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Research Topic

How consumers behaviours are affected by digital influencers and digital marketing strategies – An analysis of Cristiano Ronaldo

Bachelor Thesis

Geneva Business School

Bachelor in Business Administration

Major in

Digital Marketing

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Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank the participants in the focus group interview who have contributed with valuable experience and knowledge. Secondly, I would like to show my appreciation to my supervisor Roberta Giannini, who's guided me through the work and contributed with much useful advice during my research.

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Nathalie Bjork
Gothenburg, Sweden
30th of May 2020

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the phenomenon of influencer marketing from a consumer's perspective (De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2017). The goal is to find out how consumers view the company's purpose with influencer marketing. Secondly, influencers usually have a personal relationship with their followers, this means that influencer marketing is considered more effective than traditional marketing (Blanchard, 2011). If a consumer is affected by an influencer's endorsement of a particular product, they will most likely be interested in buying it (Mukherjee, 2009). Additionally, consumers' effects and behaviors are changing and social media users identify themselves with online profiles on different digital platforms (Bodnar and Cohen, 2012). In order to fulfill this thesis purpose, a focus group has been used to discuss these issues based on three research questions; Does the influencer's source credibility and the number of sponsored posts affect the consumer's purchase intentions? Does the right choice of influencers type affect the customer behavior? What are the possible positive or negative effects from digital marketing strategies regarding the customers' impressions about the brands? The theoretical material has been analyzed and compared with the results from the focus group (Torraco, 2005). Based on the study's chosen theoretical concepts and models. It is these analyzes that then form the basis for the conclusions the research generated.

In this research, the most followed celebrity on Instagram will be analyzed. The influencer that has been chosen to question is Cristiano Ronaldo; this is because he is famous among both women and men and all ages. During this past month, we have analyzed him as an influencer on Instagram in order to understand how consumers' behaviors are affected by influencers.

The findings show consumers to be critical of influencer marketing and their alternative motive. Consumers find that companies should choose an influencer that is well renowned and has a high credibility. Finally, the effects that consumers experience influencer advertising are partly the creation of emotions and slightly the increased awareness of the brand and the products (Jameson, 2017).

Keywords:
Brand awareness, digital consumer behavior, digital marketing strategies, influencer marketing, online advertising.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Traditional marketing has gone from communicating through newspapers to modern marketing through social media (Blanchard, 2011). Traditional marketing was previously product-oriented, where the primary purpose was to make consumers aware of new products or services at extra cost. The marketing channels used to reach target audience were mainly via television, radio, newspapers, and emails (Kotler, 2000)

In recent years, traditional marketing has been developed to digital marketing (Keller, 2008). The internet has taken over a large part of the marketing and business industry. The main advantage of internet marketing is that companies can more easily collect information about consumer behavior and how purchasing decisions are affected by adapting the marketing mix (Kotler, 2000). This means that with the help of technological development, society has been characterized by digital marketing strategies. Even earlier, when we were in the traditional marketing stage, useful statistics could be carried out with the help of the consumer's judgment. With digital marketing, companies have been able to get more statistics from the consumer's judgment without physically sending out the request. The question is how companies position themselves with relatively new development (Kotler, 2000).

A new market has been created quickly, which has given companies opportunities to reach out to new customers (Keller, 2008). Not much research has been done on consumers' perceptions of this new type of marketing. Consequently, it needs to be replenished with new academic research. It's clear there is a gap for this in the business corporations and therefore this management report is conducted. If the marketing industry understands consumers' perceptions, we will know how to implement more advantageously targeted marketing.

The phenomenon of social media runs a large part of our lives, at the same time as its use and commitment have radically evolved into daily use. Social networks and social media spread and became a more significant part of society in the early 2000s, as the internet's accessibility grew according to Prell (2011). In the past, social networks were mainly used to enable individuals to share common interests, such as music, movies, and education. Today, individuals primarily use social networks and social media to communicate and interact with each other (2011).

Continuing, Prell (2011) showed in her study that social media also enables people to stay in touch with loved ones. In addition to this, social media has opened up the opportunity to meet new people. Social media is a significant part of people's lives all over the world, which means that companies are greatly affected by it. When social media came along, it changed how companies conducted their communications and marketing, as well as the impact on product creation.

According to Bodnar and Cohen (2012), social media and networking is the fastest way for businesses to grow in today's society. Social media can help companies strengthen and build a good reputation by engaging with social media to enhance customer experience and thereby support brand building.

Companies that have built up a well-known name become more attractive to both customers and other stakeholders in the industry (Kotler, 2000). Using social media is also beneficial for companies. The certain aspect that it makes is consumers recognizing the company, by seeing the corporate name more often and in more places (Bodnar and Cohen, 2012). Companies also have an excellent opportunity to communicate the company's values to consumers in a compelling way, which also builds the brand. Context is essential for reaching out to customers' social media content such as blog posts, tweets, and Linkedin (Bodnar and Cohen, 2012).

Today, social media consists of over 100 different platforms. Instagram is one of the dominant digital forums on social media, which is originally a mobile application (also available web-based) that allows people and companies to create moments, edit and share their photographs and short videos (Business of Apps, 2020).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In order to answer the study's research questions, a literature review of marketing and consumer behaviors online was also conducted to increase the understanding of how different types of strategies can affect consumers. Secondly, how influencer marketing is affecting them. Influencer marketing is a relatively new area that has recently developed as new technology. The use of social media has become more extensive. Furthermore, there are already some essays, manuals, and articles in the field published on the internet, among other things. However, research in this area is still limited in scope, but some interesting studies have been done. Torraco's (2005) study illustrates that a literature review is recommended.

An understanding of the subject area is an important starting point for formulating the study's purpose and issues, and for gathering relevant empirical material (Torraco, 2005). This literature review provides an overview of the area that my research is affected with. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the subject, it has been found literature by, among other things, searching the internet through google scholar and the local library in Gothenburg, Sweden. In addition to this, the keywords were very helpful. The keywords used are "Brand Awareness," "Digital Consumer Behaviors," "Digital Marketing Strategies," "Influencer Marketing," and "Online Advertising,".

Influencer marketing

The increased interest in social media marketing has been to sponsor and collaborate with people who have a large number of followers on social media platforms (De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders 2017). These people are called influencers and are defined as a person who has the power to influence and change their followers' attitudes and behaviors through social media (Ong and Ito, 2018). An influencer builds his or her brand on various platforms, such as blogs, Youtube, and Instagram. At the same time, those who are perceived as celebrities (endorsements) have often become known through their profession (Mukherjee, 2009).

Compared to traditional marketing, where communication is often one-way, the influencer has an interactive audience who values their opinion with great confidence (Mukherjee, 2009). The use of endorsers, traditionally known people, has long been used by companies to achieve a better reputation and increased sales. Gräve (2017) means that in recent years, influencers have established themselves in the market and have proven to be a more effective form of endorser for companies to use.

Brand awareness

Customers can demonstrate loyalty in several ways. Furthermore, by staying with a company, whether that continuity is defined as a relationship or not, or by increasing the repurchase rate and the number of purchases. Customers can also become advocates for the company concerned and play an essential role in other customers' decision-making (Kotler, 2000).

Companies should, therefore, review the factors that can increase consumer confidence (Kotler, 2000). If companies can reduce the risk factors, consumer confidence can increase, which can result in more purchases on the Internet. Many identified risk factors have a strong connection to the trust consumers have for the company (Kotler, 1999).

