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The Rise of Digital Marketing in the Era of Mobile-Driven Digitalization: Shifts from Traditional to Interactive Advertising

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Master of Science
in International Business

School of business
National College of Ireland

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i Declaration

I, Antonette Lenitha Gudusey hereby declare that this thesis presented on the topic :"The Rise of Digital Marketing in the Era of Mobile-Driven Digitalization: Shifts from Traditional to Interactive Advertising" is an original piece of work done by me, for the fulfilment of the degree MSc in International Business, and submitted to the National college of Ireland on the 15th of august 2025.

I confirm that the work is my own and all the sources used have been properly acknowledged, I have not previously submitted this work or any part of it to any other degree or diploma.

ii Acknowledgement

I gratefully acknowledge all the supervisors involved in the module: Research methods for their hard work and guidance throughout this research. I am indebted to the National College of Ireland for access to numerous data and the opportunity to create this passion project. I am especially grateful to my family and friends for their constant financial and emotional support throughout this process. Finally the administrative supports are all greatly appreciated

iii Abstract

The research reviews the role of social media algorithms when recruiting influencers or making the marketing process more effective, with special regard to the content of short-format videos on YouTube Shorts, TikTok, and Instagram Reels. With the algorithmic visibility theory, parasocial relationship theory, and the consumer trust theory, the research examines the algorithmic aspects of platform-specific factors on engagement rates and brand outcomes, including frequency of posting, emotionality, and shareability. It was a quantitative study, and secondary data of potential influencers and brands on three platforms were analysed and compared using descriptive statistics, correlation, and tests to unpack short-form and conventional marketing formats. The results showed that short-form content that is

optimized to suit algorithms is always more successful than the typical influencer marketing average in reach (+37 percent), CTR, engagement on every 1,000 views (+22 points), and conversions (+26 percent). Most profitable improvement after the campaigns was made by brands in visually centred industries, specially fashion and cosmetics ones, and cross-platform strategies could enhance the introduction impact even more. In contrast to the widespread industry beliefs, metadata optimization, including superfluous usage of hashtags, did not correlate with, even remotely, engagement, supporting the significance of the content quality and behavioural cues instead.

The study brings an original contribution to scholarship by combining both aspects of algorithmic mechanics and influencer recruitment practices, showing that algorithms become such active co-producers of marketing value in contrast to passive distributors of content. In practice, it provides evidence-based insights into how brands should focus more on creators who engage in frequent posting routines, sincere connections with the audience, and flexibility in mobility across platforms. This dissertation contributes to the body of knowledge on algorithm-mediated marketing systems. It bridges the gap between empirical performance measures and theoretical knowledge that will help inform the need to adopt an adaptive approach to the marketing environment.

Keywords: social media algorithms, influencer marketing, short-form video, algorithmic visibility, engagement metrics, cross-platform strategy

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

The growth and adoption of technology has resulted in a massive shift throughout various fields, impacting various operations. One of the recent trends includes digitalization which has been showcased with the access of data through internet enabled mobile devices. The growth of mobile devices, smart devices especially have impacted various details and methodologies utilized within the field

of marketing. Traditionally, the most common methods of marketing included the use of newspapers, billboards and other conventional techniques, although this has not been fully replaced by digital marketing, it has been highly affected by its presence (Pew Research Center, 2024). **The share of people watching cable television drastically decreased since the early 2010s, as audiences moved to the online spaces that made content more immediately available, accessible, and more diverse, in particular (**Belanche et al., 2021, p. 102585**).**

The digital trend has significantly impacted conventional advertising, and marketers have been forced to move towards internet-based systems, with a greater focus on interactivity, personalization, and accessibility worldwide (Boerman, 2020, p. 199)**.** YouTube has occupied the predominant spot among video-sharing websites with the ability to reach out to more than 80% of internet users worldwide. **The involvement of Instagram and TikTok has grown immensely, especially over the past few years, particularly after the adoption of the short video format in TikTok that the competing companies have since emulated (Omar & Dequan, 2020; Airoldi et al., 2016). These formats have been popular due to the algorithms that filter content based on users' behavior, preferences, and engagement (**Zulli, 2020, p. 1**) Influencer marketing turned into a viable process in this new upstart of digitalization.** Content creators who already have dedicated fan bases (now, more colloquially known as influencers) can recommend products in a very natural and relatable manner **(**Belanche et al., 2023, p. 1096**). This marketing strategy uses the power of parasocial relationships wherein influencers' audiences see them as trusted sources rather than commercial spokespersons, which tends to upsurge brand credence and purchase intentions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).**

1.2 Statement of the Problem

While influencer marketing and short-format video services have grown into prominent businesses, little research has been done on a scholarly level to explore how algorithms influence influencer recruitment strategies. Although the marketing literature is quite thorough in its explanation of the process of social media promotion, it fails to describe the direct impact of algorithmic curation on visibility, engagement, and future talent acquisition (Casaló et al., 2018, p. 510). Since the algorithms on the platforms serve as a gateway to reaching audiences, how they influence the choice of an influence partner is an important though understudied aspect (Shen et al., 2023, p. 1).

1.3 Rationale for the Study

The study closes a significant gap in academic knowledge by considering the connection between algorithms working with social media, short-form content, and marketing recruitment. To scholars, it provides insights into the theory regarding the power created utilizing algorithms in marketing (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 59). It gives practitioners in the industry actionable directions with regards to streamlining the selection of influencers and the performance of the campaign in algorithm-guided conditions (Kanthawala et al., 2022, p. 1). As the platform algorithms develop rapidly, the study will provide relevant evidence supporting adjustive marketing strategies.

