ourselves along with the influencers. Then, when the marketing campaign is ongoing, we are just going to see and follow through it, if some corrections need to be made. After the campaign, we just need to put up all the numbers together, and then we're going to make out like a final report of the campaign and send that out to the customer. I think that's pretty much it, and then we are going to sell more, or suggest some kind of new campaign.

Question 15. Is there some kind of tools that you are using for monitoring the ongoing campaign?

Yea well now we are basically using Hootsuite. There are tens of different tools for Instagram, Facebook, and others. Hootsuite is basically the only one we are using because it works pretty well with the social listening, planning and scheduling, and monitoring as well.

Question 16. What do the reports include and what are you measuring from those?

Well, still the most valid numbers are the engagement, the reach, post views, negative or positive comments. Then we are just going to need to, depending on how big the campaign is and what rights do we have and also we are going to combine it with the google analytics and of course sometimes we need to reach out the customers and ask like; how much traffic they got to their own website or their e-commerce platform or how did the campaign affect to their sales directly.

Question 17. After the campaign, how do you measure was the campaign successful or not?

Depends on the customers, what their goals are, and how their goals are set before the campaign starts. Usually, no, always it's based on those goals. Goals can simply be such as brand awareness or increased sales.

Question 18. How are the results delivered to your clients?

We make a report out of it. Depending on the client and how big the campaign is, we might have even like a meeting where we are going to go through the whole campaign or the whole event, how did it work, what's the numbers basically, but the usual and the most easiest way is to send spreadsheet or even presentation about the campaign with some pictures and screenshots about all the key numbers of the campaign.

Question 19. Are there any theoretical models that your company is following?

That always depends on a case as well. Good basic model in marketing is to follow the AIDA model. I think in social media the goal setting is pretty important so the SMART goal setting model as well.

Question 20. Is there something specific you would like to add or tell about?

Yea, I don't like where the Influencer marketing or the whole industry is heading, and what I mean with that is, just basically measuring the cold values of influencer marketing, the social media is radically modifying the whole market as like, who gets the most reach out of their pictures or posts, and who has the most followers. So its kind of like a brutal game and there is a lot of automation and bots, which is not human. That being said because what we have learned once we founded this agency is that, it requires a lot of hands and work, and still requires a lot of good social skills and its kind of like a mixed old management industry managing some artist or athletes combining with the knowledge of digital marketing.

Question 21. Do you have some advice for brands that are considering influencer marketing as their marketing tool?

Well, of course, you give some space for the influencers to modify the given marketing campaign to fit more to their own lifestyle and their own doing, so it becomes more organic and more believable more trustworthy, and it gives your brand more powerful message.

Question 22. What do you think that is the future of Influencer marketing?

It is still going to grow, and the channels are growing, the use of the influencers are growing a lot pretty quickly. There are always going to be new ways and new methods to reach out for people, and that depends on the different devices what is on the market and what is on the digital market, what the technology actually allows. The content itself that is going to gain importance, there is no room for bad content, so the content producers are much more valuable now than they were before. That is also part of the change and the shape how the whole marketing field, the marketing industry is changing, let's say like you can actually shoot 4k video your phone, and different equipments are a lot better than even two years ago.

Appendix 2. Interview with company 2.

Email interview with Harva Marketing
6th of May 2018
Interviewer: Kalle Salminen

Question 1. What is your professional occupation?

Marketing planner

Question 2. What does your company do?

Harva Marketing is a marketing agency specializing in digital marketing and sales promotions. Harva provides full-stack marketing services from planning to implementation.

Question 3. What are the main reasons why should a brand use influencer marketing?

There is so much advertising noise these days that consumers largely ignore it. Consumers distrust brands, but they trust influencers, who they feel like they know. A recommendation from a trusted influencer is like a recommendation from a friend.

Question 4. What are the social media channels your company uses for influencer marketing and why these?