Brand loyalty

The definitions of brand loyalty are many and have changed over time. Kotler (2000) explains how previous research has chosen to explain the concept based on purchase frequency and put less focus on the underlying factors of consumer buyback frequency. Therefore, Keller (2008) means that they decide to see brand loyalty as relationship-based, where brand loyalty is the relationship between behavioral and attitudinal loyalty.

Continuing Keller, (2008) also uses behavioral and attitudinal loyalty concepts to show that commitment should not be defined solely based on the consumer's repurchase frequency. Behavioral loyalty is described here as repeated purchases of the same brand. In contrast, attitudinal loyalty is aimed at the consumer associating the brand with a unique value. Keller (2008) defines brand loyalty as customer-brand relationships. The foundation of brand resonance and building a strong band, deeply held commitment to purchase a product or service from a brand without being influenced by different factors. Kotler (1999) also highlights the benefits of brand loyalty. He believes that brand loyalty can contribute to increased word-of-mouth. The willingness to recommend further positive messages about a brand is essential to companies. It is this form of communication of information that seems to be most receptive to other consumers. It reduces the chances of brand switching (Kotler, 2000).

Marketing strategies

Enforcements of market strategies are defined as the use of a strategy in a company to clarify the company's goals (Baker, 2014). The strategy itself can be defined as a composition of the company's business objectives. A useful and practical application of strategy is directly linked to the company's performance (2014).

Usually, a failed performance can result from a more common applied strategy (Baker, 2014). No matter how well planned and elaborate a company's strategy, if it is not used correctly, it will probably not contribute much to the company. It is said that it is better to succeed with the application of a weaker strategy than to succeed poorly with well-planned strategies (Baker, 2014). The absence of a common strategy for identifying the best practices can result in many companies trying out different alternatives of processes and strategy, rather than gathering information as a reasonable basis for a strategy plan (Kotler, 1999).

Companies do not evaluate their strategies well enough, which reinforces that companies have too little information as a basis in their strategies (Kotler, 2000). Management has a

crucial role in how strategies are applied (2000). The marketing managers' commitment and actions are essential for integrating the company's overall level so that the work is successful and that they control the performance is linked to the strategy (2000).

Kotler (2000) believes that it is of the utmost importance to plan strategies that company management involves the employees in the process. To achieve positive strategic results, centralized organizations need to receive market feedback, which is not recommended if they are in a rapidly changing market. Bodnar and Cohen (2011), believe that decentralization promotes companies since employees have closer contact with customers and, in this way, can create positive values based on decisions made at a non-central level.

Influencer selection and recognition

According to Brown and Hayes (2008), the results of digital marketing have proven to be much more effective and successful compared to traditional marketing. This means that companies' sales increase more through influencer marketing than if, for example, they send out flyers. Taroni (2019), states that Instagram is the platform that is considered to be the best and most effective in influencer marketing. The influencer promotes a product or brand in a way that is natural to him or her. When a company uses influencer marketing, one product is usually advertised at a time. Typical products are technology, beauty products, clothes, and supplements.

With a growing advertising market among online shopping, companies need to look for new effective ways to reach consumers. The increasing popularity of using influencer marketing has led to a normalization of the phenomenon among companies. Research on influencer marketing is still a relatively new area. However, there is plenty of analysis according to Jameson (2017) on how marketing should be designed together with or with the help of a known person and how it affects the consumer. One approach that has been investigated in several cases is how to source credibility. That is, how credible a consumer perceives the source, influences marketing by using famous people (Jameson, 2017). When advertising via influencers is conducted on a digital platform, such as Instagram, it can be problematic to apply the previous research directly to influencer marketing. Therefore, the research gap that is intended to be filled is whether influencer marketing differs from the results that previous research has concluded on marketing with celebrities in general.

Based on an experimental study, which studied the relationship between the number of products a known person advertises and the consumer's attitude towards the influencer (Jameson, 2017). Consumer's relationships with influencers and celebrities on the internet and social media, also called Parasocial Relationship (PSR) (Dibble, Hartmann and Rosaen, 2016). It has been shown to influence consumer behavior in different ways (Jameson, 2017). PSR via social media has a positive impact on the source, or influencer/celebrities, credibility, which in turn has a positive effect on consumer confidence in the brand and purchase intention (Jameson, 2017).

In the book, "The Influencer Effect: Insider Tips For Gearing Up Your Online Success" written by Jameson (2017, p. 57). Mark Zucekerburg stated,

> *"People influence people. Nothing influences people more than a recommendation from a trusted friend. A trusted referral influences people more than the best broadcast message. A trusted referral is the Holy Grail of advertising."* - Mark Zuckerberg Founder and CEO of Facebook.

Marketing impact

Influencers have had a significant impact on Instagram (Trivedi and Sama, 2019). If an influencer is seen as a friend rather than a celebrity that the follower admires, its credibility becomes more significant. If the attitude of a blog is positive, it can have a positive impact on the attitude of the follower to the website or blog or Instagram platform (Che, Cheung and Thadani, 2017). This, in turn, can lead to positive attitudes towards the brand, which can increase buying intentions. Something that is of great importance for trust is the source's credibility to the information available online (Sami, Asrar and Bhutto, 2017). The credibility of the information comes mainly from celebrities who use blogs, Instagram, Linkedin, and other networking platforms. Credibility is primarily based on the attractiveness, competence, and reliability of the person who spreads the message. The quality and conviction of the argument also have an impact on how consumers are affected by marketing. Credible sources have a more significant opportunity to influence consumers' attitudes (Sami, Asrar, and Bhutto, 2017).

Customer loyalty and customer loyalty programs

All businesses should work to create customer loyalty. In addition to this, loyal consumers whose interest extends over a more continued period are more valuable than the short-term ones from an economic perspective (Kotler, 1999). Bodnar & Cohen, (2012) also explains that the work of attracting new consumers is more demanding than retaining existing ones. Loyalty is about getting consumers to make repeat purchases from original retailers, even though offers from other retailers are more attractive in some cases. It has been shown that consumers are not affected for various reasons but choose to stay with their original retailer. Loyal consumers can also choose to pay more because they know how the service of the retailer works. In this way, they can recommend the brand to other potential consumers (Priyankara, Weerasiri, Dissanayaka and Jinadasa, 2017). Kotler (1999) means that loyal consumers can give companies a profit in the long run as the relationship between the two grows over time.

Creating mutual relationships with consumers is a great way to build loyalty. This can be done through special offers to consumers (Jameson, 2017). As a loyal consumer, the will to receive and discuss various discounts will be more reliable than for those who shop for the first time (Bodnar and Cohen, 2012). Kotler (1999) states that loyalty can be to

find the pattern in the purchase that consumers have made, study the behavior the consumer had when making a purchase.

Customer satisfaction and trust are two factors that create customer loyalty. Trust is an essential factor in creating relationships between retailers and consumers (Kotler, 1999). In accordance with Bodnar and Cohen (2012) trust and also competence are factors in being able to create customer loyalty within the company. Having the will to implement a successful e-commerce company can be an important component.

Summary influencer marketing

There is a lack of literature due to the phenomenon of influencer marketing. It includes marketing, new human behavior, and digitization of our society. It is a new behavior that is a whole new way of marketing advertising. As stated by N'Goala (2015) the digital marketing industry manipulates the customer subconsciously; we humans build a relationship between brand and customer in a completely different way. Before that, it was enough with traditional advertising and having a recipient. If you look at what advertising and marketing was approached ten, twenty, and thirty years ago.