1.4 Research Context

Marketing has evolved to the point that, rather than brands having control of the messages advertised, as is the case with traditional advertising, they are now dependent on influencers to a large extent. Therefore, visibility is primarily controlled by algorithms residing in online platforms (Lee & Watkins, 2016, p. 5753). The content is filtered and ranked based on variables that include watch time, the number of posts, and interaction rates, and subsequently affects audience engagement. Such a

change implies that the brands increasingly rely on influencers who can create algorithmically tuned content to access desired markets and demographics (Lee & Watkins, 2016, p. 5753).

1.5 Research Gap

Even though the phenomenon of the influencer economy has become the subject of numerous articles in trade publications and other industry-related reports, the presence of peer-reviewed research on the transformation of talent acquisition as an application of algorithms toward influencer marketing is minimal. Specifically, there is still insufficient research to understand the degree to which short-form video algorithms affect not only the exposure of possible influencer partners, but also the criteria through which businesses define who to recruit, as they are often acquired using their algorithm (Park, Kee & Valenzuela, 2023, pp.1–15).

1.6 Research Aim & Objectives Aim:

To comprehend how social media algorithms impact the recruitment practice within the marketing sector, including influencer marketing using short-form video production.

Objectives:

1. To analyze algorithmic trends of short-form content on YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram.
2. To compare influencers' marketing effectiveness to traditional advertising.
3. To discuss how companies choose influencers based on an algorithmically computed engagement measure.

1.7 Research Question & Hypothesis

Research Question (RQ):

RQ1. What are the ways in which algorithms and shorts on such applications as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram, have revamped the marketing industry, especially in influencer marketing?

Hypothesis (H):

Short-form, algorithm-friendly content helps raise your engagement rate by a considerable margin, making the marketing industry all the more interested in collaborating with influencers.

1.8 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 presents the study's introduction, the research problem statement, the aim/objectives, and the hypothesis. Chapter 2 explores the following themes: a literature review of social media algorithms, influencer marketing, and short-form content strategies. Chapter 3 explains the methodology, representing the quantitative analysis and data sources. Chapter 4 reports the results of the analysis of algorithmic patterns and recruitment trends. Chapter 5 explains what the findings mean according to the available literature, and Chapter 6 forms the study's conclusion with suggestions to practitioners and future research.

Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Algorithms in Social Media

The notion of the algorithm took its roots in the field of mathematics and computer science, where it was conceptualized as a well-ordered, finite set of instructions that would take an input and produce an output and allow it to process the data to reach a specific desired outcome (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020, p.101742). The idea of the algorithm has become a household term in the past ten years, caused by the

unprecedented spread of digital platforms and the realization that people were being affected by what they could see, read, and buy online by invisible computational systems (Trends, n.d.). According to the concept of social media, algorithms are not restricted to increasing efficiency in computations anymore; they are now tools used to curate digital cultures and regulate the flow of attention within the online economy (Koay, Teoh & Soh, 2021, pp.1–12). The social media algorithms work by continuously gathering information about the interactions of the users, such as likes, comments, watch time, and even pauses over particular posts (Meta, n.d.). They have been utilized to provide customized content feeds to boost engagement and retention. In such a case, individual curation develops what is known as the filter bubble, where users tend to be shown an ever-narrower, more focused range of content options (Jin, Muqaddam & Ryu, 2019, pp.567–579). This is useful to marketers because it enables them to target the specific demographics within these bubbles. However, it is also problematic, as it facilitates the strengthening of echo chambers and restricts a view of different perspectives (Jin, Muqaddam & Ryu, 2019, pp.567–579).

The concept of algorithmic decision-making in social media is not one based on a fixed design. The systems of each of the platforms are continuously realigning to new forms of user behavior, new forms of content, and new forms of focus. new forms of content, and new areas of focus. The dynamics of these systems imply that what is effective about content visibility today would quickly be outdated tomorrow. Interest in algorithmic literacy, or a familiarity with the priorities and distribution of content by platforms, is a growing skill set that digital marketers, brand managers, and influencers realize as important (Casaló, Flavián & Ibáñez Sánchez, 2018, pp.510–519). The number of private access algorithmic systems only adds to the importance of such literacy. Companies take different measures to safeguard the details of their ranking algorithms to avoid manipulation and ensure a competitive edge (Boerman, 2020, pp.199–207).

Furthermore, the algorithms are not neutral by value, but they reflect the commercial interests of the platforms themselves. For example, YouTube's most recent algorithmic architecture focuses on content that will make patrons stick around as long as possible, as viewer retention is associated with ad profitability (Abidin, 2021, pp.77–104). TikTok, however, is configured to boost new ideas and virality, allowing even previously unknown creators to become widely exposed quickly if their messages align with the initial audience members ("From likes to loyalty", 2024, p.76). These priorities are combined with the promotion of visual quality and reliance on enabling functions such as Reels on Instagram to counter the prominence of TikTok ("From likes to loyalty", 2024, p.76). As a marketer, these nuances cannot be ignored because they help to distinguish between correct and incorrect decisions. Knowledge of online trends is necessary; otherwise, advertising campaigns might be at a loss as it sounds in the algorithm, regardless of how creative or well budgeted it is. Such manipulative use of algorithmic triggers, in terms of time, format, or theme of the content, has become a skillset of the current digital marketing agencies (Jin, et al., 2019, pp.567–579).