The channels are largely dependent on the influencer and the channels that they naturally use and have an existing audience in. We also always promote the influencer marketing case in the client's existing social media channels, often Facebook.

Question 5. What is taken into consideration when choosing the right influencers for a brand?

The target group is the first consideration, then reach and of course the influencer's image and whether it matches with the brand.

Question 6. How can you get the information about your influencers' audience?

From the agency that represents the influencer (Splay Network, Troot, Asennemedia, Alma, etc.) - we seldom work with freelance influencers.

Question 7. How can you make sure that the campaign is going as planned?

The agencies usually provide information as to how the campaign is going.

Question 8. How can you ensure that your influencers are ethical when they are delivering the brands messages?

We only work with professional influencers who have contracts with agencies and have therefore discussed and agreed to certain standards.

Question 9. Do your influencers use something to let their audience know about the collaboration with the brand, and if yes, what it is?

All professional influencers have to mention when they are doing a commercial collaboration.

Question 10. How does the influencer marketing campaign process look like?

We have suggested influencer marketing to many of our clients. After the initial OK from the client, we define the audience we wish to reach and contact a few influencer agencies for proposals. Then we, together with our client, choose the right influencer(s) and channels.

Question 11. Is there some kind of tools that you are using for monitoring the ongoing campaign?

The agencies provide us with comprehensive reports.

Question 12. What do the reports include and what are you measuring from those?

It varies depending on the agency.

Question 13. After the campaign, how do you measure was the campaign successful or not?

We always set targets beforehand and then see if they were met or not.

Question 14. How are the results delivered to your clients?

Depending on the case we report either after the campaign, weekly or monthly.

Question 15. What do you think that is the future of Influencer marketing?

Influencer marketing will still be on the rise for a few years. After that, I think, we will be so sick and tired of all content being commercial that we will finally be ready to pay for content.

Appendix 3. Interview with company 3.

Phone interview with Someco
11th of May 2018
Interviewer: Kalle Salminen
49minutes long

Question 1. Mikä on teidän ammattinimike?

Social Media specialist.

Question 2. Mitä teidän yrityksenne tekee?

Someco on sisältömarkkinointitoimisto, joka tuottaa erinäisiä sosiaalisen median ja digitaalisen markkinoinnin viestintää. Näihin sisältyy mm. blogien testausta, monenlaisten kuvien tuottamista sosiaaliseen mediaan ja mainontaa. Lisäksi asiakkaiden koulutus, sparraus ja tukeminen sisältömarkkinoinnista on iso osa tekemistä. Sosiaalisen median sisältömarkkinoinnin suunnittelu ja strategian luominen.

Question 3. Kuinka te tavoitatte asiakkaita vai ottaako asiakkaat teihin yhteyttä?

Inbound markkinoinnin kautta pääasiassa luodaan asiakas kontaktit. Meillä on myös ollut jo vuosia blogi minkä kautta asiakkaat voivat tavoittaa meidät. Lisäksi meillä on myös tehtyjä valmiita oppaita joita asiakkaat voivat ladata ja tutustua meihin.

Question 4. Mitkä ovat mielestänne pääpiirteitä mitkä erottavat vaikuttajamarkkinoinnin muista markkinointi tyyleistä?

Olennaisinta on se konsepti mikä on ihan täysin erilainen mitä on aikaisemmin tehty, ero on siinä että viesti ei ole millään tavalla yrityksen sanelemaa ja yritys ei päätä mitä kirjoitetaan. Vaikutusmarkkinointi ei perustu siihen että yitys sanelee viestin, vaan viesti tulee ihmiseltä, jolloin se on samaistuttavampaa ja uskottavampaa.

Question 5. Mitkä ovat syitä, minkä takia brandien kannattaisi käyttää vaikuttajamarkkinointia?

