

# ***Optimizing Influencer Marketing Strategies in the Beauty Industry: Case Analysis***

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**Abstract:** As social media platforms have matured, influencer marketing has increasingly gained favor among advertisers. This study explores the optimization strategies for influencer marketing in the beauty industry. Through case analysis and previous research experiences, it is recommended that suitable influencers for different brands and products be selected. The findings indicate that influencer marketing significantly enhances brand awareness and consumer trust. However, brands need to make precise selections based on target customer groups, brand image and story, and influencer types. The three key factors proposed in this study—target customer groups, brand value and story, and creator types—offer specific brand guidance when choosing influencers. By optimizing influencer selection strategies, beauty brands can build their brand image more effectively and improve market competitiveness. The conclusions emphasize that influencer marketing should become a necessary promotional tool for beauty products. The study also highlights future research directions, including applying these strategies in other industries and more systematic data research.

**Keywords:** Influencer Marketing, Beauty Industry, Social Media, Brand Strategy

## **1. Introduction**

These days, influencer marketing has risen with the maturity of social media platforms, such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, increasingly favored by advertisers [1]. Influencers have plenty of followers or fans on social media platforms. They affect their followers' thoughts, preferences and purchasing behaviors [2, 3]. Beauty industry entrepreneurs notice that influencers have become one of the key influence factors on consumer decisions and have collaborated with them. The application and effectiveness of influencer marketing have been widely studied in various aspects of the beauty industry, including the main advantages of influencer marketing, factors influencing consumer decisions in influencers, marketing risk and so on [4, 5]. Some scholars explored the scope, effectiveness, and potential threats of influencer marketing [6]. Some confirmed the link between influencer marketing and consumers' purchase decisions, especially in Generation "Z" through surveys and samples [7]. Elias Davidsson and Danial Ahmad's research also focuses on finding the right influencer, but it focuses more on influencers' relevance and credibility with the brand [8].

However, there is a lack of studies focusing on influencer selection based on different brands and products and targeting consumers' preferences in the beauty industry. This study will be based on relevant case analyses and combined with previous experiences to provide more perspectives and suggestions for beauty industry brands on selecting influencers to achieve maximum marketing

efficiency. The findings of this research will provide insights for businesses in the beauty industry and contribute to the existing body of knowledge on influencer marketing.

## **2. Case Description**

The beauty industry is an absolute beneficiary of the development of influencer marketing. Recently, many beauty brands have become more visible through social media. However, the shift from traditional advertising marketing to influencer marketing still needs to be familiar to some advertisers. The beauty industry covers many categories, including skincare, cosmetics, personal care, medical cosmetology, etc. Common Thread Collective's statistics show that the beauty industry's market growth kept at 2.4-2.6% every year from 2012 to 2023, breaking the 90-billion-dollar mark in 2023. Beauty is also one of the most highly engaged industries in influencer marketing because social media, such as Instagram and TikTok, provide excellent conditions for posting visual content to fashion influencers. Many brands, big or not, have already become successful cases of influencer marketing. Maybelline collaborated with Gigi Hadid and Shayla Mitchell, significantly expanding its market influence and beating its parent company, L'Oréal and competitors, including Estee Lauder and Revlon, for cross-platform partnerships. Chinese niche brand Flortte rose on the TikTok e-commerce platform by partnering with many medium influencers. However, there are still many ineffective influencer ads that still follow the traditional mode of display ads. Most beauty-focused social media accounts seldom have a clear strategic positioning, making it difficult to produce differentiated content [9]. This led to a dilution of audience attention in the age of fast-scrolling media. Also, marketing commercialization has imbued beauty self-media with a utilitarian consumer hue, building an untrustworthy brand image [10]. Factor analysis and suggestions concerning influencer choice will be given to tackle these problems.

## **3. Factors analysis**

Three main factors are worth considering when an advertiser wants to choose an efficient influencer. They are target customer groups, brand value or stories, and creator types.