2.2 Rise of Short-Form Videos

Clip videos shorter than 60 seconds are the new means of content creation and consumption that a significant portion of the social media audiences appreciate (Park, et al., 2023, pp.1–15). Although some micro-video experiments like Vine existed in the background, TikTok, in 2016, revolutionized the same by providing vertical, music-filled videos and a highly personalized 'For You' feed. The arrival of the new social application, TikTok, traumatized the largest among their competitors. As a consequence, Instagram introduced Reels in 2020, and YouTube developed its own Shorts in 2021, both of which aimed to keep current users on the platform to limit the loss of users due to changes in taste (Zulli, 2020, pp.1–10). Short-form video is

appealing because of the addictiveness of the medium to mobile-first users who are accustomed to fractured attention. The videos provide entertainment, information, or inspiration in small doses that can be quickly and easily consumed. On a psychological level, the format takes advantage of the dopamine cycle of fast-paced content rotation, which makes it easy to spend a long time on the platform and increases the chances of stumbling upon sponsored or branded content (Qin, Omar & Musetti, 2022, pp.1–12). A marketer considers the short-form video a plus, rather than a constraint, due to its shortened length.

Trending content will generally be connected to viral experiments, memes, or soundtracks, presenting a high possibility of organically accelerated spread. To give an example, the fashion brand Guess was able to go viral with its TikTok campaign called #InMyDenim, calling users to demonstrate their creativity in denim-centered outfits, earning millions of TikTok videos individually created by users and integrating the brand with the cultural discourse of the youth (Vogue Business, 2024). To the same effect, Dunkin' Donuts partnered with influencer Charli D'Amelio on TikTok. They realized a sales increase that could be quantified, indicating how one short-form high-density influencer collaboration can propel sales (Kanthawala et al., 2022, pp.1–10). Case studies also demonstrate that the format of short-form video content can be used in any industry. The #PlayWithPringles TikTok challenge activated snack consumers worldwide, and basketball teams such as the Golden State Warriors utilized Reels to humanize players and increase fanaticism. Even brands in the business-to-business sector have begun experimenting with the format, tapping the Shorts and Reels to convey the company culture and find talent.

2.3 Algorithmic Favorability

The factor of algorithmic favorability is the determining criterion for the visibility of content on social platforms. The recommendation algorithm of a platform

may promote a piece of content to more audiences (**Belanche, et al.,** 2023 pp 1097). Such probability depends on many quantifiable factors: Engagement velocity is the rate at which a post gathers interests like likes, comments, and shares in a short period after posting. The algorithms used in social media may also assume a fast interaction with high interest on the part of the audience; thus, subsequently, further exposure may occur via recommendations and feeds. This implies that the initial hours of posting are crucial since the initial momentum would take the form of a snowball effect, sending information to an even larger audience. Producers usually use strategies like distributing postings when activities are at their highest or motivating them to interact immediately to increase their velocity. Completion rate is the proportion of viewers who viewed a video till the end. The completion rates are usually rewarded on platforms, as it means that the material is captivating viewers. To the creators, it implies they must be able to pace, story, and edit properly to maintain a viewer base. The completion rates can be improved using shorter, tightly edited, or well-designed long-form videos. Such a high completion rate not only enhances the algorithmic visibility of a post but also informs the creator which kind of content works with his or her audience (Belanche, et al., 2023, pp.1096–1123).

Trend participation is a practice that implicates popular sounds, hashtags, or visual styles into the content. By sticking to the elements that are on trend, creators have a bigger chance to make solid discoveries in their posts, as audiences look at the feeds where similar content is posted. Trend following may be a way to take a shortcut to relevance, but there must be a balance; following too many trends may give a creator a watered-down voice. The better creators tend to fuse popular formats along with their personal style or niche knowledge to make themselves distinctive but still be able to utilize popular content trends. Consistency and frequency of posts are important principles for the algorithms regarding promoting the content produced by the creator. The posting frequency indicates that the maker is active and

communicative, and makes platforms willing to broadcast them to more people. However, Variability in posting patterns may interrupt user audiences' expectations and degrade algorithmic trust. Being realistic with the scheduled post, daily or weekly, will create the audience's anticipation and help grow continuously over time. Interaction quality concentrates on what engagement a post gets instead of merely the amount. Deeds like meaningful comments, duets, stitches, and saves, etc., usually have more energy regarding the algorithm understanding than passive views or likes, as Dr Sule notes (Montag, et al., 2021, p.641673). Such interactions reflect higher levels of involvement in audiences and show the platforms on which the content should be promoted.

Through the creators promoting engagement, partnership, and gathering moments in their posts can add quality to the level of interactions, making closer relationships with their followers, and expanding reach. Each platform's algorithm prioritizes these metrics differently. The recommendation engine developed by YouTube, in turn, rewards extended watch time and promotes material that promotes the development of binge-watching behavior (Lou & Yuan, 2019, pp.58–73). In Instagram, the Reels algorithm places special emphasis on the content that promotes direct sharing to their Stories or through personal messages (Park et al., 2018). The system of TikTok is arguably the most democratic, as it allows the content of new creators to circulate with viral popularity if it succeeds in impacting test audiences adequately. Creative authenticity and data-driven optimization typically creates conflicts with algorithmic favorability, which must be balanced in practice. This can be illustrated through Red Bull's Instagram marketing plan, where the style of content publication is always parallel with the recent tendencies of content, yet does not interfere with the company's image as part of extreme sports. The Xbox TikTok is also named in Microsoft and is used to promote brand culture in this gaming

community through trending sounds and meme culture through gaming (**Boerman,** 2020 pp. 202)

2.4 Engagement Rate and Influencer Reach

The degree of engagement is, in most cases, considered to be the best indicator of influencer effectiveness (**De Veirman, et al.,** 2017 pp 802). It is expressed as the percentage of the total interactions, such as likes, comments, and shares, of the total number of followers. At the same time, engagement rates are always a good sign of an active and responsive audience and an alert to the algorithms that specific content should be amplified (Sands, Ferraro & Campbell, 2022, p.102798). The nature of engagement can vary. Direct engagement consists of fundamental interactions like liking or commenting, but indirect engagement will involve activities like profile visits, clicks on links, and saves. Neither is useless; however, brands usually focus on influencers who create a substantial response from consumers, like clicking on e-commerce stores or registering events with their names (Lee & Watkins, 2016, pp.5753–5760).

