

MIDOCEAN UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Media and Digital Marketing

Master's in Digital Marketing

The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Engagement: A Comparative Study
between Small Businesses and Established Brands in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

This study sort to investigate the impact of influencer marketing on consumer engagement while comparing the small and established businesses in Saudi Arabia where social media has widely been adopted a marketing tool. Since there are many influencers online doing the marketing role in both small and established businesses, the study sort to understand whether established brands were able to receive higher engagements in influencer campaigns, whether consumer trust is positively correlated with brand size and familiarity and finally whether the strong influence audience relationships could offset the effects of limited brand recognition. A number of survey questions were adopted with a Likert Scale (1= strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral, 4=disagree and 5=strongly disagree) to answer the research questions. More detailed questions were asked to answer both the research questions and the general objective. Data was recorded in a spread sheet and then analyzed using Excel Data Analysis Tookpak in Microsoft Office. Descriptive results were displayed in form of tables (mean, standard deviations and level of confidence) as well as pie charts for easier understanding. Mean differences were tested using two sample t-test and ANOVA two-way factorization and results used to test hypothesis. Results indicated no association between trust and consumer engagement ($p>0.05$) and also, the results indicated that established brands do not automatically receive higher engagement in influence campaigns. There are other factors that could be potentially leading to higher consumer engagement and they include authenticity, creative content (humanized and entertaining) and understanding of the audience. There is no clear results on whether strong influencer audience relationship could offset the effects of limited brand recognition but the results indicate that understanding the audience is one of the strategies to enhance influence marketing effectiveness. According to these results, it is recommended that further research be done to determine whether social media influencing using creative contents such as short videos could enhance influencer promotions in small or established businesses using new survey questions and even a more elaborate participant.

Key Words: Influencer, ANOVA, Creative Content, User, Promotion

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Research Background

Saudi Arabia's digital landscape has undergone a rapid transformation, driven by high internet penetration, mobile-first consumption, and a youthful population deeply engaged with social media platforms. With over 99% social media penetration and platforms like TikTok, Snapchat, and Instagram dominating user attention, influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for brands to connect with consumers in culturally resonant ways.

Recent studies highlight that influencer credibility, authenticity, and trustworthiness are central to driving consumer engagement and purchase intention. For instance, Saad et al. (2025) found that Snapchat influencers significantly impact purchase decisions among Saudi youth, with brand credibility acting as a partial mediator between influencer traits and consumer behavior. Similarly, Almuani *et al.*, (2023) emphasized the mediating role of influencer trustworthiness, showing that factors like influencer-brand fit and campaign duration indirectly affect purchase intent. However, the dynamics of engagement differ notably between small businesses and established brands. While large brands benefit from recognition and established trust, small businesses often rely on micro and nano influencers to build authentic relationships and niche community engagement. According to Alsalloum & Gainous (2025), Saudi consumers increasingly favor smaller influencers who reflect their values and offer genuine content, especially in sectors like fashion, food, and wellness.

This study aims to explore these contrasts by examining how influencer marketing strategies affect consumer engagement across different business scales. It will investigate whether brand familiarity, influencer credibility, and content style contribute to varying levels of likes, shares, comments, and click-throughs when promoting small versus established brands.

Research Problem

Despite the growing popularity of influencer marketing, not all campaigns yield equal results. When promoting large brands, influencers often experience high engagement, whereas small business promotions tend to underperform—even with similar content quality. This inconsistency raises a critical question: What drives the difference in consumer engagement between these two brand categories? Social media platforms have dramatically transformed marketing dynamics in Saudi Arabia. Among these transformations, influencer marketing has emerged as a key strategy to connect brands with consumers. As a practicing influencer, I have personally witnessed significant differences in audience engagement when promoting small businesses versus well-established brands. This research aims to explore the root causes of this disparity and understand how influencer marketing truly impacts consumer engagement across different business types. The essence of conducting this study is to uncover the underlying factors that drive variations in consumer engagement when influencers promote small businesses compared to established brands. By analyzing audience behavior, trust dynamics, and content performance across

different brand categories, this research seeks to: 1) Identify key engagement drivers unique to small businesses and major brands. 2) Examine the role of influencer credibility and authenticity in shaping consumer responses. 3) Assess how platform algorithms and audience demographics influence engagement outcomes. And lastly 4) Provide actionable insights for marketers and influencers aiming to optimize their strategies in the Saudi digital landscape. Ultimately, this study aspires to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on influencer marketing in emerging markets, offering a nuanced understanding of how brand scale affects consumer interaction and trust.

Research Methodology

This study employs a mixed-method approach which is combining: - Quantitative data through a structured online survey targeting social media users in Saudi Arabia aged 18–45. Also, it adopts a Qualitative analysis by reviewing previous influencer campaigns and performance analytics. Data was collected using Online survey tools including Likert-scale questions to measure trust, engagement, and purchase intention. To measure the quantitative parts of the data, Metrics such as comment volume, likes, CTR, and shares from selected past campaigns. The Descriptive data analysis techniques was used to summarize survey results. Study sample will be chosen from a sample of influencers with the age bracket described above in a random manner and recruited voluntarily into the survey.

Research Questions

The main research question is what is the Impact of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Engagement while comparing between Small Businesses and Established Brands in Saudi Arabia. The following sub questions will also be answered from the main question above:

- 1) How does consumer engagement differ between small and large brand promotions?
- 2) What are the primary factors behind successful influencer campaigns?
- 3) In what ways does consumer trust vary with brand recognition?
- 4) What approaches can improve the performance of small business influencer marketing?

Research Aim and Objectives

The main research objective will be to determine the Impact of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Engagement while comparing between Small Businesses and Established Brands in Saudi Arabia. The following sub objectives will also be answered from the general study aim:

- 1) Compare engagement levels in influencer campaigns for small versus large brands.
- 2 Identify key variables influencing campaign performance. - Examine the role of consumer trust in engagement outcomes.
- 3) Recommend actionable strategies for enhancing influencer marketing effectiveness.

Significance of the Study

Understanding this gap is crucial for both marketing practitioners and small business owners. The findings of this study can help influencers set realistic expectations, guide businesses in refining their marketing strategies, and ultimately improve the efficiency of influencer collaborations across the Saudi market. Understanding this gap is crucial for both marketing practitioners and small business owners. The findings of this study can help influencers set realistic expectations, guide businesses in refining their marketing strategies, and ultimately improve the efficiency of influencer collaborations across the Saudi market. Additionally, understanding the impact of influencer marketing on consumer engagement —while comparing small businesses and established brands in Saudi Arabia—is key in that It provides data-driven insights into how brand scale influences audience behavior, helping marketers tailor campaigns based on business size and target demographics. Moreover, it empowers small businesses to leverage influencer partnerships more strategically, maximizing limited budgets by identifying the most effective engagement tactics. It contributes to academic literature by filling a gap in regional studies on influencer marketing, especially in the context of emerging markets like Saudi Arabia. In addition to that, it informs platform-specific strategies, as different social media channels may yield varying engagement outcomes depending on brand type and influencer credibility. In a tight market competition, it enhances influencer-brand alignment, encouraging more authentic and impactful collaborations that resonate with Saudi consumers' cultural values and digital habits. Ultimately, this study aims to support more equitable and effective marketing practices by illuminating the nuanced ways influencer marketing drives consumer engagement across different business contexts.