Se vain on uskottavampaa kun toveri suosittelee jotain, mainontaan uskoo tällä hetkellä noin 30% ihmisistä Suomessa PING:in tuotttaman tutkimuksen mukaan. Ihmisten tarvitsee kokea että se on totta, mainonta yrityksen puolesta ei enää ole totta ihmisten korviin. Kuluttajat pelkäävät että mainonta ei ole luotettavaa. Toiseksi, internetin valta ostopäätöksen tekemisessä, esim. suklaapatukka ei tarvitse sen enempää arviota, mutta mitä isompi tuote niin silloin googlataan että toimiiko tämä. Esimerkiksi tekniset tuotteet ja kosmetiikka jne, vaativat arviointien lukemista ja tutkimista, jotka kuluttajat yleensä helposti löytävät Googlesta. Joten, Google näkyvyys olisi tärkeää, että kun kuluttajat hakevat infoa haluamastaan tuotteesta niin he löytävät luotettavia blogeja tai videoita vaikuttajilta joissa kerrotaan kyseisestä tuotteesta.

Question 6. Mitä sosiaalisen median kanavia yrityksenne käyttää ja miksi näitä?

Tämä riippuu paljon yrityksestä että, millä alalla se työskentelee. Facebook on Suomessa edelleen todella vahva ja Suomessa onkin 2,7 miljoonaa käyttäjää. Toisena tulee YouTube, joka on suosittu mutta kauhean moni yritys Suomessa ei vielä osaa hyödyntää sitä. Instagram on helppo ja hyvä kanava Facebookin ja YouTuben lisäksi. Twitter ja LinkedIn ovat myös hyviä kanavia asioidessa B2B markkinoinnissa.

Question 7. Mitä pitää ottaa huomioon valitessaan sopivaa vaikuttajaa brandille?

Tavoitteen alle kasaantuu kaikki muut asiat, tavoitteen määrittely on tärkeintä. Vaikutusmarkkinointi kamppanjaa ei kannata edes käynnistää sillä tavalla että; "Tehdään jotain kivaa pöhinää Instagramiin." Riippuu paljon siitä mitä halutaan kuluttajien tekevän ja mihin halutaan heidän tutustuvan, onko se sitten asuntolainoihin, suklaapatukoihin jne. Kun miettii vaikuttajaa itsessään on tärkeä käydä läpi mikä on se kohderyhmä, kuinka sitoutuneita hänen seuraajansa ovat, kuinka pitkään ovat seuranneet, onko seuraajilla kehittynyt pitkä seuraamissuhde vaikuttajaan? Siinä on iso ero kuinka todentuntuinen viesti on, kannattaa miettiä käyttääkö

valtavan isoja vaikuttajia vai mikrovaikuttajia. Kannattaako käyttää suosituimpia YouTube ihmisiä ym. Vai kannattaisiko nostaa "pienemmät" vaikuttajat esiin, jolloin viesti on aidomman tuntuinen, viesti on räätälöidympi pienemmälle yleisölle, postauksia saattaa olla vähemmän, mutta niistä huomaa että niihin on panostettu. Hinta ja aika vaikuttavat paljon. "Isoimmat" vaikuttajat alkavat olemaan jo aika hintavia ja isommat kamppanjat kalliita, joten kannattaa miettiä valitako yksi kallis vai monta edullisempaa? Lisäksi ei ole järkeä maksaa vain yhdestä kuvasta IG ja sillä selvä, vaan kannattaa hakea pidempiä yhteistöitä, jossa toistuvasti puhutaan aiheesta.

Question 8. Millä keinolla te saatte tietoa vaikuttajan seuraajakunnasta?

Useasti isommat bloggaajat ovat jo nykyään jonkun toimiston alla. Jotkut itsenäiset tubettajat tekevät ja seuraavat itse omia tilastojaan. Mutta yleensä toimisto/väliäsi pitää ajan tasalla, minkä ikäisiä, kuinka sitoutuneita jne seuraajat ovat. Google analytics on hyvä työkalu seuraamaan tätä liikehdintää. Nykyään on myös helppo ostaa seuraajia, joten vaikka jollakin olisikin kymmeniä tuhansia seuraajia niin, se ei vielä tarkoita välttämättä paljoa ja ei kannata uskoa kaikkea heti.