What will the advertising look like in ten years? Ten years ago, there was not even the phenomenon of influencer marketing. Twenty years ago there was no Internet advertising, and everything has changed rapidly. The old fashioned advertising world is dying (Simcock and Lynn, 2006). There is not much scientific basis for charting this new phenomenon that reveals what future marketing methods will look like. Digitization is increasing, faster than it has been mapped out on the effect it has had on society. Secondly, defining genuineness, and determining the credibility of different influencers in today's society (Wathen and Burkell, 2002). The gap is the lack of literature; the market and trends are growing faster than the norms. Furthermore, it is interesting to study about the fact that a consumer actively follows an influencer, who publishes sponsored posts, influences the influencer's source credibility and the consumer's purchase intention and brand attitude. This is seen as relevant because it is made clear that there is a difference in how the consumer is exposed to advertising.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Either quantitative or qualitative research methods can formulate the research strategy for a study. The choice between the two strategies also shapes how data is collected, analyzed, and then presented. Qualitative research is advantageous to conduct by getting answers to how something is or to understand the respondents' subjective opinions (Taylor, 2005).

To attain the purpose of our study, empirical material needed to be collected. Describing the influencer's source credibility and how the consumer's brand attitude. Furthermore, how purchase intentions were affected in various volumes of influencers and marketing strategies. First off for the research we worked on is the theoretical frame of reference to analyze and discuss the empirical framework. The theory was developed from relevant literature, and academic articles, and the empirical consisted of a focus group.

The thesis consists of both primary and secondary data with the aim of being able to answer the research questions. Primary data is something that was collected by ourselves, which means that the collected information is used for the first time (Church, 2002). Primary data consists of empirical data based on the focus group interview that was conducted. Someone other than us writes the secondary data in the thesis, such as writers, researchers, and journalists.

The secondary data consists, literature and academic articles and are sources that someone else has collected for a purpose other than ours. The secondary data in this thesis helps to give the study a better basis (Church, 2002). We used secondary data primarily when the theory was collected before we started the focus group interview. In the collection of secondary data, measures were taken to maintain a thorough source of criticism. This is because there would be credibility in the facts that were collected (Church, 2002). We asked source-credibility questions such as: Who wrote the source? For what purpose do we think the text was written? Is the book relevant to our study? We intended to achieve credibility in the secondary data by seeking further information about the authors and the text's background. In addition to this, we conducted a qualitative interview with a focus group with private individuals who were active on social media and followed at least one influencer on their channels.

Focus groups

Qualitative interviews are a common data collection method for qualitative research methods. It has been chosen to interview a focus group with six people (Wilkinson, 1999). Focus group interviews are seen as less structured in comparison with formal interviews. In a qualitative interview, the researcher focuses on the interviewee's views and perceptions (Fielding, 1993). This is because there is a great interest in taking part in the participant's perspective on the questions asked. When working with qualitative interviews, the interview subjects should be able to elaborate on their responses. When interviewing focus groups, it is also desirable for the group to be questioned to discuss a particular issue or topic (Vaughn, Schumm, and Sinagub, 1996). Qualitative interviews

are usually conducted between two people, that is, the interview object and the researcher, but when using focus groups, there should be at least six to ten people interviewed simultaneously in a group (Vaughn, Schumm and Sinagub, 1996). Qualitative interviews revolve around something that all interested parties may feel involved in and have an interest in.

Chosen participants

When the study was chosen to be based on a qualitative research strategy, it was considered that focus groups were the most suitable method for collecting the data. This is because, according to Wilkinson (1999) focus groups allow researchers to create an understanding of why people do what they do. In a regular interview, the participant is asked questions about the reasons why they have a specific opinion. However, in a focus group, there is an opportunity for the participants to explore each other's ideas for having a particular view. It is then possible to get more interesting answers. There is a higher chance that a participant will actually think through their response, or perhaps even change the answer, in a focus group when it hears how the other participants reason. Therefore, because of this it's considered a focus group to be an excellent method as we want to have many different opinions on a specific topic.

It was decided to have between six and eight participants for the focus group. Vaughn, Schumm and Sinagub (1996) recommend the most common group size is six to ten participants. This meant that we chose to have a maximum of eight participants. Continuing, Vaughn, Schumm, and Sinagub, (1996) they also point out that a significant problem that researchers use focus groups is that participants who said they should show up did not always do so. This information was kept, and eight participants were reached. The day before, two men dropped out of the focus group interview. As a result, the focus group eventually consisted of six participants.

Presentation of the focus groups and participants:

Participant 1: Female 28 years, Marketing Manager
Participant 2: Man 29 years, Business Development & Growth Manager
Participant 3: Man 28 years, Social Media Manager
Participant 4: Female 27 years, Teacher
Participant 5: Female 28 years, E-Commerce Coordinator
Participant 6: Female 28 years, E-Commerce and Marketing Manager

It was chosen that at least half of the participants would work in marketing, and the other half would have varying professions. This is to see if they think in different ways. Those who work with social media may be more familiar with influencer marketing. What was discovered in the context of the focus group was that those who work with social media and marketing were more favorably placed on influencers and influencer marketing than those who did not work with it. It was deliberately chosen not to divide the focus groups according to what profession the participants had to get more interesting discussions with different opinions.

When using a focus group, the emphasis is usually on a specific theme or subject area in which you are immersed (Wilkinson, 1999). It was chosen to engage in influencer marketing, consumer behavior, and a focus of a specific influencer, Cristiano Ronaldo for the interview. Additionally, it was put together an interview guide that was the basis for the focus group. The theoretical frame of reference was the basis for these questions. The questions asked the participants were then answered and discussed around. In a focus group, participants often argue with each other and question each other's opinions (Wilkinson, 1999). These arguments lead to more realistic descriptions of what people admire and think regarding influencer marketing. It was found that many exciting discussions arose during the focus group.

The meeting with the focus group occurred in a quiet environment. The interview was carried out after working hours, in order to obtain a calm environment in the office without disturbance from other people who work there every day. The respondents had to sit around a large table where everyone saw each other to see and understand each other more during the conversation.

The focus group took place on May 20, 2020. Four women and two men participated. The participants adhered to the topic, which meant that we did not direct the participants back to the main topic. Some participants talked less than others and getting their opinions on different issues the interviewer sometimes had to go in and ask them specifically.

Guest and Macqueen (2007) states that there are several benefits to transcribing. It facilitates a thorough analysis of what the participants said in the interview. Therefore, after the focus group interview, the interviewer transcribes all data collected. The transcription was essential to include everything that the participants said during the focus group. In this way it would not miss anything and that the analysis would be credible.

Qualitative data

To analyze all data from the focus groups, a thematic analysis was used and frameworked as a strategy. The results were divided into different themes. To find these themes, we searched for words and expressions that were repeated by the focus group participants. In accordance to Vaughn, Schumm, and Sinagub (1996), the weight of repetitions is among the most common criteria for determining a pattern and for constituting a theme. The transcript was reviewed individually. The topics that were considered relevant to the study were then highlighted in Chapter Four.