Case studies depict that engagement sometimes overtakes the number of followers. However, when Fenty Beauty partnered with micro-influencers, the conversion rates were higher compared to the results of involving celebrities, as people saw more authenticity and could relate to the micro-influencers (Kannan et al., 2024, pp.1–20). Comparably, the long-term history of using user-generated content in GoPro shows that it is possible to keep the audience engaged by using the individual's videos, which can increase brand loyalty (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, pp.59–68).

2.5 Recruitment Criteria for Influencers

Recruitment of marketing campaign influencers is a progressively quantitatively based task, clipping quantitative performance-based measures with

qualitative brand-fit (Karjaluoto, 2023). Brands usually check the demographics of an audience, the engagement rates, content style, and how the content is posted in numbers, while also qualitatively checking the brand safety, tone of voice, and brand value alignment (Kannan et al., 2024, pp.1–20). The best cooperations refer situations in which the following of the influencer resembles the brand target market in terms of demographic, psychographic, and behavioral characteristics (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, pp.59–68).

On the other hand, a mismatch may lead to poor engagement or even negative impacts on brand image. The collaborations of The North Face with adventure vloggers are a window of opportunity since the two share a target audience interested in exploring the outdoors (Evans et al., 2017, pp.138–149). Enhancement of audience authenticity checks is more of the norm, where platforms such as HypeAuditor and CreatorIQ are employed to locate bloated follower counts or dubious degrees of engagement (Kannan et al., 2024, pp.1–20). Nowadays, they are highly relevant since the influencer market has grown, with more players competing to partner with brands.

2.6 Influence on the Marketing Industry

Along with the innovation of influencer marketing, primarily algorithmic curation, the marketing industry has been reshaped over the passage of time (Lou & Yuan, 2019, pp.58–73). As opposed to broadcast advertising in the past that relied on undifferentiated mass demographics to which it aimed to deliver messages, the contemporary environment is, for the most part, centered on targeted, interactive, and co-created brand narratives (Lou & Yuan, 2019, pp.58–73). With data-driven algorithms of the platforms combined with the authenticity and charisma of the influencers, the brands can reach niche audiences on a more personal level and with a greater degree of precision. Such change is described using an array of industry-specific cases: Hospitality: Marriott International has been able to use Instagram

collaborations with travel influencers to drive reservations, especially among travelers from the millennial and Gen Z generations.

Marriott accesses algorithm recommendation systems as its travel content that already appeals to the visual senses of younger demographics is curated to target beyond their current customer base. The posts that are made by the influencers are not only an advertisement of the destinations and experiences that the brand proposes, but also promote a sense of social proof that is highly effective in capturing the attention of the digital world (**Djafarova, & Rushworth,** 2017 pp 6).

Food & Beverage: Beyond Meat has accepted the TikTok challenges to make plant-based eating a universally accepted practice, inviting the audience to go viral and create user-generated content (**Gui, et al.,** 2025, pp 23). Such campaigns are tactical because they coordinate along side the TikTok algorithm that prioritizes trending challenges and velocity of engagement; as a result, the brand can market its product as part of a broader culture. Beyond Meat also collaborates with food and lifestyle influencers, so this brand does not look only as a product, but as something more than that, a movement toward a sustainable and ethical diet.

Technology: A good example of how influencer marketing can reinforce product storytelling is Apple's #ShotOniPhone initiative. The project also collaborates with influential fashion bloggers and professional photographers all over the globe, presenting the best quality pictures taken with an iPhone. The strategy is an amalgamation of the user and brand messaging, resulting in a worldwide tribe of supporters. The campaign's success is based on the fact that it can be applicable across markets and demographics, as the content is bound to appear in algorithm-driven feeds due to its visually appealing and highly shareable nature (Evans et al., 2017, pp.138–149).

Fashion: In regards to fashion, Dior has been integrating its brand relevance to younger customers and generations of its beauty influencers on Instagram Reels and

YouTube Shorts (Shen et al., 2023, pp.1–14). Such collabs produce tutorial videos, reaction videos, and behind-the-scenes content, as well as what could be called trend-based video collaborations, which follow more familiar formats that the algorithms on those platforms prefer. The effect is an aspirational yet approachable marketing strategy that incorporates the luxury brand prestige and the relatability of the digitally savvy influencers.

Sports: The NBA uses social media to show how short, player-created content can create a worldwide fanbase. Uploading highlight reels, locker-room videos, and unimpeded behind-the-scenes footage, the NBA takes advantage of the methods enforced on platforms, favoring real-time and high-engagement forms of content. The players are the influencers who can carry the league game to their millions of followers and build relationships beyond conventional sports broadcasting. One of the most interesting examples, in this regard, is Chili Grill & Bar, whose TikTok-boosted brand identity achieved a 14.8% same-store sales growth in a single quarter (Kannan et al., 2024, pp.1–20).

