

Social Media Influencers

Scrolling down the webpages of various social networking sites, similar posts featuring a glamorous person alongside an advertising product invariably recur throughout the page. These people are by no means inconspicuous on the Internet, they are the ones who have leapt to fame in social media, namely social media influencers. Thanks to the ever-changing technological advancement, nowadays, advertisements have been migrated from the conventional media like bus, television, or shops to the Internet. However, are social media influencers more trustworthy than traditional media advertisements?

Being a contentious issue, this question has ignited a myriad of discussions around the globe. Yet, it is beyond dispute that these influencers have meagre credibility. My stance is threefold, with the first reason being the most pivotal one – social media influencers are well paid for the job. A confident, triumphant smile coupled with the products are the similarities in most of these posts. However, have you got to the root of this smile? As a matter of fact, the videos of those influencers recurring non-stop on social media platform were paid by the brands of the shared products to advertise their products responsibly. Therefore, as a responsibility, no sooner have they been informed of their ‘wage’ than they are liable to demonstrate all their infatuation and enthusiasm to the products for the sake of fulfilling the requests by the brands. Due to the seduction of money, there is no likelihood that the influencers will be honest to share their real experience on using these products even if they discover their drawbacks. As a result, the imperfections and hindrances of these products will be disguised considering the power of money. Take the members of the sought-after boyband – Mirror as an example, Keung To and Anson Lo are reported to receive at least \$100,000 whenever they send out an Instagram post related to some advertising products. It exemplifies that it is formidably difficult for influencers to reveal the truth considering how much they will receive.

Influencers not being honest about what they share are ubiquitous in social media. There is even more extravagant news about how influencers wrestle with the invitations by these brands. Pursuant to a YouTuber's interview with a social media influencer who was famed on the Internet in days gone by, it is possible that influencers do not even try out the products. What they do is just copy the caption provided by the brand, describing the 'marvel' and send out the posts on Instagram. With the influencer's work done, he or she will be commended by the brand with a considerable amount of money.

Given the unpalatable and lamentable atmosphere in the industry of online advertisement, it is vitally important to distinguish the false from the truth. Without real experience and honest comments by the influencers, followers may fall to the hook set by the brands by believing the extravagant benefits and efficacies brought by using the products. Therefore, social media influencers are not necessarily to be more trustworthy than traditional advertisements. Perhaps their credibility has a resemblance too. Either the influencers or traditional advertisements take advantage of the exaggerated wordings to magnetize buyers to purchase their products. Both of them are in no way trustworthy.

Someone may suggest that not all social media influencers share the products without a sincere heart. For instance, Taiwanese YouTuber, Zhong Ming Xuan is renowned for his honest and frank attitude in blaming some parlous cosmetic products. It cannot be denied that there are some influencers behaving in an honest manner. Yet, it is noticed that they may not receive any benefits from brands, thereby being bold to stand against those prestigious and lavish brands. On the other hand, even if these courageous influencers are present on the Internet, they just take a relatively small proportion in a city, let alone in the world. Witnessing this situation, it is nonsense to deliver a message that social media influencers are trustworthy, considering their benefits behind their Instagram posts.

To conclude, on no account are social media influencers more trustworthy than traditional media advertisements. Being a vigilant social media user, it is our responsibility not to believe in information on social media platform without a serious thought.