Chapter 14
Results–Oriented Influencer Marketing Manual for the Tourism Industry

Carlos de-Laguno-Alarcón
University of Malaga, Spain

Plácido Sierra-Herrezuelo
University of Malaga, Spain

María-Mercedes Rojas-de-Gracia
University of Malaga, Spain

ABSTRACT

This chapter aims to provide a better tool for implementing the marketing technique known as influencer marketing in the tourism industry. To do so, a results-oriented influencer marketing manual for the tourism industry has been created. Despite the success of influencer marketing, the few previous studies in this field do not include verified measures to ensure its effectiveness. For this reason, the approach that is presented here could be crucial to support these marketing activities. As this topic is new and often little-understood, the data compiled was based on the case study methodology. This chapter proposes the following phases: (1) campaign planning, (2) search for influencers, (3) evaluating the best profiles, (4) contacting influencers, (5) proposing a project, (6) execution, and (7) analyzing the results. This work could help companies considering influencers as a new communication channel to successfully run their campaigns.

INTRODUCTION

Although the era of digitalization may be perceived as relatively new, research has long stressed its importance in studies about the need for companies to use new technologies to improve their business (Lindh and Rovira, 2018). Autonomous and collaborative robots, the Internet of things, additive manufacturing, cloud computing, augmented reality, and Big Data are some of the advances that companies are using to increase their productivity (Özüdoğru, Ergün, Ammari & Görener, 2018).

Furthermore, the way in which companies relate to customers has changed dramatically, with new figures such as influencers appearing on the scene. The term influencer is not new, but its use on social media is, where this concept is proving to be an important marketing tactic. Thanks to the Internet, this tool has become powerful and easy to use. Influencers allow brands to reach customers in a more social, direct, and effective way. In fact, influencer marketing perfectly meets companies' need to face increasing skepticism of advertisement among their customers. Moreover, purchase decisions are now based on comments from users who customers see as similar (Castelló, del Pino & Tur, 2016; Kanellopoulos & Panagopoulos, 2008; Pan, MacLaurin & Crotts, 2007). Thus, according to Nielsen (2015), 66% of the global audience trust consumers posting opinions online and 83% trust recommendations from people they know. Therefore, encouraging different neutral players to create positive content about a company's products or services has become a new and extremely effective communication tool.

Specifically, social media have changed the rules of the tourism industry. This phenomenon, known as Travel 2.0, has made it possible for people other than the companies themselves to share information about a specific service on a website; users can now share and rely on this information (Casaló, Flavián, Guinalíu & Ekinci, 2015; Wöber, 2006; Xiang, Wöber & Facemailed, 2008). In this context, influencers have become new tour guides. The fact they share their experience in the first person provides a new point of view that is characterized by naturalness and trust. This is why campaigns with influential people can be extremely beneficial for tourist brands, since this allows them to reach a much more specific user profile at a lower cost than other conventional advertising campaigns (Hernández, Fuentes & Marrero, 2012).

In fact, there are already several tourist destinations that are using influencers to raise their profile in certain areas. This is the case of the Spain China Project, from 2018, through which the Spain Brand has organized an important campaign to promote Spain in China through influencers. In total, 10 Chinese influencers with more than a combined 30 million followers on social networks are visiting several cities in Spain, which allows them to share their experience and promote Spain's tourism, culture and gastronomy in the Chinese market. Reciprocally, and almost at the same time, the China Influencer Project was also implemented, through which 150 Spanish influencers, with more than 50 million followers combined, visited China and also shared their experiences on social networks.

However, conducting a successful marketing campaign with influencers is not easy if a company has no prior experience in the subject. On the other hand, there are many companies linked to tourism, such as hotels, airlines, etc., that could benefit from having influencers in their marketing campaigns. In this sense, although there are currently some guidelines on how to implement this type of strategy, there are no solid proposals that offer a results-oriented approach or indicators that help to better evaluate the campaign. This is precisely the objective of this paper: to create a results-oriented manual for influencer marketing campaigns in the tourism industry and, potentially, in any other industry. To achieve this objective, this manual is based on a practical case, that is, it is based on field experience, which gives it greater practical value.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Before delving into the project, it is necessary to clearly and precisely define the terms that will be used in this manual. This is vital, considering that the field of influencers is still new and unknown to a large part of the population. Specifically, there are three key elements in this study: influencers, influencer marketing, and influence inside tourism.

25 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/results-oriented-influencer-marketing-manual-for-the-tourism-industry/220662

Related Content

A New Conceptual Framework for Greater Success with Integration of E-CRM
Soumaya Ben Letaifa (2009). *Emergent Strategies for E-Business Processes, Services and Implications: Advancing Corporate Frameworks (pp. 14-29).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/new-conceptual-framework-greater-success/10047

Mobile Direct Marketing
Ralf Wagnerand Martin Klaus (2009). *Handbook of Research in Mobile Business, Second Edition: Technical, Methodological and Social Perspectives (pp. 269-281).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/mobile-direct-marketing/19550

AI-Based Sales Forecasting Model for Digital Marketing
Biswajit Biswas, Manas Kumar Sanyaland Tuhin Mukherjee (2023). *International Journal of E-Business Research (pp. 1-14).*
www.irma-international.org/article/ai-based-sales-forecasting-model-for-digital-marketing/317888

What Affects the Level of Social Networking Site Daily Usage?: An Empirical Analysis of Greek University Students
Ioannis Antoniadis, Vaggelis Saprikisand Ioannis Koukoulis (2020). *International Journal of E-Business Research (pp. 47-59).*
www.irma-international.org/article/what-affects-the-level-of-social-networking-site-daily-usage/247117

Reverse FinTech Socialisation: A Remedy for Financial Exclusion in the Digital Era
P. S. Abhijithand Antony Joseph K. (2022). *International Journal of E-Business Research (pp. 1-17).*
www.irma-international.org/article/reverse-fintech-socialisation/316146