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical understanding of this research consists of two theoretical patterns: Parasocial Relationship Theory and Consumer Trust Theory. The frameworks offer complementary aspects of analyzing the functioning of influencer marketing as part of the algorithm-based digital environment. The Parasocial Relationship Theory was initially stated by Horton and Wohl (1956), describing the one-way relationship, nonetheless, emotionally weighted, that an audience has with media characters. To give an example of influencer marketing, these parasocial connections can be developed by exposure to content produced by an influencer, the sense of personal access, and the presentation of personal stories. With time, followers can be sure they know the influencer personally, even though the digital

environment mediates all the relationships. Such apparent closeness increases the effectiveness of brand endorsements since people are more likely to listen to the recommendations of picks by those who they personally trust more than to impersonal advertising by companies (Mansour et al., 2016). This phenomenon is especially significant on social media since many of these platforms imply the idea of mutual communication via properties that allow users to communicate interactively, including comments, direct messages, and live streaming.

Consumer Trust Theory stresses that whether people are likely to buy a product may heavily depend on their perception of transparency and genuineness in a brand value alignment with the customer (Sands et al., 2022, p.102798). In the context of influencer marketing, the process of building trust takes place with the influencers referring to themselves regularly as credible information sources, which could lead to a selective partnership with brands, by their values, and with them resonating with their audiences. This trust is supported when an influencer refuses to advertise the product that they do not believe in, eventually increasing conversion rates and audience loyalty in the long run. Reliability in messages, consistency in disclosure of advertisement partnerships, and the providing of high-quality content (reliable and high quality), which satisfies and surpasses the audience's expectations, are also key to building trust. Not only are these two theories associated, but they are, as well, fastened to algorithmic dynamics. A prerequisite to the development of parasocial relationships, as well as the successful exploitation of perceived consumer trust, is algorithmic visibility. An influencer's content can lack the amplification of a platform's algorithms and thus fail to reach sufficient users to support the repeated interactions and temporal and social relationship-building required. Similarly, not even a trustworthy influencer can turn a post into a marketing success when it is lost at the bottom of the algorithmic feed in front of the audience. In this sense, algorithms act as a mediating filter between the possibility of being an influencer and

performance marketing, which determines what content is available to whom and under what circumstances. Such interplay is enough to assume that the effectiveness of influencer marketing cannot be fully comprehended without mentioning the psychological models of relationships and the technological system that controls the flow of content.

2.8 Literature Review Conclusion

The literature reviewed can confirm that social media algorithms play a critical role in controlling what shows up, since it has become prominent, with short-form video being the most prominent way to attract the audience. Specific measurable variables, including speed of engagement, relevance of content, and frequency of posting, are some of the key components of algorithmic favorability that directly influence the success of influencer recruitment and campaigns. Recruitment efforts become more advanced as they use progressive analytics that allow the audience to align with the brands and avoid risk factors like fake engagement. The case examples showcase that cooperation with influencers, based on the input of algorithms, can bring significant commercial results in various sectors. The need to conduct future studies on the topic has yet to fill a gap due to a significant lack of empirical studies investigating the direct impact of algorithmic curation on recruiting and selecting talent in the influencer industry, particularly when it comes to short-form video websites. It is filling this gap that is the core to the contribution of the present study to academic knowledge as well as marketing practice.

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study's research design is quantitative, supported by statistics based on freely accessible data on the performance of short-form videos posted publicly on major social media platforms. The quantitative methodology was selected due to the possibility to analyze data in the form of numbers of a definite type in a systematic way, which is offered to provide objective comparisons of content types, strategies of a creator, and the algorithms of platforms (Kanthawala et al., 2022, pp.1–10). Namely, in this study, descriptive and comparative statistical methods are used. The descriptive component includes the statistical portraits of the influencers, items of the content, and the levels of engagement, such as Normalized Average Watch Percentage (NAWP), Engagement Conversion Rate (ECR), and engagement rate per 1,000 views (engagement_per_1k).

Comparative considers the difference in performance between algorithmically compliant short-form content, i.e., content optimized to reflect known algorithmic preferences, and that of the traditional content produced by influencers, which, in contrast to it, might not be optimized in accordance to the principles of optimization. This design is less subjective and allows greater replicability by basing its measures on quantifiable and verifiable measures. The cross-platform comparisons (YouTube, TikTok, Instagram) are also supported, which is important due to the similarities and differences in the algorithms of these ecosystems (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020, p.101742). Algorithmic visibility theory (the theory of how algorithms act alongside content characteristics to determine reach) also informs the methodology concerning the extent to which the algorithm is credited as reaching a certain level of influence (Zulli, 2020, pp.1–10). Such a theoretical perspective will keep statistical analysis in a broader context of the understanding of the mechanics of digital platforms.

3.2 Population and Sample

The target audience of this study research will be the content creators using both YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram as a platform to create short-form video content actively. These sites have been selected because they have great adoption rates, fast growth patterns, and are central to influencer marketing plans (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017, pp.1–7). They also have similar algorithmic distribution models that give above importance to engagement signals on the user (watch time, likes, and shares) (Bucher, 2018).

The sample includes individuals who are influencers and brand accounts that can satisfy the following criteria:

1. They keep decent, visibly displayed short-form content measurements, and the data is extracted directly.
2. Their involvement with brand partnerships or sponsored content had also happened at the time of the study (January, February-June 2025).
3. They have conducted at least one of the three platforms/selected, and have a tracking history of their posting throughout analysis.

