

INFLUENCERS AND FOMO : A POWERFUL COMBINATION FOR BOOSTING SALES AND BRAND AWARENESS IN DIGITAL MARKETING

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Abstract. Influencers are individuals who have a significant influence on social media and can influence the behavior of their followers, often with the aim of promoting a brand's products or services, while FOMO stands for Fear of Missing Out, which is the feeling of anxiety or fear of missing out on trends, moments, or important information experienced by others. This phenomenon is often amplified by social media, where individuals compare their lives to others who appear to have more enjoyable experiences. In this case, brand perception and influencer influence will greatly affect consumer purchasing behavior. This review explores key psychological drivers such as social proof and FOMO, evaluates the impact of various categories of influencers (macro, micro, and nano), and examines ethical challenges surrounding transparency and false engagement with the intention of building public trust in the introduction of a product or brand. Additionally, this study identifies research gaps and proposes future research directions to improve the measurement and effectiveness of influencer marketing strategies in the digital marketing era. This combination is highly effective in boosting sales of a product or brand and increasing brand awareness, both domestically and internationally.

Keywords : Brand Awareness; Costumer; Marketing; Fomo; Influencers.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, digital technology continues to evolve, with the internet enabling rapid global information exchange. This has created platforms for users to connect, share ideas, and access information easily (Hilbert, 2020). Digital technology has reached extraordinary levels, significantly transforming various aspects of human life and social paradigms. Technology has become a key pillar in the transformation and advancement of contemporary society, influencing how we communicate, work, educate, interact socially, and conduct daily activities (Oktaviani et al., 2023).

Quoted from GoogleStats, the existence of influencers has become an important part of the global digital ecosystem, including in Indonesia. According to Influencer Marketing Hub, the

number of influencer companies increased from 1,120 units in 2019 to 6,939 by 2024. Indonesia became the country with the most influencers in 2024, with an estimated number of influencers reaching 863 thousand, equivalent to 3.6% of the total influencers worldwide. The number of influencer content posts in Indonesia reached 3.1 million throughout 2024, making it the fourth highest in the world. This is shown in Figure 1 (10 Countries with the Most Influencers). Brazil ranks first among countries with the most influencers in 2024, with an estimated 3.83 million, equivalent to 15.8% of the total global influencers. In second place is the United States with 3.78 million (15.6%), followed by India with 1.99 million (8.2%) and Iran with 1.21 million (5%).



Countries with the Most Influencers in the World, GoodStats

Below Indonesia, there is Turkey with the number of influencers reaching 755 thousand (3.1%). The United Kingdom follows in seventh place with a total of 720 thousand influencers (3%), followed by Italy with 653 thousand (2.7%), Germany with 520 thousand (2.1%), and France with 513 thousand (2.1%). The influencer marketing industry is projected to continue to grow, with a value reaching US\$32.55 billion by 2025, an increase of 35.62% compared to 2024, which is US\$24 billion. Influencers are seen as a powerful marketing channel to build reputation and brand strength in the long term, as well as to reach the widest possible audience. In Indonesia, the large youth population and increasing internet penetration have made the influencer industry grow rapidly. Social media users are also continuously increasing, leading many brands to start turning to influencers as a strategic marketing strategy. The influence of Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube is becoming stronger among young people, building audiences and monetizing creativity.

Although it continues to increase, not all businesses are willing to spend money on using influencer services. In 2024, the budget allocation for influencers reached 85.8% of the total marketing costs, which is then predicted to decrease to 75.6% in 2025. The effective use of influencer services can help increase sales, although it still must adjusted to the target market. Not all brands can utilize influencers. In 2025, 63.8% of companies plan to collaborate with influencers in their marketing strategies, 26.8% are still undecided, and 9.4% admit they will not use influencers. The unclear benefits and the difficulty in choosing the right influencer remain challenges faced by many brands.

1.1 Rumusan Masalah

1. How do influencers build brand awareness and create a sense of FOMO among their followers through the content they create?
2. How can FOMO enhance a brand's branding and increase long-term consumer interest?