Research Structure

Chapter I: Introduction, this chapter details the need for this study and the significance to the business community as well as other stakeholders. It also details the problem statement, research questions and objectives.

Chapter II: Literature Review, this chapter reviews related literature on the roles of social media influencers and the existing disparities that exist when used between large and small businesses. The literature review explains what has been done and the gaps that exists in the study of social media influencers in business or marketing strategies.

Chapter III: Methodology, this chapter details the study population, how the data was collected and analyzed. It explains the validity and the reliability of the study as well as weaknesses emanating from the chosen study methodology.

Chapter IV: Study Findings, this chapter presents the final results originating from the data analysis and presenting them in form of tables and figures. The statistical significance of every analysis has also been explained in this chapter to explain the correlations, similarities and the variations.

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Chapter V: Study Discussion, this section details the similarities and the differences originating from the current results and the existing literature. It also explains the weaknesses and strengths of the data analysis techniques in the research.

Conclusion and Recommendations: This chapter also has a section for conclusion and recommendation based on the present findings on the study subject in question. It highlights major findings and proposes important recommendations for authors and stakeholders in social media marketing especially the influencers promoting brands in start ups as well as established businesses.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

To support the foundation of this study, several academic sources were reviewed. Lou & Yuan (2019) examined the role of message credibility in building consumer trust. De Veirman *et al.* (2017) focused on how influencer reach and content alignment affect consumer attitudes. Chetoui *et al.*, (2020) explored influencer credibility in the context of fashion marketing, and Lim *et al.* (2017) studied the mediating role of customer attitude in influencer marketing. Together, these studies underline the importance of trust, credibility, and brand familiarity in influencing engagement levels. Another study that discusses influencer credibility is Mabkhot *et al.*, (2024), who conducted an empirical investigation into how various dimensions of influencer credibility—such as expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and authenticity—affect consumer behavior. Their mixed-method approach, combining large-scale surveys and in-depth interviews, revealed that credibility significantly influences purchase intention, brand loyalty, and engagement behaviors like liking, sharing, and commenting. This study reinforces the idea that trust and authenticity are central to effective influencer marketing, especially in digital environments where consumers are highly sensitive to perceived sincerity and transparency. - Pan *et al.* (2024) and Sallam & Algamash (2016) offers a systematic review on factors that would affect credibility—such as influencer characteristics, post quality, and follower identity—that significantly affect both behavioral engagement and purchase decisions. Their findings emphasize the importance of source credibility and persuasion knowledge in driving influencer marketing effectiveness. However, the articles fail to establish the existing disparities that occurs when such marketing strategies are employed between small and large businesses in countries that have embraced social media marketing like Saudi Arabia.

History of Influencer Marketing in Saudi Arabia

Influencer marketing in Saudi Arabia has evolved rapidly over the past decade, fueled by the Kingdom's digital transformation and the ambitious goals of Vision 2030. With over 90% of the population active on social media, platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok have become central to consumer engagement and brand communication.

Early Adoption and Growth

Initially, established brands dominated the influencer space, leveraging high-profile personalities to amplify their reach and reinforce brand prestige. These campaigns focused on broad visibility, often prioritizing reach over authenticity. Small businesses, constrained by budget and visibility, were slower to adopt influencer strategies but began to gain traction through micro and nano influencers, who offered more localized and relatable content.

Shift Toward Authenticity

By 2020, consumer preferences began shifting toward authenticity and relatability, especially among younger demographics. Small businesses started collaborating with influencers who shared their values and spoke directly to niche communities. This shift led to higher engagement

rates for small businesses in certain sectors like fashion, food, and wellness, despite their limited reach.

Engagement Dynamics

Studies show that influencer credibility and cultural alignment are stronger predictors of engagement than brand size (De Veirman *et al.*, 2017). While established brands benefit from recognition and trust, small businesses often outperform in comment rates, shares, and click-throughs, especially when influencers are perceived as genuine and community-oriented.

Regulatory and Cultural Factors

The introduction of the Mawthooq license and stricter disclosure regulations in 2025 has leveled the playing field, ensuring transparency across influencer campaigns. Cultural sensitivity and localized storytelling remain critical, with Saudi consumers favoring influencers who reflect traditional values and social norms (Ao *et al.*, 2023).

Trends in Influencer marketing in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia's influencer marketing landscape is evolving rapidly, shaped by digital innovation, cultural values, and regulatory shifts. As brands compete for consumer attention, several key trends are redefining how influencers drive engagement especially when comparing small businesses to established brands.

Rise of Micro and Nano Influencers

Small businesses increasingly collaborate with micro (10k–100k followers) and nano influencers (<10k followers) to foster authentic, community-driven engagement. These influencers often have higher engagement rates and stronger trust among niche audiences. Established brands, while still using macro influencers for reach, are also pivoting toward smaller creators to improve relatability and Return On Investment (ROI) (Ao *et al.*, 2023).

Dominance of Short-Form Video

Platforms like TikTok (88% usage), Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts are central to influencer campaigns (De Veirman *et al.*, 2017). Small businesses benefit from creative, low-budget video content that feels organic and personal. Established brands invest in polished, high-production videos but are increasingly adopting informal formats to stay relevant.

Social Commerce Integration

Saudi Arabia's social commerce market is projected to hit \$9.92 billion in 2025, with influencers playing a key role in driving in-app purchases (Ao *et al.*, 2023). According to the authors, small businesses use shoppable posts and live streams to convert engagement into sales. Established brands leverage exclusive deals and influencer-led product launches to boost conversions.

AI-Driven Personalization

Artificial intelligence is being used to match influencers with brand values, optimize content, and predict campaign performance. This benefits small businesses by reducing guesswork and improving targeting. Established brands use AI for large-scale campaign management and performance analytics.

Cultural Localization and Trust

Saudi consumers favor influencers who reflect local values, language, and traditions. Small businesses often have an edge here, partnering with influencers deeply embedded in local communities. Established brands are adapting by hiring Saudi agencies and influencers to ensure cultural relevance.

Regulatory Compliance and Transparency

The Mawthooq license is now mandatory for paid promotions, ensuring transparency and accountability. Both small and large brands must comply, but small businesses may face more challenges navigating these regulations without agency support.

Key Concepts and Definitions

Influencer Marketing: A form of marketing that uses individuals with an online following to promote products or services. It works based on Influencer marketing works based on trust and social influence. The marketing program works on four major principles that are highlighted below:

- Credibility & Trust: Followers trust the influencer's opinions and recommendations.
- Niche Targeting: Influencers often have audiences within specific interests (e.g., fitness, tech), making it easier for brands to reach the right people.
- Authenticity: Influencers present products in a more personal, relatable way than traditional ads.
- Engagement: Influencers create content that encourages interaction, boosting brand visibility and awareness.

Engagement: Audience interaction with content, including likes, comments, shares, and click-throughs. Engagement may also refer to how audiences interact with content across digital platforms. It includes measurable actions that indicate interest, involvement, or emotional response. These actions typically include: Likes or reactions – which are Quick indicators of approval or sentiment, Comments – that are a Direct feedback, questions, or conversations sparked by the content, Shares or reposts – which are amplification of content to new audiences and finally the click-throughs – referring to Users clicking on links, ads, or calls-to-action embedded in the content.