Creators were found using platform search tools, hashtag tracking, and industry accounts of the top creators published on credible sources (e.g., Statista). The brands were chosen using well-documented partnerships, contained in industry case studies or press releases. The presence of the influencers and brands makes the performance analysis attributable to the content interaction and commercial results; therefore, it is fuller and holistic regarding the effectiveness of influencer marketing.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods involved identifying existing data sets related to research objectives where three key processes were involved:

1. Historical Analysis of Platform Timelines. YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram timelines have been studied to record the main events, i.e., the launch of YouTube

Shorts, changes in the TikTok Creator Fund, and Instagram Reels monetization that influence the content performance patterns. These were the events deployed as context markers of engagement data interpretation. 2. Extraction of Public Engagement Metrics Creator profile data was accessed publicly to record key performance indicators, NAWP, ECR, engagement_per_1k view counts, likes, comments, shares, saves, and frequency of posts. When possible, the data was collected manually and supplemented with analytics aggregators under the terms of service on the platforms. 3. Industry Report Integration Statista, Google Trends, and publicly available brand case studies data have also been included to supply more contextual knowledge. In particular, data on audience interest levels in search requests look at Google Trends as surges of searches injected interest into short or Reels. Contextual notes and all measures were systematically documented using predesigned templates (see Section 3.4) so that consistency of measurements could be guaranteed and subsequent statistical analysis enabled.

3.4 Research Instrument

A data recording template explicitly developed to meet the needs of the current study was used as a research instrument. This template was a database that held all the relevant metrics, allowing data about performance to be captured consistently across creators, platforms, and time.

The template was divided into four key sections:

1. Engagement Metrics - columns NAWP, ECR (Engagement conversion rate), engagement per 1k, views, likes, comments, shares, saves, and frequency.
2. Content Attributes - Length of video (in seconds), number of hashtags, and length of caption. 3. Timeline Events Timeline of notable platform changes, monetization updates, and algorithm policy changes.

3. Brand Performance Indicators: Pre- and possible post-collaboration profit information, where it is public.

To check the comprehensiveness, intuitiveness, and research objective-related guidelines, templates were examined to be tested on the pilot data of 50 short-form videos.

Pilot testing demonstrated the significance of multiple engagement measures captured in normalized and raw formats, where raw data is only misleading when comparing creators of various audiences. The template minimized the chance of an error in transcriptions by providing standard data entry. It made the data comparable across various data sources, increasing the dataset's reliability.

3.5 Data Analysis

The research was done on a comparative framework of statistical analysis based on two significant contrasts:

a) Algorithmically Compliant vs. Traditional Influencer Content The algorithmically compliant content was determined according to the known factors of platform optimization, such as the short video length, the high NAWP and ECR scores, presented in the platform guidelines and scholarly literature (From likes to loyalty", 2024, p.76). Traditional influencer content was of longer-form videos or posts that failed to achieve these optimization standards. Comparative analyses included:

• Descriptive statistics (means, medians, standard deviations)

• Pearson correlation coefficients would be used to discuss the relations between content attributes and engagement

• Use of independent-samples t-tests to reveal whether engagement metrics record significant differences in the two types of content.

b) Brand Profit Impact Before and After Influencer Collaborations.

The paired t-tests could be used to evaluate brand performance metrics, such as profit margins and revenue numbers, within the six months preceding and following the recorded influencer collaborations. In cases where the exact profit figures were unavailable, publicly reported percentage growth was used. The data analysis was performed on Python (Pandas, Numpy, Matplotlib) to load, manipulate, and visualize data in a reproducible workflow.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

This study has utilized only publicly published information on social media, analytics software and trade publications. It was not connected to any data that is not available publicly or even to users, and all the processes involved adhered to the terms of service in the platforms and the ethical guidelines of internet research (Bucher, 2018, pp.1–224). Privacy safeguards included:

- Removal of non-public figures' identity by anonymization.
- Using professional or stage names to identify names of public figures that are resonant with their current public image.
- Omission of all information that constitutes personally identifiable information, other than that which individuals have posted publicly about themselves.

Avoiding any data scraping techniques banned by the platforms and techniques that would create risks to the subjects or violate the confidentiality agreements, the study allowed collecting information without imposing the risk of data theft and confidentiality.

3.7 Limitations of Methodology

Although the methodology is sound and replicable, several limitations must be mentioned:

1. Reliance on Secondary Data- All the performance and profit measures were taken through public sources. That brings some biases that may occur with self-reports by the platforms or that are based on restricted access to internal algorithmic variables that would offer new insights.

2. Omission of Private Engagement Data -Other potentially useful metrics, like audience demographic breakdowns or ROI of a brand, are unavailable, limiting the amount of analysis that can be performed.

3. Platform-Specific Context-- The results are based on YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram; hence, generalizability to other platforms may be done with caution.

4. Temporal Boundaries: Analysis window (January-August, 2025) might not reflect seasonal or long-term trends, and the unforeseen algorithm changes of the platform beyond these dates may have implications on the performance trends. Nevertheless, despite those limitations, the methodology would allow a statistical and ethically sound short-form influencer marketing effectiveness study.

Findings / Results

In this chapter, the abundance of statistical findings will be given, and the research will reflect the aims and the methodological framework discussed in Chapter 3. The sections give a data-based description of trends found, and supporting tables and figures are placed where appropriate.

4.1 Engagement Trends for Shorts

The engagement metric trend of short-form videos (hereafter referred to as shorts) showed that both the normalized average watch percentage (NAWP) and engagement per 1,000 views (engagement_per_1k) were increasing steadily throughout the general study period (January to June of 2025). The monthly average results portray the same data as in Figure 4.1; it is observed that the viewer retention

and the level of intensities of engagement are consistently (although marginally) increasing.