Question 9. Miten pystytte varmistamaan että kamppanja sujuu suunnitellusti?

Mietitään että sopiiko vaikuttaja oikeasti tähän tämän tuotteen kanssa, välillä näkee jotain outoja yhdistelmiä kuten eräs tapaus jossa, todella "vihreä" toveri mainostaa eco bensaa? Tämä on selkeästi riski, koska aiheuttaa ristiriitaa. Mietitään kenen vaikuttajan kanssa toimitaan, priiffataan kunnolla keskustelun kautta, mitä haetaan, mikä on tärkeetä, ja ollaanko samalla kartalla. Jos pidempi yhteistyö kyseessä niin säännölliset check-in tapaamiset ovat tärkeitä ja ihmiskontaktin säilyttäminen.

Question 10. Käyttävätkö vaikuttajanne jotain, mistä katsojalle selviää yhteistyö kyseessä olevan brandin kanssa, jos kyllä niin mitä?

Aina täytyy olla, ja se on erittäin tärkeää. Instassa ja FB:ssä on tietty tapa millä täytyy merkitä erikseen, eli sitä ei saa tehdä esim sillä tavalla että; "hei tää on mainos!". Pitää merkitä sponsored content toolilla yhteistyöstä. Heti alkuun yleensä merkitään että sponsored content tämän yrityksen ja tämän brändin kanssa.

Question 11. Minkälainen prosessi on luoda vaikuttajamarkkinointi kamppanja, mitä vaiheita siihen kuuluu?

Suunnitteluprosessi on aika iso ja ajatus siitä lähtee jo kaukaa. Ei kannata aloittaa niin että, keksitään vaan "lähetetäänkö näitä meidän bloggaajalla?" Eli se lähtee tuotteesta ja yrityksestä

voimakkaasti ja niiden tavoitteista. Jos halutaan käyttää vaikuttajaa jolla on näkyvyyttä: kenelle tuote on, mitä halutaan saada sillä aikaan, mitä mahdollisuuksia meillä on tehdä tämä kamppanja? Mikä on se juttu, halutaanko että ihmiset lähtee itse tuottamaan sisältöä. Vaikuttaja on tärkeä ottaa jo aikaisessa vaiheessa mukaan. Heti kun on selvät sävelet mitä tehdään. Asiantuntijat ovat mukana etsimässä oikeita vaikuttajia. Tällä tavoin ehkäistään sitä että, vaikuttajat olisivat vain äänitorvia joka tuottaa suunnitellun sisällön yleisölle, vaan ovat mukana sen kamppanjan aikana suunnittelussa. On hyvä antaa vaikuttajalle ns vapaat kädet, mutta rajoituksien kanssa, mihin ei haluta puuttua/sanoa ym. Tarkkailu on erittäin tärkeää että, miten se kamppanja etenee? Tekninen puoli pitää olla kunnossa että, näkee mitä tapahtuu kokoajan, esimerkiksi kuinka paljon liikennettä verkkosivuilla on, tykkäyksiä ja kommentteja ym. Kun julkaisu on tapahtunut niin asia menee tekniseksi ja pitää tutkia numeroita mitä tapahtuu. Jatkuva läsnäolo kamppanjan aikana on täreää koska, vaikuttajilla voi olla kysymyksiä ja niihin pitää olla tavoiteltavissa vastaamaan. Ei jätetä kamppanjaa pelkästään vaikuttajan harteille, yritys itse voi myös jakaa ja levittää sanomaa. Alussa on voitu sopia miten raportti saadaan, tekeekö vaikuttaja itse raportin lopuksi vai yhdessä yrityksen kanssa. Uutta kamppanjaa voidaan alkaa miettiä samalla kun tarkastellaan tuloksia, ollaanko tyytyväisiä tuloksiin ja täten antaa mahdollisia parannusehdotuksia seuraavalle kamppanjoille.