Chapter 4: Findings

Cristiano Ronaldo findings

The material of Cristiano Ronaldo shows that it has been interpreted that the selected influencer communicates strategically and uses different strategies (Jameson, 2017). In addition to adapting the content and making it more interesting. These myths are grounded and reflected by our individualism. Furthermore, the society where individual people's initiative and freedom are what color our life choices and us is a line with what Hewstone, Stroebe and Jonas (2015) describes. This means that all myths can be linked to the recipient's relevance and how their worldview looks around a perfect lifestyle (Prell, 2011). By analyzing Cristiano Ronaldos Instagram carefully, we could see that the material shows a continuous presentation without dissatisfaction, complaints, and the life of influencers and celebrities is only constructed as joyful and positive. Their lives are portrayed as part of the desire and dream of many, without problems and misery, which is identified as a clear strategy on the part of all influencers to produce a particular lifestyle.

Cristiano's marketing strategies

This section analyzes the presentation of Cristianos' strategies. It is presented how Cristiano actively uses repetition and product placement to make all products appear of the same value (Keller, 2008). Finally, we analyze how low-engagement products are displayed as equals with high-engagement products. In addition to this, Cristiano Ronaldo contributes to different life philosophies based on the presentation and repetition of how he lives his life. There is a constant repetition of what choices he makes (Kotler, 2000). The product placement strategy is also about how the product is presented in a context in order for the company and influencers' brands to contribute to reinforcing the image that each brand wants to show.

During the last month, we have analyzed Cristiano Ronaldo's material carefully. Cristiano Ronaldo is not only one of the world's best football players, but also one of the world's most-followed influencers. The choice of platform is Instagram as Taroni (2019) states Instagram is the most successful social media platform for Influencers. In appendix nr 11, Cristiano's latest post between May 3 to May 15, 2020 will be found.

Reputation

In the analysis of the material, there is a precise repetition sign. Repeating objects, texts, or symbols create higher subject involvement created, which means that individuals readily absorb information (Kotler, 1999). This means that all influencers contribute to a particular philosophy of life that they stand for by producing and repeating how they live their lives, and continuously by repeatedly repeating to show what choices they make.

Mueller (2014) states that the repetition takes place in the form of a constant luxury. Secondly, in recurring expensive materials that makes the pictures and a consistently clean and beautiful home that shows a perfect exterior. Cristiano uses a specific repetition of attributes, such as luxury events, different superior housing that is recognizable, photos of family, and showing his champions league trophies.

When repetition occurs, the likelihood of arousing interest and creating relevance increases as it is a volume exposure that Mueller (2014) believes is a strategy for reaching out with messages. Cristiano always wears a tracksuit and workout clothes from either Nike or Adidas. These examples are found in appendix 12 and 13. In many posts, they are placed as an essential part of the presentation and framing of the image. The audience subconsciously does not see it as a promotion. Moreover, there are recurring posts that include the promotion of his own brand CR7 and also Clear hair care; this is found in appendix 14.

All the above features are applied together with different products in the posts. There are also partnerships with exclusive brands such as Nike, Herbalife, Uni campus, and many more. Everything, regardless of product, is presented with the same perfection and elegance. This means that all products are experienced exclusively together with all the attributes and characters that influencers consistently attribute to them in their posts. This repetition leads to higher substance involvement as the recipient recognizes signs and different brands (Glynn and Woodside, 2009). In this way, top-of-mind is also created.

Morgan, Pritchard, and Pride (2011) believe it is crucial, especially for brands with low involvement products. Since these products do not have the same extensive mental process, which involves the processing of information, as high-involvement products and therefore, it is crucial to achieving meaningful connections with them. Furthermore, Cristiano also repeated collaborations with various companies, such as Nike football in appendix 15.

When influencers continuously and regularly remind recipients through recurring posts about the same brand and products, they thus become spokespersons and face outwards for the brands with which they collaborate; in this case, Cristiano has been an ambassador for Nike football for several years. This means that both the brand is associated with celebrity and that Cristiano is associated with the brand. The brands thus have a symbolic meaning in the lives of influencers, and they add something to their life story. The level of involvement is perceived to be higher because there is a symbolic meaning (Morgan, Pritchard, and Pride, 2011). Images are also repeated where Ronaldo has his children in the posts, as in Cristiano's top 10 most liked posts found in appendix 1-10.

By using strategies around closeness, recognition, and emotional aspects, messages can be more easily transmitted (Bodnar and Cohen, 2012). The children can create connotative sentences by representing a closeness and recognition in many people and creating emotional bonds. In all posts where the children are present, they are shown

with a smile on their lips as well as clean, which makes them feel well cared for. Examples of posts where the children are in focus are in appendix 16.

Product placement

After analyzing Cristiano's material, a new type of product placement has been identified. Williams, Petrosky, Hernandez, and Page (2011) discuss the importance and relevance that an individual consumer has for a product. Secondly, that the buying process has an important role when it decides on brand choice. Furthermore, this way the brands make it possible to identify themselves with like-minded groups (Shalev and Morwitz, 2012). Influencers are skilled at constructing the communication they want to approach. In paid collaborations, the connotations show that the products are not just placed in focus alone in an image. Besides, the product's price is never mentioned. However, the product is instead produced as a natural part of itself and their lives. Jameson (2017) believes that it is essential for influencers to show how the products add value to their story. The product blends into the picture as a natural part of their lives, but at the same time, it stands out as in appendix 17.

Another post where the product blends into the picture is for his own personal brand CR7 where the consumers subconsciously can see in the post that Cristiano is wearing this specific underwear. The underwear by CR7 blends into the interior in a way that makes it appear as interior detail. This is found in appendix 18. It also describes what the brand stands for and why influencers appreciate the product or service. Influencer marketing is linked to influencers' brands and specific profiles (Jameson, 2017). Therefore, the contexts that complement the image are among the most apparent differences between the previous era of product placement and the new one. Ronaldo's content is professional and also positively written with a painting language that always consists of attributes that enhance the effect on the images (Bodnar and Cohen, 2012). This way, Influencers thus appear as experts who know what they are talking about.

However, the texts can also be perceived as constructed by the companies behind the product or service more than having the influencers write the content themselves (Bodnar and Cohen, 2012). This is because the texts are often extremely detailed and information-rich about the product or brand itself. The authenticity of influencers can be questioned as recipients can see when the context becomes too complicated in the information about the product and thus not perceived as equally personal in appendix 19. To summarize product placement, influencers as Cristiano Ronaldo are adept at getting the products to be included in the images in a way that adds value and consists of the lifestyle and identity that the different influencers convey. This means that Cristiano Ronaldo becomes the products himself and that the product placement thus takes place at an advanced level (Kotler, 2000). The products are carefully placed with thought and are considered, in a stylized but straightforward way, very important in the context and together strengthen both the product and influencer's brand.

Engagement

Hewstone, Stroebe, and Jonas (2015) mean that high valued products are products of high personal relevance but also high risk-taking. Lower-valued products are defined, on the contrary, as the decision-making processes involving low-risk taking and particularly low importance to the consumer. The production of all products that Cristiano Ronaldo is presenting is communicated equally and with equal importance in the messages. Based on this observation, low-valued products meet consistent communication as with higher valued products. Examples of this are found in appendix 20 and appendix 21.

Focus group findings

This chapter presents the compiled findings of the focus group meeting. The results are reported under different headings based on the themes that affect the topics of this research. Different types of approaches that were addressed during the focus group interview. These are discussed to enable the issues to be analyzed from a broader perspective, as Wilkinson (1999) mentions. The women and men are all residents in Sweden, and the participants in the focus group use Instagram on a private level. Several also used it in connection with work. The following section presents the results and findings from the focus group. The results are continuously analyzed. All names listed are anonymized. The transcription of the interview is found in appendix 22, and has been translated by the author; thus, the interview was in Swedish.