### **3.1. Targeted Customer Group and Product Type**

Perspectives, including genders, ages, habits, income, identities and interests, can estimate target customer groups. Women aged 16 to 65 are the main consumers of the beauty industry. However, different age groups have different consumption preferences. Middle-aged women who have some financial ability will accept expensive ingredients and anti-aging effects. Similarly, anti-acne products are more suitable for students. Makeup with strong retention and air permeability can better meet the needs of women in the workplace. The purpose of the influencer is to help the brand display typical stories of customers and typical scenes to touch the empathy points. In this respect, media platforms should also be considered since different posting forms and forums attract different users, who will be branded as potential customers.

### **3.2. Brand Image, Value and Story**

The overlap and identity of brand image, value or story of influencers are also important. For well-known big brands and distinctive small brands, they are indispensable conditions. When influencers truly identify and love the products they promote, their recommendations are more convincing and credible since they are giving positive feedback as real users. The overlap of influencers can strengthen the value of a brand or build the image quickly. Pehchaolin is a centuries-old Shanghai skincare brand in China that combines traditional Oriental aesthetics with modern technology. Its

cooperated influencer is actress Zhilei Xin, who plays the role of a charming Asian woman in a hit TV series Blossoms Shanghai. This image harmonizes with Pehchaolin's native cultural inheritance of old Shanghai.

### 3.3. Creator Type

Creator type is a vital factor in brands' choices as well. Beauty content creators can be classified into five types: tutorial-oriented, persona-driven, review-focused, lifestyle-oriented, and academic-oriented. Tutorial-oriented creators focus on teaching and technique sharing, such as makeup tutorials, product application methods, etc. The replicability of the content is a key reason viewers favor the tutorial-oriented faction. Viewers can achieve expected results akin to those in videos or photos by directly replicating the beauty products used by tutorial-oriented influencers. Following tutorial-oriented creators can also help viewers stay up-to-date with trends. They achieve marketing and sales by predicting and leading trends. Persona-driven ones emphasize artistic flair, creativity, or unique persona style and memorable characteristics. Personalization and emotional connection are the main advantages of persona-driven creators. They give followers a sense of belonging and identity, often resulting in a dedicated fan base. Review-focused ones primarily center around evaluating and comparing various beauty products and providing purchasing recommendations for the audience. Review-focused creators convey a sense of experience and neutrality, often employing a professional evaluation process and methodology. They offer convenience and facilitate comparison shopping for viewers. Lifestyle-oriented ones integrate beauty with everyday life, fashion, travel, and other related content. Lifestyle-oriented creators typically are not pure beauty influencers; their followers identify with their lifestyle and values. So, they are also called LOHAS. Using the same products as them helps fans feel closer to the ideal lifestyle. Collaborations between brands and lifestyle-oriented creators tend to show product applications in real-life scenarios and promote a healthy lifestyle ethos. Academic-oriented ones possess backgrounds in medicine, scientific research, or professional fields, offering purchasing advice to audiences from an objective perspective. They are regarded as professional and authoritative and usually provide detailed data and analysis to enhance audiences' trust.

## 4. Suggestions

In light of the analysis of these several reasons, this article will propose some suggestions and solutions, respectively.

### 4.1. Identifying Targeted Customer Groups

Determining the targeted customer group of products can help to hunt influencers. Ideal influencers should have the highest overlap in fan groups or be in line with the brand customer group image, especially for those newly established companies with limited budgets. But how to determine followers' properties? It is possible to determine genders, ages, habits or interests by using the function of products. Research on the construction of user portraits on Weibo shows that users of different ages and genders exhibit differences in emotional expression, which leads to different needs and preferences for emotional expression from influencers [11]. In other words, influencers are more likely to impact audiences of similar age groups or genders. Also, special interests and living habits provide application scenarios. For example, people who demand sunscreen typically engage in outdoor activities. In this case, influencers who show sports lifestyles will be more suitable. Similarly, people who engage in frequent social activities tend to have a higher demand for cosmetics. Fashion bloggers are more likely to attract them. Income level is another perspective worth considering because it directly relates to brand level. The student group is an easily identifiable low-income group.