Question 12. Onko teillä jotain työkaluja mitä käytätte kamppanjan monitoroimiseen?

FB ja IG sponsored content työkalut antavat nähdä kaiken, kuinka moni on tykännyt, nähnyt ja kommentoinut. Näiden kautta nähdään suoraan kaikki tärkeät luvut. Seurataan millaista kommenttia tulee, mikä on vastaanotto, mikä on ihmisten mielikuva.

Question 13. Mitä raportit pitävät sisällään ja mitä niistä mitataan?

Tämä riipuu aina valtavasti tavoitteista. Alusta asti mietitään mikä on olennaista. Onko se ulottuvuus, klikkaukset, verkkosivuilla käytetty aika tai miten linkit resonoi meidän liikenteeseen. Keskustelujen laatua seurataan myös, mutta on tärkeää että tavoitteista on sovittu etukäteen.

Question 14. Kamppanjan jälkeen, millä keinolla te mittaatte että oliko se kannattava kamppanja?

Alussa määritelty mitä halutaan saada aikaan, lopussa tutkitaan onko se toiminut. Tunnettuvuutta on vaikea mitata. Nähdään moniko ihminen on nähnyt asian sisällön mutta, on vaikea sanoa onko se sisäistetty. Tavoitteita voi olla myynnin kasvu, verkkosivuilla käynnin kasvu, työpaikkahakemusten määrä, tai se voi olla mitä vaan, kunhan se on alkuunsa määritelty.

Question 15. Kuinka tulokset toimitetaan asiakkaille?

Raportteina jotka yleensä käydään yhdessä läpi. Voidaan tehdä esitys ja käydä yhdessä läpi asiat mitkä meni hyvin ja mitä voitaisiin parantaa. Tämäkin riippuu tietenkin kamppanjan koosta.

Question 16. Onko teillä jotain tiettyä mitä haluaisitte lisätä?

Tosi olennaista on että yritykset eivät lähde liikaa astumaan vaikuttajan tontille, meidän täytyy tehdä töitä että brändin pääajatus tulee vaikuttajalle selväksi. Ei saa häsätä liikaa, koska se näkyy nopeasti kuluttajille jos joku markkinointipäällikkö on käynyt välissä häsäämässä omiaan.

Question 17. Miltä vaikuttajamarkkinoinnin tulevaisuus teidän mielestänne näyttää?

Uskon että se menee vielä enemmän siihen suuntaan että yritykset miettivät kenen kanssa haluavat tehdä yhteistyötä. Enää ei heitetä perstuntumalla että kenen kanssa tehdään yhteistyötä. Panostetaan pidempiin suhteisiin ja halutaan tavoittaa pitkiä asiakassuhteita, pitkäaikaisia kontakteja koska, miksi yritys haluaisi että olisi vain yksi yhteistyö eikä sen jälkeen palattaisi asiaan enää.

Appendix 4. Interview with company 4.

Email interview with Isobar
11th of May 2018
Interviewer: Kalle Salminen

Question 1. What is your professional occupation?
Creative Strategist at Isobar Finland

Question 2. What does your company do?
We're a marketing agency, focusing on digital marketing. Our main areas include creative campaigns, strategy work and content production for social media, influencer marketing and video production in all formats.

Question 3. How do you reach out for customers or does customers reach out for your company?

It works both ways. We also benefit in being part of the Dentsu Aegis Network with multiple other agencies (media, experiental marketing, social media ad buying, outdoor marketing) that generate leads for us.

Question 4. What are the main differences with influencer marketing from other marketing methods?

If you look at the influencer as a medium, it's a very specific one. Each influencer is somehow unique, and those qualities have to be taken into account.