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Engagement is a key metric for evaluating content performance, audience resonance, and the effectiveness of marketing strategies. High engagement often signals that content is relevant, compelling, or valuable to its target audience.

Trust: is the confidence that consumers place in an influencer's recommendations, opinions, and overall authenticity. It reflects the perceived credibility and reliability of the influencer, and plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior. Key elements include: Authenticity – The influencer's genuine voice, transparency, and consistency in values and messaging, Relatability – referring to how well the influencer resonates with their audience's lifestyle, interests, and beliefs. Additionally, the trust factor can be looked into by considering the Track record – referring to Past collaborations, product endorsements, and audience feedback that reinforce credibility. Lastly the trust may also be assessed in terms of the Disclosure and influencer's honesty – Clear labeling of sponsored content and honest reviews that build long-term trust.

Trust is often the deciding factor in whether followers act on an influencer's recommendation—whether that means making a purchase, signing up for a service, or simply engaging with a brand.

Research Gap

While most scholars have sort to answer questions on how social media impacts businesses in terms of brand promotion, there is still scanty information on the role of social media influencers in impacting small and large businesses and how their influence varies in the two set ups. There is also little information on what role trust plays in impacting brand promotion and lastly, more information is needed on what factors could be used to enhance or promote social media influencing as a new way of business marketing. Understanding the impact of social media influencing could help in promoting authenticity in marketing, reaching a wider target and also reduce cost of marketing.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Introduction

The study will recruit 10 participants who shop online as a result of ads and product promotion due to an influencer. A short survey was issued after giving consent to participation. Few questions were issued to the participants to determine the role or impact of social media influencers in choosing whatever they bought in a given period of time.

Study Design

A qualitative study design was explored by providing brief questionnaire with the following questions: 1) marketing done by social media influencers build a long-term relationship with the customers? 2) marketing done by social media influencers allows engagement between the influencer and the followers? 3) marketing with online influencers allows diversification of portfolio by working with small and large businesses? 4) marketing by online influencers allows influencer and followers to stay updated with trends and changes in products? Respondents were allowed to answer questions based on a 5-point Likert Scale where (1- Agree, 2-strongly agree 3- Neutral, 4- Disagree and 5-Strongly Disagree). Quantitative data was also collected on the impact of social media influencer on engagement, targeted reach, authenticity and cost using the number of shares, likes, comments and other related indicators. The number of shared, likes and comments will determine the engagement rates of an influencer and a product on users, the level of the target market reached, the authenticity of influencer and the product in question and lastly, the overall cost of a brand being marketed by the influencer as compared to products going through the traditional marketing approaches. Descriptive data was analyzed and presented in form of tables and charts. Mean difference in data was compared using ANOVA and results presented in form a table. Differences in results showed the impacts or non impacts that the use of social media influencers would have on brand uptake whenever an advertising is done online using celebrities.

Data Analysis/Statistical Methods

Analysis was done using Excel sheet using Excel Analysis Toolpak. The data was loaded on analysis Toolpak in Microsoft Excel as an add-in program which readily available in an already installed Microsoft office or Excel sheet. In the sheet, data was coded to a readable format especially the results from the Likert Scale (1= agree, 2= strongly agree, 3=neutral, 4=disagree and 5=strongly disagree). The data were then subjected to quantitative analysis with the first inquest being the descriptive data analysis followed by mean comparison to determine significant differences between the various groups using ANOVA, correlation test (Pearson regression to determine if there is any relationship between the variables being examined and lastly, *t*-test to determine whether the responses given between the small businesses promoters and the large business promoters were statistically significant or not at p-value of 0.05 or less. The p-value less than the probability of 0.05 signified that there is an effect or chances of getting an extreme

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result compared to what has been observed. Thus, the p signifies the likelihood that everything observed in the data discussed is due to chance. Standard deviation, mean and level of confidence were used from the descriptive statistics to summarize the Scores from the survey. The reliability and validity of these results will be based on the use of a standard Likert scale and survey to answer research questions. In essence, the questions used will be summarized in the table of results and response recorded against them either in form of tables or charts.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

Introduction

The results were generated in form of figures and tables to answer the research questions. Results show no significant variations and mean differences between the variables that were analyzed. Qualitative data were coded to generate a data set that could be fed into the Excel Toolpak for downstream analysis. However, the quantitative data were directly subjected to data analysis to get the mean differences and associations with regards to influencer brand engagement.

How does consumer engagement differ between small and large brand promotions

Consumers differ between small and large brand promotions in terms of what the promoters or influencers consider important when marketing their products. For instance, the promoters would consider the purchase history of the clients, offering discounts, building in premium user communities and even the use of emojis among other interactive social media tools. When asked how the small and large brand promoters consider the use of purchase history, the small firms' promoters (11%, 2= agree) showed no difference in the results with the large brand promoters (12%, 1=strongly agree) with the idea that they consider purchase history to consider consumer engagement (Figure 4.1.1). Purchase history is important to the social media operators in determining the credit worthiness of a customer and the ability to return for further purchases. These results are similar to previous findings by Akbar & Ahmad (2017) who found purchase history important in engaging consumers in small and large businesses brand promotions. This could be due to several reasons including fostering trust using customers social proof and their purchase intentions. Previous buying behavior can be determined using one's browsing behavior and thus creating ads or product recommendations that meet their needs or preferences. Purchase history may also be important in determining relevant products and creating suggestions that bring a sense of connection and customer loyalty.

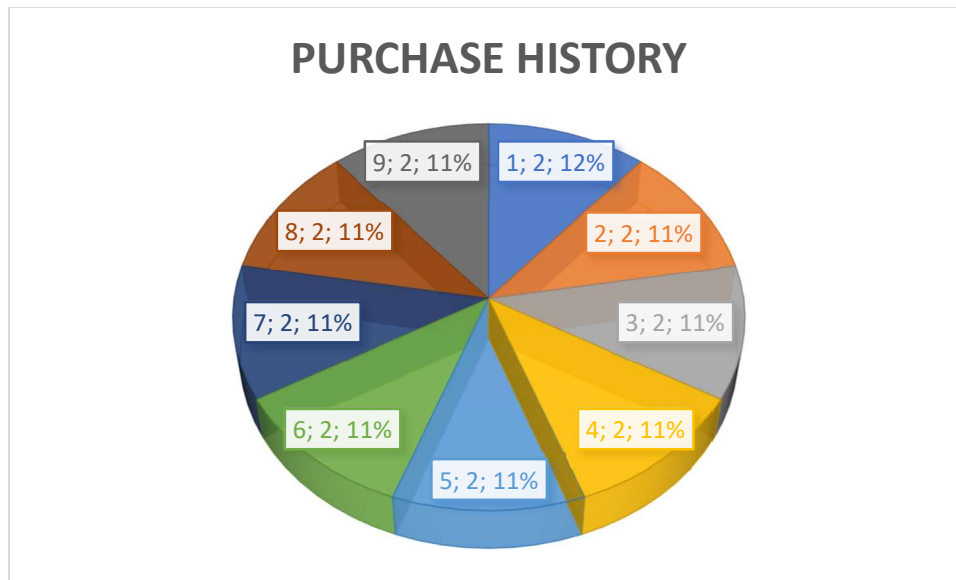


Figure 4.1.1 Purchase History



Figure 4.1.2 Offering Discounts

Also, when asked whether they consider offering discounts, a majority indicated that they strongly agree (1 on Likert Scale) with the use of discounts and another significant group indicated that they agree with the need to offer discount as a way of brand promotion. Large brands preferred to offer discounts to their customers as a way of engaging them while small first were neutral about the use of discounts (Figure 4.1.2). This could be due to the high overhead costs associated with offering discounts to products. These results concur with Akbar & Ahmad (2017), who hinted that using discounts requires heavy capital base and high influx of customers which may guarantee returns after making high volumes of sales. These results corroborate with Sallam & Algammash (2016) that reported how social media discounts is a powerful tool in