Influencers

Many of the participants agreed that they all had a common idea of what an influencer is. The participants' understanding of an influencer is that it is something superficial and often they have an approach of showing a "perfect" life (Mukherjee, 2009). In addition to this, they also believe it is a lifestyle and a profession. There were some who did not agree with the image that an influencer is a person with a perfect life, and it was those who work daily on social media. They entered into a discussion that there is a difference between being an influencer and an inspirational person. In addition to this, a pattern we perceived in the focus group was that the participants only actively followed influencers they could relate to on a personal level. It was much debated that it was vital that they share the same values fairly or were inspired by the influencers they chose to follow. When asked, do you follow any specific influences?

- *"Health and some B-celebrities. I don't follow many but you easily slide into many other accounts when surfing around. So it feels like I follow a lot of people that I often run into online every now and then. I Also follow some "sad-life stories" where you follow a "journey" in rehabilitation in different ways." - Participant number 4, 2020-05-20*

- *"A lot of sports and footballers. They may not be direct influencers from the beginning, but they probably become influencers." - Participant number 3, 2020-*

Something discussed several times in the focus groups was the entrepreneur Bianca Ingrosso and Margaux Ditz (Swedish Influencers). Several of the participants consider these two women as entrepreneurs, who have taken their influencer profession to the next level and created their brands through their platform as influencers. When the participants were asked to give examples of when you purchased things from influencer marketing they responded:

- *"I have bought things that Bianca Ingrosso advertised". - Participant number 5, 2020-05-20*

In summary, participants agreed that the image they have when they hear the word influencer is a superficial person working on social media. Participants also agreed that they actively follow people they can relate to on a personal level or who inspired them. The conversation around the issue was whether an influencer's credibility around collaborations. All participants agreed several times during the interview that price always matters when buying products online.

Influencer marketing

When the participants were asked, "What do you think about when you hear "Influencer"?

Most participants replied that it is an effective way to market a product and service in today's society. Many also agreed that the word Influencer makes them think about celebrities and people who live in a "bubble."

- *"People who kind of live in a bubble, maybe like a lifestyle." - Participant number 5, 2020-05-20*

When asked, do you see it as "advertising" if there is an influencer showing it?

- *"It depends entirely on what you think about the person. For example, Bianca does a lot of advertising for specific products where she says she cannot live without that particular product, but if you know that it is only paid then it will not be credible." - Participant number 5, 2020-05-20*

In summary, participants agreed that the credibility of influencer marketing is diminishing more, as influencers can often advertise different and competing products on a daily basis from different brands. Participants also shared that they chose not to follow influencers who advertise too much on their Instagram because it is annoying with an overflow of advertisement. In addition to this, the influencer is no longer perceived as credible.

- *"I also think a lot about all the podcasters. They may not be influencers from the beginning, but they have evolved now because that's where they get their money from. In the beginning when most people started casting there was some advertising or company sponsoring but now there are too many advertisements. If there are new commercials in the podcast then I can listen to them but not the ones that are pre-recorded and always the same." - Participant number 3*

Consumer behavior

In the focus group, participants discussed the relationship that is built between an influencer and its followers. Many agreed that an influencer could usually be seen as a friend when the followers get deeply involved into their lives. Several participants said that they often buy products that their friends have recommended to them. That discussions led to the fact that it is probably a significant approach to influencers being able to get their followers buy the products that they endorse. However, the relationship that is created is similar to a friendship relationship, and the follower then sees the marketing on the influencer's Instagram as a recommendation instead of what it is, marketing and advertising.

- *"I bought ACO beauty products when Bianca was advertising it. Also when she promoted from the brand Stronger who is very huge on influencer marketing and almost only makes advertising through digital channels" - Participant number 1, 2020-05-20*

In the focus group, the participants concluded that they reflected very much on whether the marketing is credible or not. The majority of participants are doubtful if the products advertised by influencers are reliable, or if some influencers only do it for the money.

Regarding the purpose of celebrity advertising, the responses were relatively similar among the different participants. One of the topics that appeared was that, as a company, you want to reach a broad audience with the message about their brand or products; depending on what influencers you collaborate with. According to the focus group participants, the consumer relating to the celebrity in various aspects can make this possible. The influencer thus forms a bridge between the consumer and the brand or product. When asked is it important as a consumer to be loyal to a company? Why?

- *"No, as long as the price is right and what I want, it doesn't matter. But is it a commodity I could do my purchases in two different stores and the product is basically the same. Then it is only the price that controls my purchase. But I am loyal to the shopping mall NK, because I have a membership there. But if you are expected to be loyal as a consumer then you need to get something in return from the company." - Participant number 1, 2020-05-20*

Influencer selection

When it comes to what criteria of companies' selections of collaborations with influencers. Participants believed that the basis for choosing an influencer that a company decides to work with is crucial. The participants in the focus group all agreed on. This specific issue is an essential decision for companies. The importance of an influencer having a good reputation is essential. When asked: Does it matter to you which influencer company chooses to work with? Some participants also mentioned that they would never buy something from a brand where the influencer has been involved in different scandals.

Target group recognition

When it came to recognize an icon, it became evident during the focus group that celebrity is a highly subjective concept. When a picture was shown on the tennis star Serena Williams, only one person recognized her. While the image of Cristiano Ronaldo in "ordinary" clothes, everyone recognized him. The focus group had similar thoughts regarding Cristiano Ronaldo, but some of them differed. The impression of Cristiano was negative, this due to his approach in his younger days as a "coky" individual.

- *"I don't follow him, but I still think he's really cool and professional. Think it's cool that he's such a perfectionist in both personal life and work life." - Participant number 5*

Based on this, the focus group participants believe it is of utmost importance for the companies to choose an influencer that targets a broad target group and a celebrity who is recognized. This is to enable as many people as possible to be affected by the fact that an influencer is involved in the advertising.

Consumer effects

The effects that the focus group participants felt that celebrity advertising had on them were mostly about creating emotions, both positive and negative. Another perceived impact that emerged during the discussions was that Cristiano's commercial created almost no awareness of the brand and the product. Furthermore, the observed effect was dependent on the content, design, and perceived quality of the production.

When asked about reflections around Cristiano Ronaldo's commercial:

- *"It feels like we didn't see the products at all, really shitty. They only focused on her face and his upper body." - Participant number 6*

Creating emotions

For the focus group participants, the creation of emotions was a large and decisive part of the perceived effect of celebrity advertising. However, the emotions that arise in connection with the commercials were of a mixed nature and included both joy and irritation. The fact that advertising can help create feelings for the consumer is not unique to Influencer marketing.

Summary findings

Based on Cristiano's lifestyle, it is stated that influencers construct truths about their lives via Instagram. This is when influencers have power over consumers' ideals and, therefore, their decisions as well. Several patterns are found after analyzing Cristiano's top 10 most liked images. It occurs to be family pictures that are most attracted to his audience. There is no doubt that Cristiano wants to state that he is a kind-hearted man and father, which is positively perceived by his followers. In the appendix between 1-10, you will find Cristiano's most-liked posts overtime.