1.2 Tujuan Penelitian

1. To determine the influence of influencers in building a sense of FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) among their followers on consumer purchasing decisions, and the level of sensitivity to brand awareness.
2. To analyze the simultaneous influence (something that occurs at the same time) between influencer marketing and FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) in the era of digital marketing.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Pemasaran Digital

Digital marketing is the utilization of information technology to expand and enhance traditional marketing functions such as idea or concept development, pricing, promotion, and distribution (Nurtirtawaty et al., 2021). Digital marketing is a dominant variable that influences revenue growth because it makes it easier for people to obtain information about the products being sold, thus enabling more buying and selling (Pratama & Idawati, 2021). According to (Putri & Marlien, 2022), digital marketing is the use of the internet and other interactive technologies to create and connect information that is then used to conduct digital transactions. Digital marketing allows advertisers to interact directly with buyers regardless of location or time constraints and reduces the chaos of direct communication with consumers. Businesspeople are involved in digital marketing activities in order to increase the use of internet media by the market. Digital marketing can be divided into two types (Hermawan, 2012):

1. Its costs are relatively low because digital marketing is much cheaper and easier to reach potential consumers compared to traditional advertising. Due to the nature of digital marketing, consumers can more easily check and compare products.
2. A large amount of informational content is provided using digital marketing compared to traditional media such as print, radio, and television. Digital marketing can also store accurate data needed by companies.

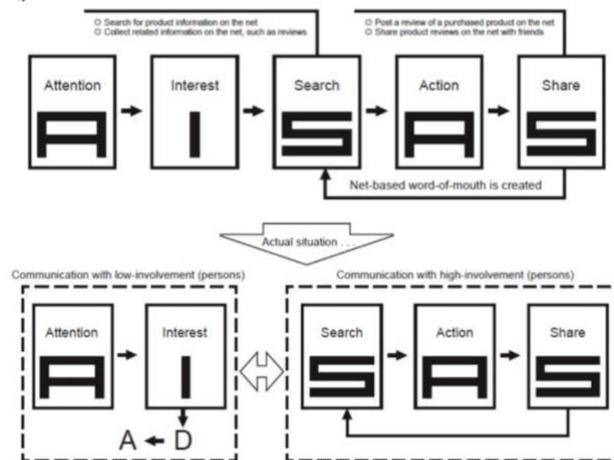
2.2 Sarana Media Sosial Influencer Sebagai Wadah Pemasaran

Influencer comes from the word "influence" with the suffix "-er" which means someone who has influence. According to Hariyanti & Wirapraja (2018), an influencer is a figure on social media with many followers who can influence their audience's behavior. The emergence of influencers has changed the way businesses communicate with customers (Saputro & Laura, 2020). Now, both large companies and SMEs utilize influencers to increase brand awareness through promotions that are soft selling in nature and testimonials that build trust.

Followers of influencers generally have similar interests to the influencer, making collaboration with relevant brands more effective. For example, food influencers are suitable for promoting food products. Influencers play a role in providing convincing reviews and creating engaging content that maintains interaction and keeps the brand image positive. With a creative and personal communication style, marketing strategies through influencers have proven effective in building trust and brand awareness. Influencers are considered an effective marketing strategy due to their ability to build strong trust with their followers.

Moreover, millennials, especially Generation Y and Z, dominate the Instagram market today. Individuals who are part of the Millennial generation and have internet access prefer online approaches in the form of User Generated Content (UGC). They use social media to gather

information and base their purchasing decisions on product reviews or testimonials from other customers or users. The demographic target whose purchasing habits align with the AISAS marketing communication model is the millennial generation (Sugiyama, Kotaro, & Tim, 2011) who believe that AISAS is an effective model approach for a small target audience due to advancements in internet technology. Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Share abbreviated



as AISAS.

Below are some categories of influencers from the smallest to the largest :

a. Nano Influencer

Nano influencers are individuals with the smallest number of followers, usually ranging from 1,000 to 10,000 followers. They have a very close and authentic relationship with their audience, which often results in high engagement rates and are considered a highly trusted source of information in small communities or specific niches.



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b. Micro Influencer

Micro influencers have between 10,000 and 100,000 followers. They have generally developed a larger audience while still focusing on a specific niche, making them an effective choice for



brands looking to target a specific market. Their engagement rates are often better than larger influencers because the interaction still feels personal.

c. Macro Influencer

Macro influencers have followers in the range of 100,000 to 1 million. They are often public figures, internet celebrities, or professionals who have achieved significant popularity on their platforms. They offer broad reach and an impression of professionalism, although their engagement rates tend to be slightly lower compared to the micro category due to the large audience size.



d. Mega Influencer

Mega influencers (also often called celebrity influencers) are those who have over 1 million followers. This category includes A-list celebrities, sports stars, or influencers who are very well-known globally. They offer the largest reach to increase brand awareness on a massive scale, but

audience engagement and trust factors are often the lowest among all categories because their audience is very diverse.



