

# Chapter 11


## Influence Amplified: Leveraging the Power of Influencer Marketing in the Digital Age

**Senka Borovac Zekan**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6130-4337>

*University of Split, Croatia*

**Paula Odete Fernandes**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8714-4901>

*Polytechnic Institute of Bragança, Portugal*

**A. Borowska-Pietrzak**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0441-2814>

*Faculty of Management, University of Gdansk, Poland*

**Slavica Galić Biličić**

*University Department of Professional Studies, Split, Croatia*

### ABSTRACT

*This chapter will unravel the intricacies of influencer marketing, from its origins to its contemporary significance. Through a meticulously crafted case study, the readers will get the practical implementation of influencer marketing, illustrating how a retail clothing brand leveraged the influence of digital personalities to amplify its reach and resonance. The case study explores the use of influencers and event promotion through social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram. The study delves into who influencers are, why and how much people trust them, and how they promote products and services. Using the example of announcing the opening of the Reserved store in Zadar, Croatia, the study analyses the influence of the online campaigns #ReservedforZadar and #Reservedforme on customers to visit and purchasing products from the Reserved store. An interview was conducted with the main organiser, who also holds the CEO position within the prominent LPP Group.*

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's digital ecosystem, traditional advertising no longer wields the same impact it once did (Rosengren, 2016., Batat, 2022., Harvey, 2021). Consumers are bombarded with myriad messages, making it increasingly challenging for brands to stand out. According to Dahlen and Rosengren, (2016), influencer marketing is a strategy that has revolutionised how products and services are promoted. By aligning with individuals who possess the power to sway opinions and behaviours, brands have unlocked a powerful avenue to engage, inspire, and build authentic connections with their target audience. As a consequence, one of the most effective ways to promote a retail fashion brand online is to collaborate with influencers with large and loyal followers on social media platforms. Sun et al. (2022) found that influencers have established credibility and trust with their audience. They can influence purchase decisions by creating engaging and authentic content featuring the brand's products. Influencers can help a retail fashion brand increase brand awareness, reach new customers, generate traffic and sales, and enhance its reputation in the industry. However, Khan et al. (2022) emphasise choosing the right influencers for a marketing campaign requires careful research and planning, clear communication, and evaluation of the results.

With the advancement of technology and the increasing use of computers and the internet, social networks are becoming an integral part of our daily lives. Online networks are forming on the internet, becoming our online environment where we acquire more and more friends and acquaintances. Therefore, Cohavi et al. (2022) emphasise that while social networks are more popular among young consumers, more adults are transitioning to the "virtual" life. Indeed, the number of social media users increases daily, not only in Croatia but also worldwide. Besides their communication role, social networks also serve as platforms for sharing content such as images, videos, and other forms. On social media, users comment on current news and share their opinions on various topics with other users, such as sports, science, culture, fashion, and many others. According to Mallipeddi et al. (2022), this has led to the emergence of so-called influencers – public figures who promote events or brands of products and services through their profiles on social networks.

Given the rapid development and the multitude of social networks, various managers find opportunities for more accessible and streamlined event promotion. With the evolution of new information technologies, new possibilities arise for sending messages directly to targeted populations, considering this cheaper and more cost-effective than traditional advertising (through television, radio, or print). This has resulted in a cost-effective new form of influencer marketing. This form of marketing refers to promoting a brand, product, or service through social media with the help of influencers – individuals who influence the opinions and attitudes of other users. This type of marketing requires less effort and lower costs than traditional forms of marketing.

Influencers are individuals with many followers interested in the content they post. Their job is based on virtual and informal communication with users or followers, where users can obtain free information about various places, events, products, and services. The rationale for conducting another study on influencer marketing in the context of this chapter lies in several crucial factors. First, influencer marketing continually evolves due to technological changes, consumer behaviour, and the influencer ecosystem. These rapid changes necessitate up-to-date research to capture the latest trends and strategies.

The extent to which influencers can contribute to the media coverage of an event is illustrated through the example of the opening of the Reserved store in Zadar, Croatia. One aspect that makes this case study interesting is that influencers were engaged in the store opening promotion, and all marketing activities were presented through the social media platforms Instagram and Facebook.). In this case, the

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