From the focus group interview, it turned out that the respondents have quite the same views, but on the contrary, they are influenced in different ways because influencers have different roles and affect customers in different ways. After all, in the end, it is about individuals and their own interests they may have. If one consumer enjoys traveling, It will be obvious that these consumers will follow influencers who upload pictures of travel adventures. If a consumer is interested in decorating, the individual will follow influencers who post pictures of decor, etc. This can be linked to Individualism, which Hewstone, Stroebe and Jonas (2015) talk about, that the focus is on human identity.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The purpose of this study has been shown to investigate the phenomenon of influencer advertising from a consumer perspective (Jameson, 2017). The aim has been to determine how consumers view the company's purpose with influencer marketing. The goal has been to find out what connection they experience between influencer marketing and the brand or product that is included in the advertising and what effects they feel that this form of marketing has on them.

Moreover, to get a comprehensive understanding of customer's behaviours and attitudes, a focus group has been used as Wilkinson (1999) recommended. Two commercials were selected during the focus group interview. In which Influencer Cristiano Ronaldo was casted, as a way to discuss the topic of influential marketing strategies. The results obtained from the focus groups have been analyzed based on the study's chosen theoretical concepts and models. The study has shown that consumers see the main purpose of influential advertising: that the companies thrive to reach a broader target group, differentiate itself from other competitors in the market. Secondly, also build up its brand capital through identification factors. The study group included a focus group with participants of different ages, genders, and occupations. This is partly to gain a demographic variation and excellent group dynamics. In addition to this, also to create a corresponding element in how different types of groups view the phenomenon of influencer marketing. This was done in line with Wilkinson (1999) recommendations on how focus groups can be designed. The people in the focus group had different types of perceptions of influencer marketing. However, the final results of the focus group are relatively similar.

Results show that consumers further believe that companies should choose an influencer that is well recognized, can be identified by the brands target group and has high credibility as Keller (2008) mentions. This person should be at a low risk of causing negative publicity while having a relevant connection to the company's image or product. Influencer marketing is attracting considerably more attention than other digital marketing advertisements, as De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders (2017) explain. However, consumers are more likely to be affected by social media advertising without influencers when it comes to strong brands, in the form of brand loyalty (De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders, 2017)

Based on the results, the study has found that today's younger generations (millennials) have a greater understanding of source criticisms (Trivedi and Sama, 2019). Therefore the younger generation is critical of influencer marketing as a concept. The participants believe that it is a useful and effective marketing tool from a company's point of view. However, not from the consumer's perspective. The focus group participants feel that their use of Instagram affects their perception of identity and those they can consciously shape and present their desired persona. They are also well aware that the identity they

present or presented does not necessarily match the person in question, since they perceive Instagram and influencers as a superficial tool for consumer consumption.

The fact that companies now want to reach a broader target group and associate the influencer with the companies products are two common factors. This is seen by influencing the recognition of the target group to form a bridge between the brand or product and the consumer as Kotler (1999) describs. By strengthening its image, brand capital is built up. In terms of brand associations, brand awareness, and perceived brand quality. Furthermore, the purpose of influential marketing is to differentiate itself from other similar companies and thus create a unique added value and therefore become unique in the new way (Keller, 2008).

When it comes to what consumers consider is behind the choice of influencer companies choose to collaborate with for advertising purposes, various criteria emerged as Kotler (2000) explains. Companies, according to consumers, mainly decide to collaborate with celebrities who have high credibility. Therefore, it is an advantage if the celebrity is prominent in the field that includes the brand or product that the advertisement is about. In this way, a connection between the influencer, its image, and the brand or product is made visible (Kotler, 2000). This highlights the importance of that the brand's target group must recognize influencers. Since a high degree of recognition is desirable, the company should choose an influencer that is recognized by as many consumers as possible. The challenge lies in pinpointing the brand's target marketing group while maximizing the exposure in the collaboration. All while choosing friction free influencers that can carry the brand towards new consumers with genuineness. This could be the reason why sportsman Cristiano Ronaldo and sportswoman Serena Williams who live with regular habits and thus run a low risk of causing negative publicity, often appear in sincere advertising contexts. The consumers in the intended target group should preferably be able to be inspired or identify with the celebrity in question: both in terms of lifestyle, living situation, and appearance. All of these factors should aim to maximize the financial framework of any company's choice of influencer collaborations.

Conclusion

Even though several participants in the study had a previous dislike towards Cristiano Ronaldo as a celebrity presence, they found him believable in his choice of brand representation. The majority of participants in the focus groups mentioned that there was no obvious link between Cristiano and Emirates or Armani commercials, but instead the focus was on pairing the luxury of Cristiano with luxury brands. The image that Cristiano Ronaldo has, allows Armani to make use of brand associations. This is something that Hewstone, Stroebe, and Jonas (2016) believe can lead to positive attitudes towards the brand's products and thereby increase the customer's propensity to buy the product. The first type of connection that consumers see is thus the influencer brand link.

The effects that participants experienced from celebrity advertising and which are thus generalized to what consumers experience were, among other things, that it creates

many strong emotions (Hewstone, Stroebe, and Jonas, 2016). This is a consequence of the fact that the aspect and associations that the influencer possesses are transferred to the product in accordance with the Kotler's 4 P model (Kotler, 1999). This means that the advertisement communicates more than what is explicitly said or performed.

Subsequently, to answer this research hypothesis, "Consumer behaviors are mostly affected by online ads/ marketing and digital influencers, and digital marketing strategies have an effect on the customer's awareness about the brands." Consumers feel that influencer marketing creates a distinct awareness of the product, the brand, and perceived quality. This is in line with what Kotler (1999) writes about how the perceived brand quality is built.

What is perceived as a discovery in the study and which we have not found among any of the previous theories we studied is that there seems to be a paradoxical relationship between celebrity associations' perceived effect of influencer marketing (Whittington and Galpin, 2010). Companies should choose an influencer who customers feel confident with. This was also something that was expressed by the participants in the focus group interview in appendix 22.

In accordance to Brown and Hayes (2008), influencer marketing is an advertisement that is performed with an online profile presence, where the influencer is recognized from a context outside the product's area. However, the fact that Cristiano Ronaldo did not have a direct link to the product was something that the study participants reacted negatively to when the advertising in these cases was perceived as unnatural, superficial and dated. In other words, it seems that the influencer Cristiano Ronaldo in relevance to advertising, is a far-fetched stretch towards credibility, in the design of celebrity advertising than Brown and Hayes (2008) describes. Finally, we conclude there was a discrepancy between the theoretical and the practical definition of what influencer marketing is.

Recommendations

Earlier theories suggest that influencer marketing is based on creating greater credibility and higher authenticity among followers than traditional marketing does (Mukherjee, 2009). Participants believe that companies fail to do so because they do not see influencer marketing as genuine. Companies today must consider choosing the right influencer for the right collaborations. It does not matter if they desire the most significant influencer in the world; that person may not be right for the brand. Then the consumer's confidence is not only destroyed towards the influencer but also the company. Millennials are more critical of influencers and influencer marketing, which is something that companies must consider. Influencers need to think about being genuine in their work and being careful about which companies they partner with.

Furthermore, it could be studied whether the strong growth of social media affects the companies' way of thinking about the phenomenon of influencer marketing. This is because more individualized advertising is possible due to the digital footprints left by

consumers. In this way, the companies could customize their marketing strategies through exploring which influencer should be visible for the customers. All in consideration to the consumer's demographic data, habits and lifestyle.

One suggestion for further research may also be to examine from an influencers perspective. Our study aimed to investigate influencer marketing from a consumer attitude but did not take into account how influencers themselves view the phenomenon and the role they play. Influencers in many situations are the player who actually mediates marketing messages from companies to potential customers. Their perspective is of course interesting and important to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of influencer marketing.