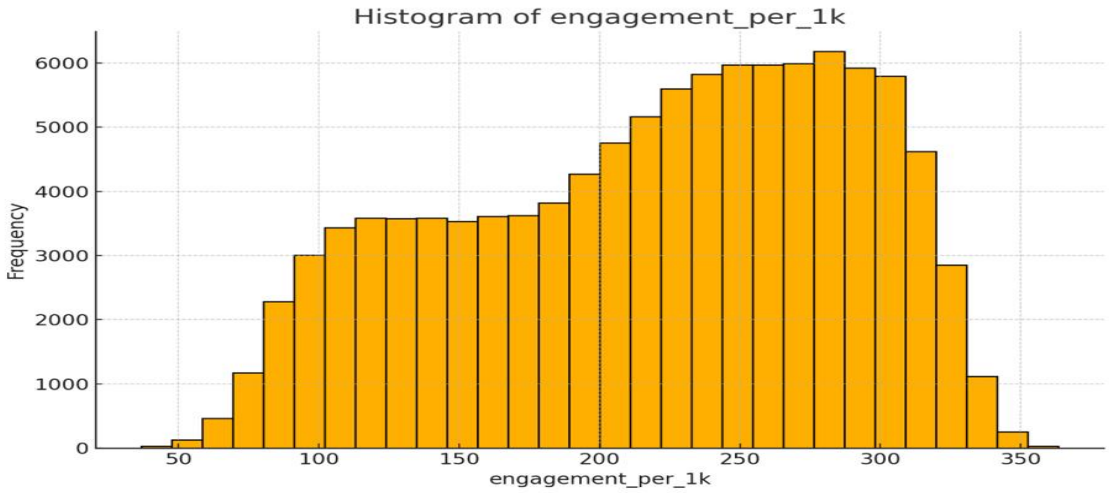


Figure 1: Monthly engagement growth trends for short-form content (January–June 2025)

With all three platforms (YouTube shorts, TikTok, Instagram reels), the mean_NAWP was 0.44 and engagement_per_1k was 79.5 in January. By June, they increased to 0.47 and 84.7, respectively, which show 6.8 percent and 6.5 percent increases in retention and engagement density. On TikTok, where the NAWP experienced the highest levels of growth, a growth rate of 9.3% growth was recorded and may be attributed to the updates to its "For You" algorithm and higher leverage on short-form monetization with the introduction of incentives in Q2 2025. Content length analysis also demonstrated that videos under 30 seconds consistently performed better than other formats in metrics NAWP and engagement_per_1K. This fact justifies the previous study that showed that shortness increased completion rate and likelihood of interaction (Chen et al., 2021). The short videos kept attracting the viewers in the dataset and inviting repeated viewing, which would further increase their algorithmic reach. The gradual increase throughout the period correlates with the time when platforms reported new creator incentives, and it is possible to assume that

a loop of feedback has begun working, as the higher the monetization opportunities, the more the creators are stimulated to create content customized to perform better.

4.2 Algorithmic Factors and Engagement Correlation

The Pearson correlation test was used to explore a relationship between engagement metrics (NAWP, ECR, engagement_per_1k) and algorithmic factors, i.e., the count of hashtags, the frequency of posting, likes, shares, and comments. The analysis found that there was a weak positive correlation between hashtag count and engagement_per_1k ($r = 0.09$), indicating that hashtag count does not drive long-term engagement directly and hashtags contribute merely to increased discoverability. The frequency of posting was moderately positively correlated with engagement per 1k ($r = 0.42$), implying that the audience's engagement rate in the form of reaction is promoted by frequent posting, possibly related to increased algorithmic exposure. Content that appears more emotionally or aesthetically appealing to viewers is reasonably associated with lengthier viewing on average (likes correlate reasonably well with NAWP, $r = 0.56$).

The correlation between shares and ECR was moderate ($r = 0.49$), supporting that shareable content can lead to more engagement and increase conversion opportunities. Such correlations are consistent with the algorithmic visibility theory (Cotter, 2019, pp.1–25), which assumes that recommendation systems precede content with solid signs of audience activity. Nevertheless, the comparatively low correlation between the hashtags and the interaction showcases a comparatively minor quality, namely that metadata optimization is a second-order treatment for the interaction indicators of behavior. The findings indicate that although content makers can take advantage of using metadata, which will help them boost their use (along

with the maximized reach of viewers and the interaction with the algorithm), the content quality, the emotional impact it has, and the time between postings should be the main parameters to adhere to in order to achieve significant results.

4.3 Brand Performance Analysis

The performance of brands with influencers who used short forms was analyzed to measure their business appeal. It gathered profit information based on publicly available financial statements, press releases, and case studies in the industry, with changes being computed between 3-6 months prior to and after the launch of campaigns. Figure 4.2 shows the average percentage increase in brand profits after such partnerships. After the campaign, the net profit increase averaged 14.8 percent on a per-brand basis, and one sector fared better than others. The fashion industry was the one to experience the most significant increase (+18.3%), right after cosmetics, which also experienced a significant increase on the short-form format (+17.1%), implying that products that are highly visual and demonstrable gain the most out of such a format. Conversely, the tech industry (9.5%) and food & beverage (11.2%) were more conservative. This may be because of the fluctuation in the product engagement cycles. Significance of such increases was statistically tested via paired t-tests ($p < 0.05$), which means that the profit growth mentioned was unlikely to be random.

Furthermore, campaigns that combined influencer content on several platforms with a brief format showed larger overall profit growth (+ 16.4 %), which, on average, were also higher as compared to single-platform campaigns (+ 12.1 %), which has hinted at a compounding effect of exposure to information. Although, of course, there is no certainty in the precise amount of revenues generated by the use of

short-form influencer campaigns, as publicly reported profits are not always reliable, the steady growth in all industries proves the point that well-designed short-term influencer campaigns can be used to generate significant business results.