2.3 FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out)

The phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) was first introduced in the context of psychology as a form of social anxiety when individuals feel that others may be experiencing pleasurable experiences that they are not participating in. Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), also known as Herding, is a non-independent behavior characterized by following the actions of others and being unsure of one's own decisions. This concept has since evolved and is widely studied in the context of modern consumer behavior due to its ability to influence the decision-making process. FOMO fosters a psychological state that stimulates impulsive behavior, particularly in the purchase of products framed by narratives of scarcity or exclusivity. This narrative creates the perception that not immediately acquiring a particular product or service will result in social disconnection or the loss of a unique opportunity.

Research by Fitriani and Rahmawati found that FOMO plays a significant role in influencing impulsive purchasing decisions among active social media users. Meanwhile, Handayani asserts that FOMO shifts the logic of consumption from functional to emotional; consumers are often willing to spend money not out of actual need, but out of fear of missing out on a moment or experience perceived as popular.

2.4 A Powerful Combination Of Influencers and FOMO

Influencers and fomo are a highly effective combination for boosting marketing in the digital age. By utilizing engaging visual content-based marketing strategies, collaborating with influencers, and promoting campaigns relevant to emerging trends, brands can introduce their products more widely and effectively. As a result, people or consumers exposed to such content will feel compelled to try and purchase the products offered (Musthofa, 2021), especially if there is an element of Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) that further strengthens this urge. One phenomenon closely related to social media use is Fear of Missing Out (FOMO), which is a feeling of anxiety or worry about not following or knowing the latest trends occurring in their social circles. The FOMO phenomenon encourages individuals to constantly follow what's popular on social media, including food and beverage consumption. (Dwisuardinata & arma, 2023) Students,

as active social media users, are particularly vulnerable to the effects of FOMO. They tend to be influenced by culinary trends that often go viral on social media and don't want to miss out on the opportunity to try "hyped" products, such as those offered by certain brands. In practice, several brands often use social media marketing strategies that capitalize on FOMO, such as limited-time offers, limited-time discount promotions, or highlighting viral content on social media. These marketing strategies not only increase appeal but also increase consumers' impulsive purchasing intentions, due to the fear of being left behind by emerging trends.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This method is a qualitative approach because it does not involve the collection of new numerical data, but rather focuses on in-depth analysis, interpretation, and synthesis of existing literature, theories, and concepts. Its main objective is to provide a comprehensive conceptual understanding of how influencers and FOMO work together as an effective combination in digital marketing to increase sales and brand awareness. This study qualitatively explores key psychological drivers such as social proof and FOMO, evaluates the impact of various categories of influencers (macro, micro, and nano), and analyses ethical challenges surrounding transparency and false engagement with the aim of building public trust in a product or brand. Ultimately, the results of this qualitative analysis are used to identify research gaps and propose future research directions, which is characteristic of qualitative review studies. This is a descriptive analysis, which is a type of research that provides an overview and describes the situation as clearly as possible without treating the object being studied.

This study relies on two sources of data, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is defined as data obtained from the field, specifically through structured and unstructured interviews. Purposive sampling was used to determine the research subjects who would become the sample for this study, where this technique is used when sample members are selected specifically or there are certain considerations so that they are able to provide maximum data. Secondary data is information previously obtained from indirect or secondary sources, such as government written sources, libraries, official documents, books, research results in the form of reports, and so on. The secondary data for this research was obtained from books and journals.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 The Combination of Influencers and FOMO as an Effective Strategy

This study shows that the collaboration between influencer marketing and FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) is a very effective combination in increasing consumer appeal to products and brands. Influencers play a role in creating emotional closeness and trust with the audience, while FOMO creates a psychological urge for consumers not to miss out on certain trends or opportunities. When the two are combined, the effect is powerful because the messages conveyed by influencers can trigger a sense of urgency and desire to own within a short period of time.

4.2 The Role of Social Media as a Trigger for FOMO

In many ways, influencers are able to utilise various social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube as the main media that reinforces this. Basically, humans are social creatures who are able to give positive energy to other creatures, and this is also able to provide a

connection to things that can influence other humans. Therefore, through engaging visual content such as unboxing videos, honest reviews, or seemingly ideal lifestyles, consumers feel compelled to try these products or services to avoid being left behind by their friends or online communities. This phenomenon is known as the 'social comparison effect,' where individuals evaluate themselves based on what they observe from others on social media.