The main difference is in the process. In other marketing methods, the success lies in the cooperation of you and the client. In influencer marketing, the mix includes more parties: naturally the influencer him/herself and in most cases an agency representing the influencer. So there are more moving parts, which can make the process more complicated, but also more fruitful.

Question 5. What are the main reasons why should a brand use influencer marketing?

Influencer marketing has a long history in celebrity endorsements, so it is basically nothing new. In this era, the idea of celebrity has changed to include "normal people," who have started to produce content on social media and gained a considerable following (and influence) over time.

The amount of eyeballs aimed at the content of influencers are increasing more rapidly compared to traditional media. This makes them interesting for brands.

So, when a brand looks at the "ecosystem of influence" today, there are a lot more options to choose from than before the social media platforms really took off. This gives a brand more options to be creative and more influential.

Question 6. What are the social media channels your company uses for influencer marketing and why these?

It all depends on where the target audience of the client is. In most cases, especially in the B2C contexts, the channels are Instagram and YouTube. In a B2B context, Twitter and LinkedIn are added in the mix.

On a sidenote, it is interesting how Facebook is rarely in the mix when talking about influencer marketing.

Question 7. What is taken into consideration when choosing the right influencers for a brand?

A lot of things are considered, depending on the depth of the cooperation:

Does the personality of the influencer match with the brand personality? Are they creative content creators on their own? Can they add something to the brand's story? Do they have large enough following? Are their followers engaging with their content or are they passive? Are they active on multiple channels than just one? Are they willing to commit to the brand for a longer period? Have they done partnerships with competitors? Are they polished or a little rugged and authentic? Are they trustworthy and professional in their partnership deals? Are their followers real or fake?

Question 8. How can you get the information about your influencers' audience?

We ask the influencer or the agency representing the influencers for deeper audience analytics.

Question 9. How can you make sure that the campaign is going as planned?

The key is constant communication between the client, the influencer or their agency.

Question 10. How can you ensure that your influencers are ethical when they are delivering the brands messages?

Nothing can ensure that 100 %, but a well planned briefing session is extremely important. In that session, the representative of the brand lays out the do's and don't's for the brand messaging.

Question 11. Do your influencers use something to let their audience know about the collaboration with the brand, and if yes, what it is?

They use the proper tagging methods on each channel. If it's a video on YouTube, the message "includes paid promotion" is included in the beginning. If it's an Instagram picture, the hashtag #kaupallinenyhteistyö (meaning paid promotion) or a similar one is used. We trust the influencers we work with know the "industry standars" regarding this.

Question 12. How does the influencer marketing campaign process look like?

1) We receive the brief from a client
2) Together with the client, we set up metrics and KPI's for the campaign.
3) We look at the data, e.g., to define which channels we should be active in

4) We generate initial ideas about the concept (what would be the role of an influencer, what would he/she be doing in the campaign)

5) We generate a longlist by asking the influencer networks/agencies for suggestions and coming up with our own.

6) We go through the longlist with the client and cut it down to a shortlist including 2-4 influencer options

7) We go back to the influencer networks and ask for more detailed information regarding target group, reach, previous campaigns with competitors, etc.

8) Based on our recommendations, the client makes final decision

9) We select and negotiate the deal with the chosen influencers

10) We finalize the concept together with the client and the influencer, so it feels natural and authentic for the influencer, but still respecting the brand values and the goals of the campaign.

Question 13. Is there some kind of tools that you are using for monitoring the ongoing campaign?

The campaigns are usually somehow complex and unique, so there is no one tool that we always use for monitoring.

Question 14. What do the reports include and what are you measuring from those?

Depending if the campaign includes a direct link to, e.g., an online store, the analytics are naturally tied to the relevant key metric.

In any case, the reports include metrics from the influencer's social channels: reach, engagement rate.

Question 15. After the campaign, how do you measure was the campaign successful or not?

We look at the results against the goals that were set up in the beginning of the process.

Question 16. How are the results delivered to your clients?