marketing for both small and large enterprises as it boosts both sales, customer loyalty and improves on brand awareness. To be specific, in small businesses, use of discounts increases businesses visibility and reach hence allowing competition with larger brands. It is also a strong incentive to drive traffic towards a given website hence boosting sales and revenue. In a crowded website, small discounts will also enable smaller businesses to create a distinction between them and other small businesses. In larger businesses, using discounts helps in boosting brand awareness and creating a buzz around new stocks or products hence increasing its visibility. Use of discounts can also allow large businesses to engage and interact with customers hence increasing loyalty while sharing their products. In some cases, using discounts will enable large businesses to clear their inventories especially the slow-moving items or those out of season.

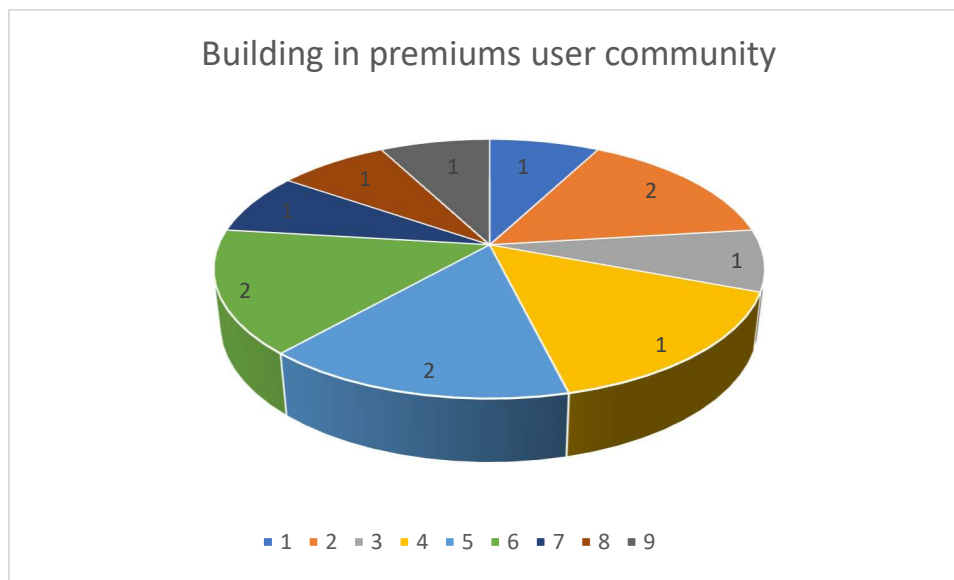


Figure 4.1.3 Building in premium user community

When asked about the use of premium communities, the larger brand promoters indicated that they strongly agree (1 on Likert Scale) with its impact in engaging customers as compare to its' use in small brand promotions (Figure 4.1.3). Most of the promoters in large brands strongly agreed that using premium communities serves them better. This could be due to the high number of customers that they meet in such premium accounts. There are also additional benefits that come with the using of premium accounts including the ability to track customer activities and get additional information about their tastes and preferences. These results are similar Sallam & Wahid (2012) who reported that premium user communities are important for both small and large business communities as it promotes engagement, builds loyalty and also provides valuable feedback to the businesses. Using these communities may as well offer exclusive access, promote product or brand adoption while also building a loyal customer base for small enterprises and encouraging innovation and strengthening company image in larger firms. Apart from being more cost effective, using premium user communities in online marketing offers

valuable feedback and deeper insights that can be essential for the online influencers in increasing product adoption.

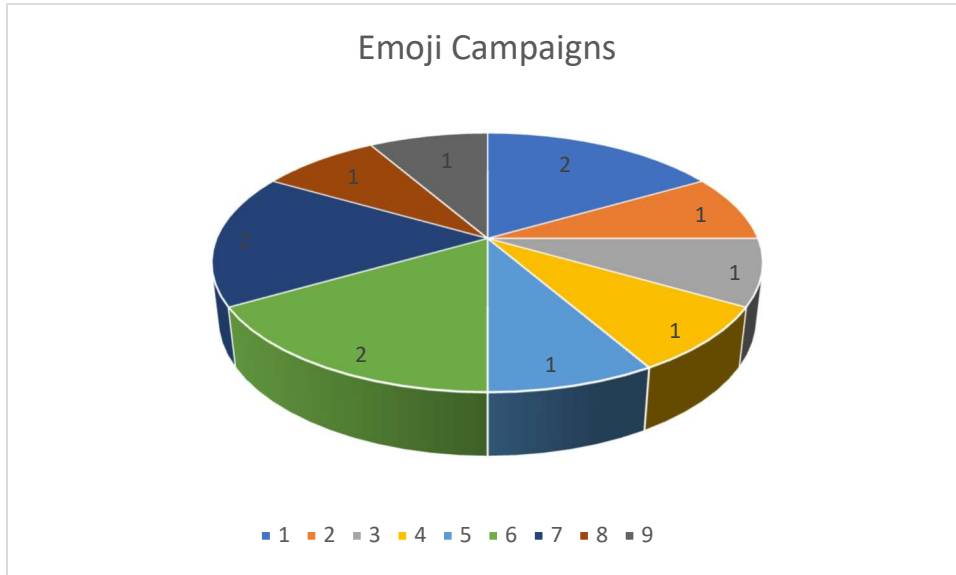


Figure 4.1.4 Emoji campaigns

Most of the respondents indicated that they strongly agree with the use of emojis on large brand promotion as compared to those who run small brand promotion (Figure 4.1.4). This result differs with Sallam & Alghammash (2016) which indicates that large brands prefer to use emojis to speed up interactions due to high number of customers flooding their social media platforms. While the small brands would want to use emojis, sometimes they would face an imitation because there are few clients' interaction and may want to write phrases instead of using quick replies or emojis. These findings relate with Sallam & Wahid (2012) who reported that emojis are valuable for both large and small firms because they are important in communication, engagement and building brand personality. In essence, emojis adds an emotional layer to messages used in marketing and thus making more relatable and also memorable to the customers which eventually leads to higher purchase intentions as well as strong brand loyalty. Small businesses can use emojis to create posts that are more engaging and fun. Such marketing posts can be shared for likes and comments hence reaching wider audience in a cost-effective manner. In larger enterprises the use of emojis can help in humanizing brands hence making a company more approachable. Customers may also be free to express their thoughts and feelings about a product while the marketing firm can use the emojis to respond to customer queries as well as comments hence demonstrating that they are a listening business willing to engage their clients.