Finally, we assume that the consumers who follow an influencer are also the ones who are exposed to the sponsored material that an influencer publishes. It means that the consumers who access the material are also the people who already have the highest perception of influencer source credibility. Which means these target groups are not affected by sponsored material the same way as the "general consumers" who are not following influencers. In this case more research with these target groups is recommended.

Limitations

The author mentions in the literature review the lack of information and that more research are necessary in this field of research. In addition to, this study was based on a qualitative method consisting of a focus group; the respondents' responses have been interpreted and analyzed by the author. This means that if the study were to be carried out again, the result would not be the same. Even though the consumer perspective was studied and that even if they value the same factor, it is a reason to assume that this factor is the most important. The low number of respondents is a limitation. Furthermore, it would have been interesting to conduct a study of a similar research in which consumers are examined through observation, in order to allow deeper conclusions about consumers' attitudes and behavior in relation to Influencer marketing. Since this study is based solely on the behaviors that the consumer is aware of. An aspect that would thus also be interesting is to study how a collaboration between one company and one influencer over a longer period of time. This way to investigate how this affects credibility towards the company and the influencer.

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Appendices

Appendix 1
Nr 1: 24 December 2018

Appendix 2
Nr 2: 16 July 2018

Appendix 3
Nr 3: 31 December 2018

Appendix 4
Nr 4: 12 November 2017

Appendix 5
Nr 5: 26 July 2018

Appendix 6
Nr 6: 10 July 2018

Appendix 7
Nr 7: 21 August 2018

Appendix 8
Nr 8: 3 November 2019

Se mer på Instagram

11,129,838 gilla-markeringar

cristiano

The Show started with Love💑

visa alla 61,448 kommentarer

Appendix 9
Nr 9: 13 March 2019

Appendix 10
Number 10: 5 January 2019

Appendix 11
Instagram between May 3-15, 2020
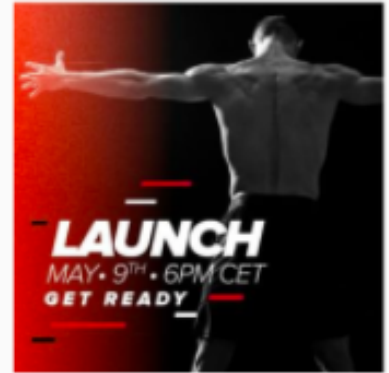
Appendix 12

Appendix 13

Appendix 14

Clear hair care   CR7

Appendix 15

Appendix 16

Appendix 17
The Pestana Cr7 Lisbon is a hotel where Cristiano is a partner. This post is used as a beautiful luxury post, but at the same time, it is placed in a natural environment, where it is used and fits into the image as well as the lifestyle that any influencer portrays.

Appendix 18

Appendix 19

12:06
◀ Sök

CRISTIANO
Inlägg

barbarabonansea Can't wait 🚀💪⚡   ♡
jmiguelsiero Con esas vas a volar!!! 💪😎👌   ♡
21 februari · **Visa översättning**

cristiano ✔
Betalt samarbete med cr7cristianoronaldo   ...

10 438 839 visningar

cristiano Here's a new sneak peak on my upcoming
@CR7cristianoronaldo Eyewear collection in partnership
with @italiaindependentofficial ! Had so much fun on set
with Lapo!
Take a look and tell me which ones look better on me!
#CR7Eyewear #CR7 #PLAYFECTIONISM

Visa alla 11 450 kommentarer

carmeloanthony I need mine ASAP 🙌   ♡
richkidslondon 🔥🔥🔥   ♡

20 februari · **Visa översättning**

cristiano ✔   ...

Appendix 20

Appendix 21

Appendix 22

How old are you and why do you think you have been selected for this focus group?

P1: I am a 28 year old woman, living in Gothenburg. I Think I've been selected because I'm a very big user of social media. Since I moved to an apartment, I buy a lot of new stuff and get a lot of inspiration from influencers. I also work in Marketing.

P2: 28 years, lives in Gothenburg. Comes from Skärhamn on Tjörn, the Swedish west coast. I think I have been selected because I use a lot of social media.

P3: 29 years old, lives in Gothenburg but grew up on Tjörn. I think I was chosen because I work with Marketing and have studied marketing with a focus on graphic design.

P4: I am 27 years old and live in Gothenburg. Was raised in Lerum outside Gothenburg but now live in my apartment in town. I'm probably not the one who follows the most influences or uses social media, but maybe just enough.

P5: I am 28 years old and come from Lerum, outside of Gothenburg. I now live in town. I work with E-commerce within a company that sells plants. I work with customer service and we use a lot of social channels. I also shop a lot online and get easily influenced and use a lot of social media.

P6: I am 28 years old and live in Gothenburg. I work with e-commerce and some digital marketing and therefore think I can give some thoughts on the subject.

Do you shop online? If so, where?

P5: I basically buy everything online - food, clothes, medicine, household goods. Both things and services such as doctor appointments online. But above all, I shop for clothes and beauty products. I mainly shop at H&M, Lyko, Cocopanda, Apotea and Lensway as well as Proteinbolaget. I also have subscriptions to companies like Glossybox, which I receive once a month.

P2: I basically buy nothing online except tickets for travel. Maybe I would shop online if I wanted to have a party or something similar. I like to shop in stores so you can try and know that it fits. Think it is super annoying to shop online and get home stuff that may not fit and that you then have to send back.

P3: I also do not shop very much online, but if so then maybe some clothes. Previously I did some online shopping at asos.com and online stores like that.

P1: I buy a lot online, but I shop mainly for promotions or sales, if it's cheaper. But otherwise I also like to shop in a physical store for testing. Buy some stuff online like lenses, shampoo and stuff like that, when I know what I want and often buy the same things.

P4: I shop a lot online, mainly clothes. Sometimes I shop things online that I then pick up at the store. I think it's nice to test the clothes directly in the store and if I regret the purchase I can just return them immediately. When I shop online I often do it at Gina Tricot, H&M, Ellos or Zalando. I also often shop if I receive mail or see campaigns on social media. Some things however, I do not like to shop online.

P6: I do a lot of shopping. I do some "online window shopping" and put a lot in the shopping

cart but will not really buy. But otherwise it's some skincare, hair care, makeup and some clothes.

What affects my purchases if I shop online?
P3: Obviously prices, but also easy payment methods. If you have to pull out cards etc, I often skip the purchase.
P5: Delivery time also affects my shopping habits, but it depends a bit on what I'm buying. Sometimes you may need lenses quickly and then delivery times may be extra important to me.
P1: I also check reviews and stuff. Mainly on clothes to see what others have commented on sizes and stuff like that. I'm for example curious about testing "Tanrevel", but I have a little bit of a hard time with it if it's only influencers who advertise. I would probably like a recommendation from someone familiar or someone I know who can actually confirm that it is in fact a good product.

What do you think about when you hear "Influencer"?
P1: I think about Bianca Ingrosso
P2 & P3: Agree, like famous people with beauty products and stuff like that!
P4: I think of it as a job.
P5: People who kind of live in a bubble, maybe like a lifestyle.