The format varies depending on the campaign. Usually, it is a session where we both look at the numbers and go through other learnings about the process.

Question 17. Is there something specific you would like to add or tell about?

The context of influencer marketing is only going to get bigger, so there will be a need for specialists just for this area of marketing.

Question 18. What do you think that is the future of Influencer marketing?

In the future, I think we will see more fluid partnerships with smaller "micro influencers." There will be more automated processes that save time for the client and the agency in gathering influencer suggestions.

Appendix 5. Interview with company 5.

Email interview with Splay
13th of May 2018
Interviewer: Kalle Salminen

Question 1. What is your professional occupation?

Country Manager, Splay Suomi Oy

Question 2. What does your company do?

It is the Finnish subsidiary of the largest influencer marketing network in the Nordics. Splay connects brands and influncers to create impactful communications for the millenial target audience

Question 3. How do you reach out for customers or does customers reach out for your company?

We contact customers active and they do the same. We were the first on the market to work with video content and YouTubers so we are the lead agency for many companies.

Question 4. What are the main differences with influencer marketing from other marketing methods?

In more traditional marketing brands control the marketing from start to finish. In influener marketing alot of the control must be given to the influencer so that it will be accepted by the target audience. The influencer decides the method in communicating the message.

Question 5. What are the main reasons why should a brand use influencer marketing?

Marketing has changed and the millenial demographic is especially critical of marketing. AS content is so bountyful online & on social media, brands need to stand out and break through the noise. Influencers are brands best friends in this demographic – they know what will be accepted and what not. The main reasons: Much higher engagement, authentic and the message will be remembered coming from someone they respect.

Question 6. What are the social media channels your company uses for influencer marketing and why these?

YouTube, Instagram & Facebook. YouTube and Instagram are highly engaging – we choose channels where engagement culture is high to differentiate ourselves and break through.

Question 7. What is taken into consideration when choosing the right influencers for a brand?

Values and does the personal brand fit with the company's brand. Influencers share their own stories so the brand must fit within this storyline to be credible.

Question 8. How can you get the information about your influencers' audience?

YouTube analytics and third party analytics tools (eg Tubular, SocialBlade)

Question 9. How can you make sure that the campaign is going as planned?

Splay always has a team of experts working on the campaign to follow how it has been received by the target audience.

Question 10. How can you ensure that your influencers are ethical when they are delivering the brands messages?

We comply with all marketing rules so that brand messaging is clearly labeled. In order to work profesionnally as an influencer, there is a high level of ethical standards. They value & respect their audience.

Question 11. Do your influencers use something to let their audience know about the collaboration with the brand, and if yes, what it is?

All collaborations are clearly marked:

1. YT includes paid promotion tab

2. Text on video "video tehty kaupallisessa yhteistyössä xXX kanssa"
3. Say it on the video

Question 12. How does the influencer marketing campaign process look like?

It consists of a brief – campaign plan – influencer plan – content plan – execution & follow up

Question 13. Is there some kind of tools that you are using for monitoring the ongoing campaign?

Certain key metrics

Question 14. What does the reports include and what are you measuring from those?

Key performance metrics are determined in the campaign planning phase. Our reports address these key metrics.

Question 15. After the campaign, how do you measure was the campaign successful or not?

How well the key metrics were achieved. Engagement rate is a very important metric.

Question 16. How are the results delivered to your clients?

In a campaign report

Question 17. What do you think that is the future of Influencer marketing?

IM must become even more strategic. I see a lot of unused potential from brands while some are embracing IM. The influencer field will continue to grow & brands will find it more difficult to get results without working with an IM agency.

Appendix 6. Interview with company 6.

Email interview with Troot Networks
13th of May 2018
Interviewer: Kalle Salminen

Question 1. What is your professional occupation?

Country Manager at Troot Network

Question 2. What does your company do?

Troot Network is a YouTube video network offering influencer marketing solutions, video advertising and events. We work closely with a limited number of hand-picked YouTube talents.