4.3 Impact on Consumer Behaviour

FOMO encourages consumers to make impulsive purchases. In this context, purchases are no longer based on real needs, but on momentary emotions, fear of missing out, and social experiences. According to Fitriani and Rahmawati, FOMO can change consumers' thinking from rational to emotional. As a result, many consumers are willing to spend money just to feel a sense of belonging or participation in a particular trend.

4.4 Effectiveness on the Younger Generation

Millennials and Gen Z are the groups most vulnerable to the influence of FOMO and influencers. They are active on social media, have high engagement levels, and are easily influenced by viral trends. An example of this can be seen in Argan et al.'s (2023) research on Warmindo (Warung Indomie Modern), which utilised FOMO with limited-time promotions and viral content to attract young buyers. This strategy succeeded in rapidly increasing sales and strengthening Warmindo's brand image as a trendy place to eat.

4.5 Implications for Brand Awareness and Sales

The combination of influencers and FOMO has been proven to:

- Significantly increase brand awareness through rapid content dissemination.
- Encourage short-term purchasing decisions due to fear of missing out on promotions or trends.
- Helping brands expand their audience reach more efficiently than conventional advertising methods.

However, companies must remain cautious about long-term effects, such as consumer fatigue or declining trust due to excessive promotion. Overall, this research confirms that influencer marketing strategies combined with FOMO elements are the most effective approach in the digital age. These two factors work simultaneously: influencers build trust, while FOMO creates urgency. When both are aligned, they can increase sales and strengthen brand awareness in the short and long term.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the combination of influencer marketing and the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) phenomenon is a highly effective digital marketing strategy for increasing sales and brand awareness. Influencers play an important role in building trust and emotional connections with audiences, while FOMO creates a sense of urgency and psychological pressure for consumers to keep up with trends. When used together, the effect strengthens consumers' purchase intent — both in the short and long term.

Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube are the main platforms that reinforce this influence, due to their visual, interactive nature and ability to quickly spread

trends. This phenomenon is most strongly felt by younger generations (Millennials and Gen Z), who have high engagement levels and frequently compare themselves to others on social media. While this strategy has positive impacts on sales growth and brand popularity, it must be implemented ethically and transparently to avoid negative effects such as consumer fatigue, excessive consumption, or a decline in public trust due to promotional tactics excessive.

Thus, companies in the digital age need to utilise influencer collaboration and FOMO wisely — not just to create temporary trends, but to build long-term relationships and consumer trust in the brand. This study shows that the combination of influencer marketing and the Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) phenomenon is a highly effective strategy in increasing consumer appeal, product sales, and brand awareness in today's digital age.

In the context of modern marketing, influencers not only function as promotional intermediaries, but also as shapers of perceptions and lifestyles that can influence their followers' purchasing decisions. Influencers have the ability to build emotional trust between consumers and products through content that appears natural, relatable, and relevant to the daily lives of their audience.

Meanwhile, FOMO is a psychological factor that reinforces this influence. The fear of missing out on social trends, limited promotions, or popular experiences drives consumers to make purchases more quickly — often impulsively. When influencer marketing strategies are combined with FOMO elements, the two form a synergy that creates a sense of urgency and an emotional desire to own a particular product in order to remain 'up to date'.

This phenomenon is most pronounced among younger generations such as Gen Z and millennials, who tend to be active on social media, open to digital innovation, and easily influenced by viral trends and recommendations from figures they admire. Thus, the use of FOMO-based influencer marketing is a highly effective strategy for companies to reach dynamic and competitive target markets.

However, this study also emphasises the importance of implementing such strategies ethically and sustainably. Promotions that overly emphasise FOMO risk causing boredom, social pressure, and even excessive consumerism among young consumers. Therefore, companies need to maintain the authenticity of their content, transparency, and the credibility of influencers so that long-term relationships with consumers are built on trust, not just short-lived trends.

Overall, it can be concluded that the collaboration between influencers and FOMO is not only an effective marketing tool but also a reflection of changing consumer behaviour in the digital age. This strategy will remain relevant as long as it is implemented with consideration for ethical values, emotional balance, and social responsibility in building a strong and trustworthy brand image.

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