Table 4.1.1 ANOVA: Two Factor without replication

Anova: Two-Factor Without Replication

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<i>SUMMARY</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Row 1	4	6	1.5	0.333333
Row 2	4	6	1.5	0.333333
Row 3	4	5	1.25	0.25
Row 4	4	6	1.5	0.333333
Row 5	4	7	1.75	0.25
Row 6	4	8	2	0
Row 7	4	7	1.75	0.25
Row 8	4	6	1.5	0.333333
Row 9	4	5	1.25	0.25
Purchase History	9	18	2	0
Offering discounts	9	13	1.444444	0.277778
Building on premium	9	13	1.444444	0.277778
Emoji campaigns	9	12	1.333333	0.25

ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Rows	1.888889	8	0.236111	1.243902	0.317363	2.355081
Columns	2.444444	3	0.814815	4.292683	0.014673	3.008787
Error	4.555556	24	0.189815			
Total	8.888889	35				

Two- way (factor ANOVA) revealed no significant differences ($F=1.2439$, >0.05) between the consume engagement methods in small and large brands while the four parameters considered had significant differences ($F=4.292683$, <0.05) in how they are used between small and large brand promoters to boost engagement with customers (Table 4.1.1).

Table 4.1.2: t-test: Two sample Assuming Equal variances

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances

	<i>Variable 1</i>	<i>Variable 2</i>
Mean	1.818182	1.818182
Variance	0.763636	0.363636
Observations	11	11

Pooled Variance	0.563636
Hypothesized Mean Difference	1
df	20
t Stat	-3.12379
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.002674
t Critical one-tail	1.724718
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.005348
t Critical two-tail	2.085963

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances showed a significant difference ($t=2.085963$, $p\text{-value}=0.005348$ for two tail t -test and $t=1.724718$, $p\text{-value}=0.002674$ for one tail) between the parameters that were considered when comparing customer engagement between small and large brand promoters (Table 4.1.2).

What are the primary factors behind successful influencer campaigns?

For a successful social media campaign, the participants indicated that there was a need for creating a compelling content, being authentic and understanding the audience. However, when the three factors were subjected to a correlational test on how they perform with regards to each other in small and large brands, the results showed a weaker correlation ($r<0.5$) (Table 4.1.3). This may mean that their performances in the two different businesses did not have an independent effect on how the success that were realized by the influencers. Instead, the influencers entirely achieved success in their campaigns based on how compelling, authentic and understanding they were to their respective audiences. Similar findings were reported in previous study by Junejo *et al.*, (2022) who reported that compelling contents builds results and drives engagement hence achieving desired outcomes. This could be due to the fact that compelling contents increases engagements through sharing and commenting or liking entertaining or relatable products. Some can be saved hence indicating the clients' interests while also boosting the campaign efforts. Sometimes the influencers will create contents that aligns with their own values or even voices hence fostering trust with their followers and that can lead to deeper conversations as well as connections. Being authentic and understanding to the users will also create contents that feels genuine and aligning to the influencer's personality. Such adverts lead to higher engagement rates through website traffics and click through hence reaching a wider target.

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Table 4.1.3 Correlation test

	Creating compelling content	Authenticity	Understanding audience
Creating compelling content	1		
Authenticity	0.452267	1	
Understanding audience	0	-0.5	1

Table 4.1.4 ANOVA: Two factor without replication

Anova: Two-Factor Without Replication

SUMMARY	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Row 1	3	6	2	1
Row 2	3	4	1.333333	0.333333
Row 3	3	4	1.333333	0.333333
Row 4	3	4	1.333333	0.333333
Row 5	3	4	1.333333	0.333333
Row 6	3	3	1	0
Row 7	3	3	1	0
Row 8	3	3	1	0
Row 9	3	6	2	1
Row 10	3	6	2	1
Creating compelling content	10	14	1.4	0.488889
Authenticity	10	14	1.4	0.711111
Understanding audience	10	15	1.5	0.277778

ANOVA

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	4.7	9	0.522222	1.093023	0.414242	2.456281
Columns	0.066667	2	0.033333	0.069767	0.932862	3.554557
Error	8.6	18	0.477778			
Total	13.36667	29				

Similarly, Anova: Two-Factor Without Replication did not show any significant mean differences (p -value is >0.05 , $F=0.069767$) therefore indicating that there was no much effect on how differently they performed in the small and large brands.

In what ways does consumer trust vary with brand recognition?

Trust among consumers vary with brand recognition in terms of long-term relationship, engagement, diversification of portfolio and staying updated with trends and changes in the market and products. Descriptive statistics analysis showed a median of 1 (Strongly agree, confidence level=95.0%) on the Likert scale when asked about whether: 1) marketing done by influencer would build a long-term relationship with customers, 2) allow engagement between influencer and followers, 3) diversify the portfolio of working with small and large business and 4) allow influencer and followers to stay updated with trends and changes in products. The standard deviation showed no significant differences (std= 0.6322456, 1.032796, 0.516398 and 0.8498370) when compared among the four variables considered in determining the level of trust and how it varies among consumers (Table 4.1.5). ANOVA Two factor showed no mean differences between the four variables that were assessed during the analysis ($df=3$, $MS=0.425$, p -value=0.851577, and f -crit=0.477978) (Table 4.1.6). This means that the four factors could potentially have an impact the level of trust among customers on whatever is being promoted by an influencer. Previous results from Jaitly & Gautam (2021) confirm these findings that indicates a possible connection between brand recognition and consumer trust that are closely involved in building a long-term business relationship. This can be explained by the fact that while recognizing a brand can be important in influencing trust. Also, engaging in diverse portfolio can reduce perceived business risks especially when a new product is involved. Customers may be willing to take chance on any service or product introduced to them depending on the level of assurance given to them considering previous information from the influencers or past experiences they have with products sold through social media. Building trust takes time and diversifying portfolios by working with both small and large enterprises may help in addressing negative experiences that brands experiences when handling new products. Trust is also paramount when informing users about emerging trends and changes occurring in products in the market. Brands that believe in transparency and authenticity in their practices as well as communication builds deeper trust with clients hence getting high loyalty and retention which leads to repeat purchases.