Question 3. How do you reach out for customers or does customers reach out for your company?

It goes both ways. We try to make our websites and communications easily accessible for clients to contact us. Also many times we come up with content ideas with certain talents & brands and in these cases we reach out for the customers.

Question 4. What are the main differences with influencer marketing from other marketing methods?

- Influencer marketing is usually more personalized and interactive than traditional marketing.
- Influencer marketing is based on the power of recommendation
- The audience-influencer realtionship is often very intensive and close. In studies it has been defined even to be experienced (by the audience) similarily than friendship. This is why it is actually based on trust and genuinity.
  These elements make influencer marketing unique.

Question 5. What are the main reasons why should a brand use influencer marketing?

Like I described earlie it is a unique way of getting messages thorugh. We have done wide studies (https://troot.network/en/survey/) that verify that influencer marketing can be highly effective in many different means.

Question 6. What are the social media channels your company uses for influencer marketing and why these?

- YouTube, Instagram, sometimes Twitter, Facebook and Twitch.
- Our talents communicate with their audience there and as a YouTube partner we get detailed statistics from YouTube.

Question 7. What is taken into consideration when choosing the right influencers for a brand?

-   Firstly if the talent have tried the product/service and they liked it or not. They never operate with brands they don´t really like.
-   The talents audiences demography has to match the one the client is looking for.
-   If there two things are ok, we plan the content idea with the talent and discuss it with the brand in the offer stage. So we never start a campaign with a content idea. So sometimes the idea just doesn't come and we wont do it.

Question 8. How can you get the information about your influencers' audience?

-   As YouTubes partner network we get access for the alanytics. This is where we found the watch time and audience demography, that are really important.
-   In eg Instagram the influencers check the numbers and report them for us

Question 9. How can you make sure that the campaign is going as planned?

We have producers whose main job is to take care of the campaigns. Each producer has their own campaigns and they coordinate everything with the clilent and the talent. Even though we call them producers they don't actually produce the videos (the influencers do) but they produce the campaigns being responsible for the content, schedule and report.

Question 10. How can you ensure that your influencers are ethical when they are delivering the brands messages?

The producer checks the videos carefully and after that the customer checks them before publishing. All in all we consider all of our hand picked influencers brand safe and also discuss these kind of matters a lot with them.

Question 11. Do your influencers use something to let their audience know about the collaboration with the brand, and if yes, what it is?

Yes. In YouTube videos nowadays they have a written tag, they say it in speech and also it is marked in the description box. In Instagram they use a #yhteistyö, but this is something we are going to specify more this spring.

Question 12. How does the influencer marketing campaign process look like?

-   When we have a brand ready we need to specify their goals, campaign message and other marketing plans
-   Then always start wit creating ideas for content.
-   After this we plan the architecture of the campaign, channels and timing
-   We put put a offer with the influncer, content idea and campaign architecture
-   When the offer gets accepted, the producer starts to take care of the project and in the end reports everything to the customer.

Question 13. Is there some kind of tools that you are using for monitoring the ongoing campaign?

We monitor the numbers and comments manually and also discuss a lot with the influencer

Question 14. What does the reports include and what are you measuring from those?

The reach of each channel, the likes and dislikes, the comments, in YouTube watch time.
Also if there is other activating goals (eg. swipe up, check website) we measure the numbers

Question 15. After the campaign, how do you measure was the campaign successful or not?

It depends on the goals. It cannot be only measured with numbers – the likes and the conversations are really imporant and so is the YouTube watchtime compared to the average

Question 16. How are the results delivered to your clients?

It is a certain report that we modify for each customer reagarding the goals and architecture

Question 17. What do you think that is the future of Influencer marketing?

Now there has been a strong wave of family content rising in YouTube. There is a lot more quality content for +20 audience these days and the daily usage has more than doubled in only one year. I think the next thing will be more specific channels for this more mature audience, like eg cooking, business, electornics.