Based on these predictions, brands should first do market research or social media data analysis to identify customer profiles.

#### **4.2. Selecting the Right Influencers**

Choosing the right influencers can make brand image building much more efficient. Big-name brands usually collaborate with celebrities or stars rather than normal influencers on social media since they do not need to build brand awareness with a long-tail effect. What they need are attractiveness and higher market positioning. In comparison, niche brands need more impressions and trustworthiness. They can achieve this goal by telling brand story and faith. In this case, influencers who are good at storytelling can be excellent choices. Characteristic brands prefer influencers with similar images. These typical styles are widely loved by their fans, and it is easier to allow their fans to love everything associated with them. This action can also inform potential customers that “I will be the style you like”. No matter what kind of brand, it is important to reach a consensus with influencers on brand value. So, advertisers need to put more effort into communication to ensure they convey accurate ideas. Based on this, allowing influencers to express their genuine thoughts freely may yield better marketing results. They can give feedback on two sides, but these disadvantages should never concern product efficacy or safety. For example, a shortage of packaging and temporary side effects are harmless.

#### **4.3. Matching Influencer Types with Brand Needs**

The choice of influencer type also requires careful consideration. For personality brands, tutorial- and lifestyle-oriented influencers are perfect collaborators to present brand charm. With "Oriental Makeup" as its entry point, Florasis has become the top makeup brand in China in just four years. The first shot in which Florasis established its brand reputation was in the live broadcast room of top anchor Li Jiaqi, one of the top-tier anchors in China. The main marketing method that he used was cosmetic teaching. Besides, the collaboration with lifestyle-oriented influencers has the same theory as the image shaping of characteristic brands. So, why not incorporate distinctively personalized products into a lifestyle of the same style? Brands specializing in certain fields or functions tend to collaborate with academic-oriented and review-focused influencers. These products win through strength, involving multiple areas such as makeup, skincare, sun protection, and more. The specific type of influencers they target depends on the situation. That leaves persona-driven influencers unspecified. As analyzed above, this kind of influencer has both a group of loyal fans and a creative capacity. These conditions allow them to adapt to various marketing products. These suggestions are proposed based on the abovementioned factors, delineated into three levels. When referencing, it's important to consider a comprehensive view.

### **5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, this research proposes three common factors that advertisers should consider and provides suggestions to optimize the use of social media influencers for branding purposes. This study argues that, Firstly, brands should identify their target customer groups to find the most suitable influencers. Secondly, choosing the right influencers can make brand image building more efficient, with major brands often collaborating with celebrities, while niche brands should select influencers who excel in storytelling. Finally, different types of influencers suit various brand strategies: personality-driven brands can partner with tutorial-oriented or lifestyle-oriented influencers. In contrast, brands focused on specific fields should collaborate with academic-oriented or review-focused influencers.

Influencer marketing is a new and competitive track based on fast market trend transformation and consumption habits of the younger generation. Unlike traditional advertising and spokesperson marketing, it builds a more trustworthy relationship between brands and consumers. Therefore, influencer marketing ought to become a necessary promotion for most products.

This article still has some limitations, and it calls for more exploration and research in the future. The article only analyses influencer choice in the beauty industry, while this kind of marketing is also popular in many other industries, such as tourism, fitness, and electronics. In addition, this article needed to conduct more data research; the data mentioned in the text is all based on existing literature in the last few years. Besides, only general conclusions are provided, and the special circumstances of each advertiser cannot be considered. In the next step, the writer will focus on marketing surveys and more case collection and create a systematic mode to assist decisions directly. This methodology can also be applied to other industries needing further exploration.

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