Table 4.1.5 Descriptive Statistics on marketing done by social media influencers

<i>marketing done by social media influencers build a long-term relationship with the customers?</i>	<i>marketing done by social media influencers allows engagement between the</i>	<i>marketing with online influencers allows diversification of portfolio by working with</i>	<i>marketing by online influencers allows influencer and followers to stay updated with trends and</i>
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		<i>influencer and the followers?</i>		<i>small and large businesses?</i>		<i>changes in products?</i>	
Mean	1.8	Mean	1.8	Mean	1.4	Mean	1.5
			0.32659		0.16329		0.26874
Standard Error	0.2	Standard Error	9	Standard Error	9	Standard Error	2
Median	2	Median	1.5	Median	1	Median	1
Mode	2	Mode	1	Mode	1	Mode	1
Standard	0.63245	Standard	1.03279	Standard	0.51639	Standard	0.84983
Deviation	6	Deviation	6	Deviation	8	Deviation	7
			1.06666		0.26666		0.72222
Sample Variance	0.4	Sample Variance	7	Sample Variance	7	Sample Variance	2
	0.17857		0.94587		-		0.10650
Kurtosis	1	Kurtosis	1	Kurtosis	2.27679	Kurtosis	9
	0.13176		1.24056		0.48412		1.35772
Skewness	2	Skewness	5	Skewness	3	Skewness	7
Range	2	Range	3	Range	1	Range	2
Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1
Maximum	3	Maximum	4	Maximum	2	Maximum	3
Sum	18	Sum	18	Sum	14	Sum	15
Count	10	Count	10	Count	10	Count	10
Confidence Level	0.45243	Confidence Level	0.73881	Confidence Level	0.36940	Confidence Level	0.60793
(95.0%)	1	(95.0%)	7	(95.0%)	9	(95.0%)	6

Table 4.1.6 ANOVA: Two factor without replication

Anova: Two-Factor Without Replication

<i>SUMMARY</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Participant 1	4	6	1.5	0.333333
Participant 2	4	8	2	0.666667
Participant 3	4	9	2.25	1.583333
Participant 4	4	6	1.5	0.333333
Participant 5	4	5	1.25	0.25
Participant 6	4	5	1.25	0.25
Participant 7	4	4	1	0
Participant 8	4	5	1.25	0.25
Participant 9	4	7	1.75	0.916667
Participant 10	4	10	2.5	0.333333
Column 1	10	18	1.8	0.4
Column 2	10	18	1.8	1.066667
Column 3	10	14	1.4	0.266667
Column 4	10	15	1.5	0.722222

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ANOVA						
<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Rows	8.625	9	0.958333	1.920223	0.091868	2.250131
Columns	1.275	3	0.425	0.851577	0.477978	2.960351
Error	13.475	27	0.499074			
Total	23.375	39				

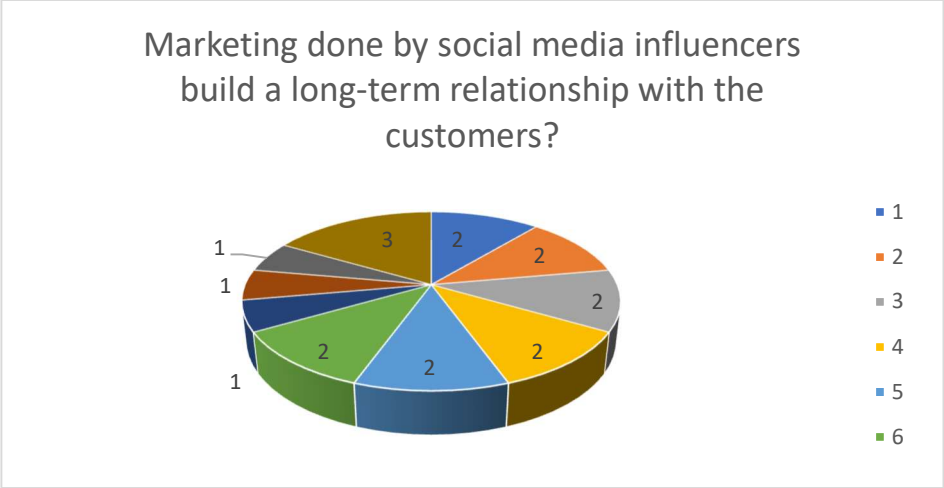


Table 4.2.1 Marketing done by social media influencers build a long-term relationship with the customers?

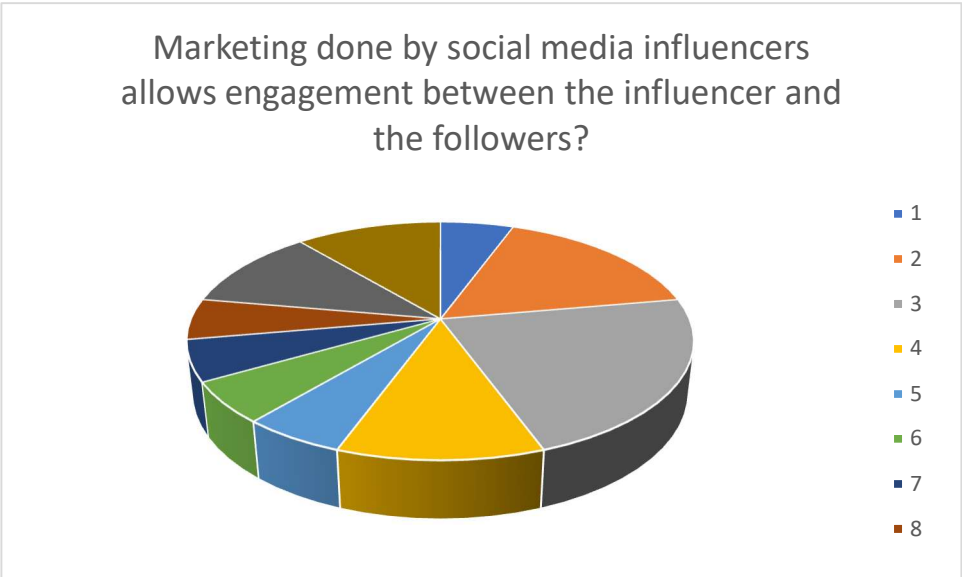


Table 4.2.2 Marketing done by social media influencers allows engagement between the influencer and the followers?

More participants in the survey agreed or strongly agreed that marketing done by online influencers positively impacted their clients decision to buy either from a small or large business enterprise. For instance, when asked whether marketing with online influencers build a long-term relationship or allows engagement between influencers and the social media account users, the number of responded with agree or strongly agree response were higher with none indicating a neutral result. Similar results were observed when the respondents were asked whether marketing with online influencers allowed diversification when choosing between a small or larger enterprises

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and also allowing the consumers to stay updated with the current or emerging trends and changes in products.

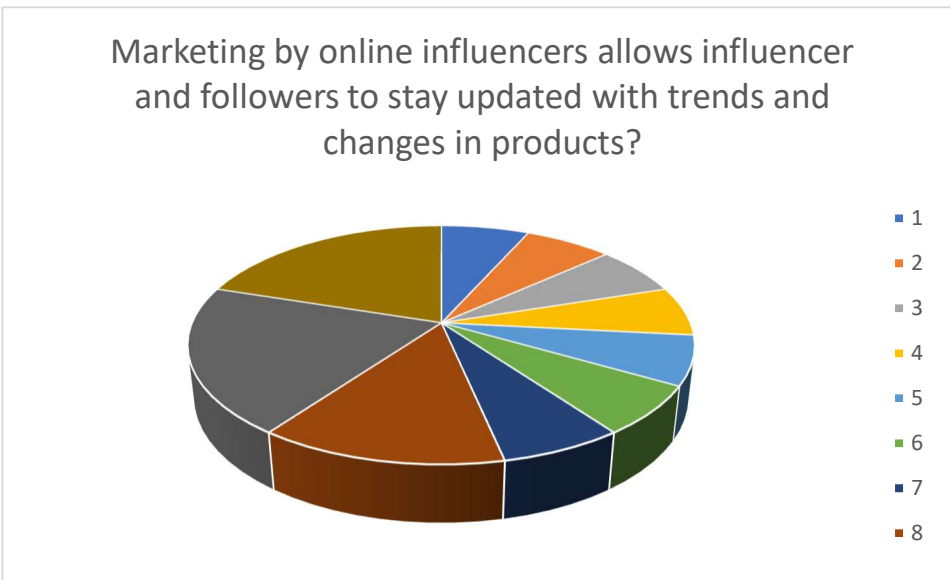


Table 4.2.3 Marketing by online influencers allows influencer and followers to stay updated with trends and changes in products?