Do you follow any specific influences?
P2: The main butcher at Scan.
P1: I probably follow most fashion and health-related things. Margaux, Bianca, etc.
P5: Mostly in fashion & beauty
P6: B-list celebrities but otherwise mostly companies I have good associations with.
P3: A lot of sports and footballers. They may not be direct influencers from the beginning, but they probably become influencers.
P4: Health and some old dismissed B-celebrities. I don't follow that many but you easily slip into many other accounts when surfing around. So it feels like I follow a lot of people that I often run into online every now and then. Also follow some "horrible life" where you follow a "journey" in different ways.
P6: Follows some B-celebrities, but otherwise some companies for work purposes mostly.

Do you recognize the woman in the picture?

P2:   Yes
P1, P3, P4, P5, P6: No

What about now?

Do you recognize the man in the picture?

All participants: Yes

What's your relation to this person?

P2: I like him!
P3: I don't like him at all, but mostly because of football stories I've heard.
P1: I don't like him either, I've heard he's been accused of rape.
P5: I don't follow him, but I still think he's really cool and professional. Think it's cool that he's such a perfectionist and that he's got so much grit.
P4: I feel indifferent about him, don't follow him.
P6: I don't think I like him very much, but it's also football related.

Has anyone seen the shown clip before?

Commercial one - Emirates Airlines:
https://youtu.be/mx23FPdylP0

All participants: No

What was your impression?
P6: I thought it was kind of a strange commercial.
P1: I think it fits with his brand. It's luxurious, he wants to be seen and he's super famous. Since it was made for the World Championship I find it relevant, but otherwise it wasn't that good.
P5: I liked it, thought it was kind of funny.

Commercial two - Armani:
https://youtu.be/-BYBO5vMPZQ

P6: It feels like we didn't see the products at all, really shitty. They only focused on her face and his upper body.
P5: Really shitty. Too long and sexist.
P2: Worthless.
P1: Feels like it fits his brand, like before. I guess it's good that they don't try to present him as an angel. There's also a lot of power positioning with the female maid.

How do you feel about commercials?
P5: Expensive advertising I think can be quite fun because there is often a lot of time and energy behind.
P1: Yes, I also like well thought out advertising.
P4: Advertising series, for example ICA, I think can be kind of cozy, where you can follow the characters for a long time so you start to "get to know" them in a way.
P3: Agree, they are also always updated and relevant.
P2: It is stimulating to see what is current and what is current through advertising.
P3: I think it is difficult when advertising interrupts something else you do. Like looking at something else and then you have to check advertising to continue watching.

Is there a difference in inspiration and commercials?
P1: Yes, I follow a lot of inspo-accounts where they are rather good at decorating for example and might give you tips.
P6: Yeah that really raises the credibility.

Do you see it as "advertising" if there is an influencer showing it?
P5: It depends entirely on what you think about the person. For example, Bianca does a lot of advertising for specific products where she says she cannot live without that particular product, but if you know that it is only paid then it will not be credible.
P2: Feels like influencer marketing has become a bit excessive and especially when it is often the same influencers. If there are too many people who market the same type of product or company for about the same period, then credibility declines.
P3: I also think a lot about all the podcasters. They may not be influencers from the beginning, but they have evolved now because that's where they get their money from. In the beginning when most people started casting there was some advertising or company sponsoring but now there are too many. If there are new commercials in each section then I can listen to them but not the ones that are pre-recorded and always the same.
P1: if for example the trio JLC advertises bookbeat or something else it does not feel credible as

I do not think that they would ever sit down and listen to it. But then it is mainly the company that has identified their target group as a good target group for the company but that the influence itself does not even account for it.

Which collaborations are unacceptable?
P3: Influencers who have younger audiences that follow them. For example, if such a person advertises for gaming companies or casinos.
P1: If Bianca were to go out and advertise Lifesum in which case they would encourage young people to enter their calorie intake every day, etc.

Which social media platforms do you use?
All participants: Instagram, Facebook, Tinder, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Twitter, TikTok

Is credibility important as an influencer?
All   participants: Yes,   very   much   so.

Does it matter to you which influencer company chooses to work with?
P2: For example, I boycott everything that Paolo Roberto has promoted since the sex scandal.
P5: I tested Meds just because Calle Schulman wrote a lot about it.
P3: I agree. He keeps saying that: this is not advertising BUT…. and then the reason for promoting it is that he is friends with someone.
P1: yes, I agree. When they try to make it appear that it is not advertising, everyone always still knows it is

Give examples of when you purchased things out of influence marketing:
P1: I bought ACO when Bianca was advertising it. Also Stronger who is very strong in influencer marketing and almost only makes advertising through digital marketing.
P3: Tradera started using a lot of podcasters to advertise and it worked on me. I bought stuff from them online.
P4: Yes, but only when it's a company that you know from before and you are reminded a bit.
P5: I have bought things that Bianca Ingrosso advertised.

Is it important as a consumer to be loyal to a company? Why?
P1: No, as long as the price is right and what I want, it doesn't matter. But is it a commodity I could buy in two different places and basically the same, then it is only the price that controls my purchase. But I am loyal to the shopping mall NK because I get membership points there. But if you are expected to be loyal as a consumer then you need to get something in return from the company.
P6: Yes, I think so. I don't feel compelled to, but I am.
P2: In pandemic times you still want to support those you like so that they remain open.
P5: I think it is much older generations that are loyal. We have so many choices and so many platforms. There is so much more than just quality in shopping. But for example, I do always go to ICA for food.

Last updated: May 2020

Ethics Review

GBS faculty members should review the work of all student research projects for compliance with international ethical standards in research. All students must use the consent form (or an appropriately modified version) in the appendix if they plan to do interviews or otherwise gather data from research subjects as part of their research.

If a faculty member feels that a project may raise ethics concerns, they should ask the student to complete this ethics review form and submit it to a member of the academic team at their local campus for review.

Ethics Review Application Form

Researcher's name(s)	NATHALIE BJORK
Email	nbjork@gbsge.com
Course instructor / Supervisor	Roberta Giannini
Program	BBA Digital Marketing
Course name (if applicable)	Thesis
Project title	Consumer behaivor affected by marketing communications using influecers (christiano Ronaldo as the influcer)
Research objective	Focus group

Research questions	Does the influecers source credability affect consumers purchase intentions? Does the right choice of influencer type affect consumers?
Research methods Which research methods will be used?	Qualitative research.
Research site Where the research takes place?	Karl Gustavsgatan 24 Gothenburg, Sweden
Participants Who are the proposed research participants?	4 Females 2 Male Ages between 26-29
Research procedures How is the data to be collected from these participants? Could the data collection process harm the participants in any foreseeable way?	Recordings No, the participants will be anonymous.

Procedures to ensure anonymity and confidentiality	their identity's will remain anonyms and confidental.
Risks and benefits of the research for participants	No risks at all.

Researcher signature

Advisor (course instructor) signature

Date: 30th May 2020

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Last updated: May 2020

Appendix - Consent form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

I agree to participate in the research project entitled (title of the research project) undertaken by the researcher(s) named below (name of the researcher)

By signing below, I acknowledge that:

- I have agreed to participate in this study.
- I have been informed of and understand the purpose of this study.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice.
- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else.
- Details relating to anonymity and confidentiality have been explained and I understand these.
- I have had the opportunity to ask any questions.
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature: *Sofia Rosvall*   Date: *20/5-2020*

The extra copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.

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Barcelona Campus
Carrer de Rivadeneyra 4
08002 Barcelona, Spain
T +34 93 481 65 06 | W gbsge.com | E barcelona@gbsge.com

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