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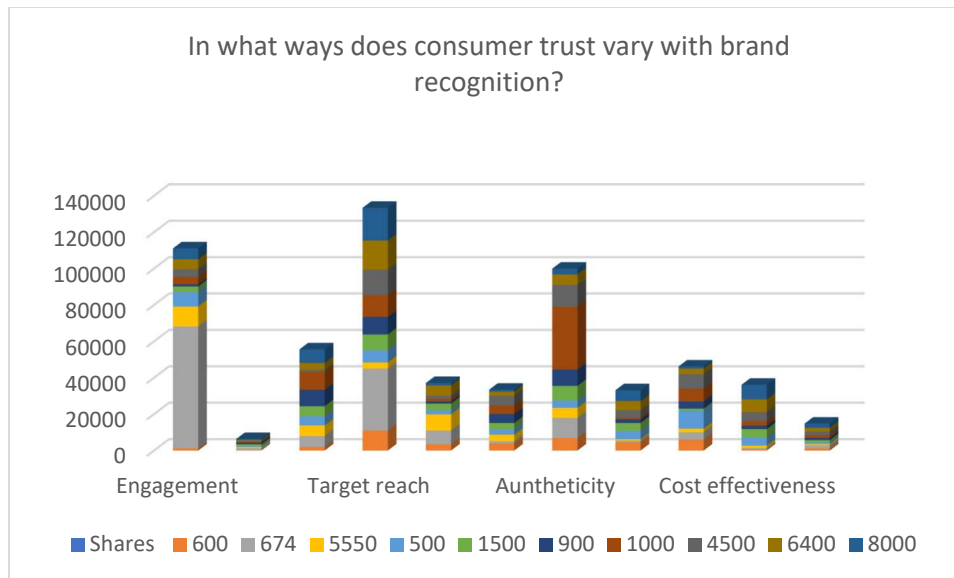


Table 4.2.5 In what ways does consumer trust vary with brand recognition?

More likes indicate a deeper engagement and target reach. The results also shows that more shares and comments could be indicating how authentic a given product or brand is whenever it is advertised on social media accounts by the influencers (Figure 4.2.5). Nonetheless, the number of likes, shares and comments has no massive impact or chances of reducing costs in marketing even though it influences social media users' choices of buying a product.

Engagement		Target reach		Authenticity		Cost effectiveness	
Mean	2	Mean	1.44444	Mean	1.44444	Mean	1.33333
Standard Error	0	Standard Error	0.17568	Standard Error	0.17568	Standard Error	0.16666
Median	2	Median	1	Median	1	Median	1
Mode	2	Mode	1	Mode	1	Mode	1
Standard Deviation	0	Standard Deviation	0.52704	Standard Deviation	0.52704	Standard Deviation	0.5
Sample Variance	0	Sample Variance	0.27777	Sample Variance	0.27777	Sample Variance	0.25
Kurtosis		Kurtosis	2.57143	Kurtosis	2.57143	Kurtosis	1.71429
Skewness		Skewness	0.27105	Skewness	0.27105	Skewness	0.85714
			2		2		3

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Range	0	Range	1	Range	1	Range	1
Minimum	2	Minimum	1	Minimum	1	Minimum	1
Maximum	2	Maximum	2	Maximum	2	Maximum	2
	1						
Sum	8	Sum	13	Sum	13	Sum	12
Count	9	Count	9	Count	9	Count	9

Table 4.2.1 social media influencing on brand recognition?

Engage ment Shares	Final Project		Likes	Comments		Target reach Shares	Likes		Comments		Authentici ty Likes		Shares		Comments		Cost effectiven ess Shares	Likes		Comments			
Mean	2962.4	Mean	11110	Mean	632.9	Mean	5557	Mean	13340	Mean	3708	Mean	3339.1	Mean	9996.1	Mean	3314	Mean	4620	Mean	3612.6	Mean	1480
Standar d Error	902.94 97	Standar d Error	6281.5 51	Standar d Error	106.57 9	Standar d Error	899.32 33	Standar d Error	2670.2 98	Standar d Error	874.53 96	Standar d Error	475.34 45	Standar d Error	2872.9 19	Standar d Error	613.49 31	Standar d Error	960.30 09	Standar d Error	823.21 19	Standar d Error	163.84 27
Median	1250	Median	4850	Median	580	Median	5685	Median	11500	Median	2850	Median	3449.5	Median	7454	Median	4160	Median	4000	Median	3465	Median	1400
Mode	#N/A	Mode	1200	Mode	#N/A	Mode	#N/A	Mode	#N/A	Mode	#N/A	Mode	#N/A	Mode	#N/A	Mode	4560	Mode	4000	Mode	#N/A	Mode	1200
Standar d Deviati on	2855.3 78	Standar d Deviati on	19864. 01	Standar d Deviati on	337.03 23	Standar d Deviati on	2843.9 1	Standar d Deviati on	8444.2 22	Standar d Deviati on	2765.5 37	Standar d Deviati on	1503.1 71	Standar d Deviati on	9084.9 68	Standar d Deviati on	1940.0 36	Standar d Deviati on	3036.7 38	Standar d Deviati on	2603.2 25	Standar d Deviati on	518.11 62
Sample Varian ce	815318 2	Sample Varian ce	3.95E+ 08	Sample Varian ce	113590 .8	Sample Varian ce	808782 3	Sample Varian ce	713048 89	Sample Varian ce	764819 6	Sample Varian ce	225952 4	Sample Varian ce	825366 47	Sample Varian ce	376373 8	Sample Varian ce	922177 8	Sample Varian ce	677677 9	Sample Varian ce	268444 .4
Kurtosi s	1.1646 5	Kurtosi s	9.3812 63	Kurtosi s	1.6556 53	Kurtosi s	0.5095 9	Kurtosi s	4.0360 18	Kurtosi s	0.2809 3	Kurtosi s	-0.8654	Kurtosi s	7.4612 55	Kurtosi s	1.6930 5	Kurtosi s	0.8313 6	Kurtosi s	1.0397 8	Kurtosi s	0.9168 7
Skewn ess	0.7747 85	Skewn ess	3.0315 3	Skewn ess	0.6751 68	Skewn ess	0.0619 6	Skewn ess	1.7291 92	Skewn ess	1.0104 83	Skewn ess	0.3224 6	Skewn ess	2.6115 27	Skewn ess	0.2897 8	Skewn ess	0.4974 08	Skewn ess	0.4606 68	Skewn ess	0.1548 21

Table 4.2.2 Social media and how its use differs in small and large business establishments in Saudi Arabia

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Range	7500	Range	65800	Range	1261	Range	9000	Range	30600	Range	7700	Range	4432	Range	31345	Range	5200	Range	9000	Range	7440	Range	1600
Minimum	500	Minimum	1200	Minimum	79	Minimum	1000	Minimum	3400	Minimum	1200	Minimum	1000	Minimum	3215	Minimum	800	Minimum	1000	Minimum	560	Minimum	700
Maximum	8000	Maximum	67000	Maximum	1340	Maximum	10000	Maximum	34000	Maximum	8900	Maximum	5432	Maximum	34560	Maximum	6000	Maximum	10000	Maximum	8000	Maximum	2300
Sum	29624	Sum	111100	Sum	6329	Sum	55570	Sum	133400	Sum	37080	Sum	33391	Sum	99961	Sum	33140	Sum	46200	Sum	36126	Sum	14800
Count	10	Count	10	Count	10	Count	10	Count	10	Count	10	Count	10	Count	10	Count	10	Count	10	Count	10	Count	10
Confidence Level(95.0%)	2042.614	Confidence Level(95.0%)	14209.85	Confidence Level(95.0%)	241.0984	Confidence Level(95.0%)	2034.411	Confidence Level(95.0%)	6040.633	Confidence Level(95.0%)	1978.346	Confidence Level(95.0%)	1075.304	Confidence Level(95.0%)	6498.995	Confidence Level(95.0%)	1387.818	Confidence Level(95.0%)	2172.352	Confidence Level(95.0%)	1862.235	Confidence Level(95.0%)	370.638

What approaches can improve the performance of small business influencer marketing?

The small business influencer marketers may need to work on target market, authenticity, engagement and cost effectiveness of their operations. To reduce on their overhead costs, the influencers may need to use likes, comments and shares to determine their overall performance. They may also need to reduce on the number of subscriptions they make on various online tools that may increase the total cost of marketing. To engage several customers, the small business influencers may also need to engage their clients on several issues using quick reply tools such as Love, laugh, smile, and other modes of reactions available on social media platforms. The quantitative data analysis on the number of Likes, shares and comments used by influencers online showed that may people liked what they found attractive online, a few commented and lastly tended to share what was posted online. Target shares were mostly Liked (mean=13340), followed by likes in engagement (mean=11110) and authentic likes (9996.1) while sharing recorded higher performances in terms of cost effectiveness and engaging new clients. These results are similar to Kudeshia & Kumar (2017) who reported that focus on a target market will boost performance of small business influencer marketing. This could be due to focused efforts on a given market for which an opportunity has been identified. By diversifying in a wide market, the influencer may need to address several questions that may require time and substantive resources. By being authentic, small business influencer will also foster trust and improve on engagements thus driving serious conversations. When customers perceive an influencer as one who is genuine then they will tend to relate to their adverts hence giving more attention to their recommendations which they regard as having more weight. Such intentions would lead to more favorability by target market and increased intentions to buy from their brands. Additionally, using more cost-effective modes of business influencing will improve performance. Such cost-effective ways of business influencing may include making short videos that resonates with the audiences and only requires likes, sharing or comments hence engaging a wider population that is within a company's scope.

Paired sample t-test

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means

	<i>Engagement Likes</i>	<i>Target reach Likes</i>
Mean	11110	13340
Variance	3.95E+08	71304889
Observations	10	10
Pearson Correlation	0.821625	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	1000	
df	9	
t Stat	-0.74052	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.238928	

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t Critical one-tail	1.833113
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.477856
t Critical two-tail	2.262157

Table 4.2.3 Paired sample t-test

Anova: Two-Factor Without Replication

SUMMARY	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Participant s 1	12	41507	3458.917	10642241
Participant 2	12	136214	11351.17	3.94E+08
Participant 3	12	48960	4080	11515564
participant 4	12	50196	4183	8829912
Participant 5	12	45639	3803.25	6856769
Participant 6	12	46100	3841.667	12022652
Participant 7	12	80020	6668.333	91174288
Participant 8	12	62332	5194.333	17953040
Participant 9	12	62678	5223.167	15362004
Participant 10	12	63075	5256.25	24434714
Engagement Shares	10	29624	2962.4	8153182
Engagement Likes	10	111100	11110	3.95E+08
Engagement Comments	10	6329	632.9	113590.8
Target Shares	10	55570	5557	8087823
Target Likes	10	133400	13340	71304889
Target Comments	10	37080	3708	7648196
Authenticity Shares	10	33391	3339.1	2259524
Authenticity Likes	10	99961	9996.1	82536647
Authenticity Comments	10	33140	3314	3763738
Cost effectiveness Shares	10	46200	4620	9221778
Cost effectiveness Likes	10	36126	3612.6	6776779
Cost effectiveness comments	10	14800	1480	268444.4

ANOVA

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	5.88E+08	9	65333666	1.357571	0.217817	1.975806
Columns	1.76E+09	11	1.6E+08	3.324434	0.000637	1.886684
Error	4.76E+09	99	48125427			
Total	7.11E+09	119				

Table 4.2.4 ANOVA Two-factor Without Replication

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

In this chapter, we are summarizing the overall results from the previous chapter and then providing possible recommendations on what can be done to impact of influencer marketing on consumer engagement while comparing between small ad established brands in Saudi Arabia. Attempts to determine the impact of influencer marketing on small and established enterprises have yield a significant result which was either confirmed or failed to be confirmed by the hypothesis testes using ANOVA, t-test as well as Pearson correlation test.

The first hypothesis, states that established brands receive significantly higher engagement in influencer campaigns. This hypothesis was not confirmed ($p \text{ value} > 0.05$) as there were no significant differences between the engagement in smaller and larger businesses brands. The number of Likes, comments and shares that influencers received whenever they promoted a product was entirely dependent on how authentic, engaging and understanding they are to the social media users.

Second hypothesis, sort to test whether the consumer trust is positively correlated with brand size and familiarity. This result was also not positive enough ($r = 0.452267$, a weaker positive correlation) to confirm the hypothesis. A stronger positive correlation should be greater than 0.5 which implies a strong and positive correlation. The customers trust on the influencer's promotion or communication about new products entirely depended on use of purchase history, offering discounts and building in premium user accounts among other things. Trust alone is not enough to create customer loyalty but instead the clients need to connect with the influence through emotions and feelings. As such the influencer must personalize the product or service they are introducing or influencing to engage the users who are available online.

Lastly, the author sort to determine whether strong influence audience relationships can offset the effects of limited brand recognition. This hypothesis was not confirmed by ANOVA: two-factor replication ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$). This means it required more than just a strong influence audience relationship to reach unlimited brand recognition. Sometimes the influencer may need to be diverse and come up with creative contents and humanize their approach to engage customers online. Based on the results above, it is recommended that social media influencer should adopt more than trust but also humanize their content when marketing a product or a service. Such contents must be authentic and be diversified to take care of both small and large enterprises. Social media influencers need to be educated on various emotional needs and various methods to engage consumers in different age brackets. Such trainings may involve seasoned marketers with a vast experience in consumer behaviors, purchase history and online interactions using emojis as well as other online communication tools in Snapchat, TikTok, Facebook among other social media handles. It is also important to research further on the impacts of social media influencing using creative contents such as short videos to understand more about the effect of influencer marketing in business promotions. Such information would be able to help in answering the

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research questions herein which may not have been well answered using the research questions that were adopted.

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