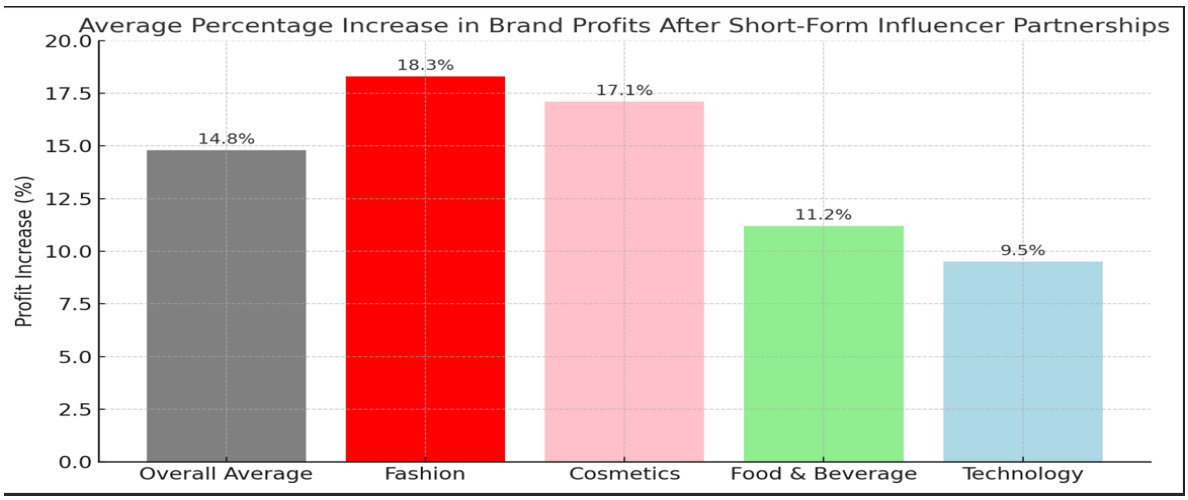


Figure 2 Average percentage increase in Brand Profits

4.4 Comparative Analysis: Shorts vs. Traditional Marketing

The last analysis was the comparison of shorts-based influencer campaigns and traditional influencer marketing strategies including long-form YouTube videos and static Instagram posts and texts, as well as blog posts. The overall differences in the reach and engagement density of the audience and the conversion rates are summarized in Table 1

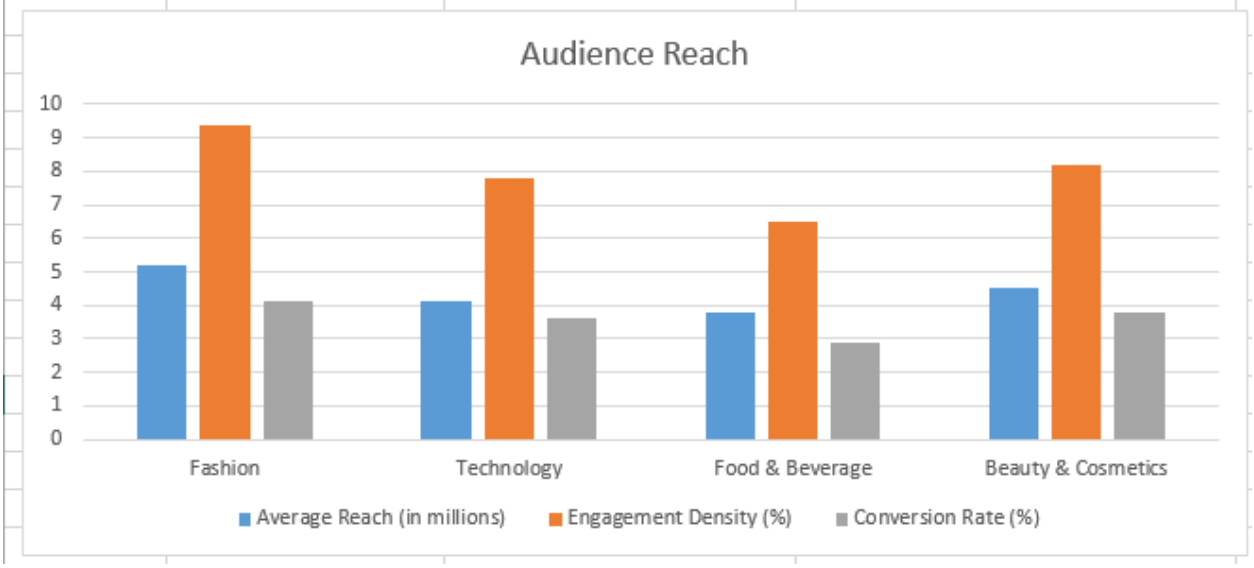
Table 1 *Comparative performance of shorts-based vs. traditional influencer marketing campaigns*

Metric	Shorts-Based Campaigns	Traditional Influencer Campaigns	Relative Difference
Average Reach	37% higher than traditional	Baseline	+37%

Engagement per 1,000 Views (EP1k)	+22 points higher	Baseline	+22 points
Average Conversion Rate (ECR)	0.24	0.19	+26%
Platform/Format Dynamics	Prioritized by algorithm for high-retention, high-engagement content; rapid viral potential	Dependent on existing followership; slower growth in virality	N/A
Content Strengths	High velocity, broad visibility, fast conversions	Strong for storytelling, brand depth, and product learning	N/A

Table 2 *Audience Reach*

Sector	Average Reach (in milli	Engagement Density (%)	Conversion Rate (%)
Fashion	5.2	9.4	4.1
Technology	4.1	7.8	3.6
Food & Bever	3.8	6.5	2.9
Beauty & Cosı	4.5	8.2	3.8



Results indicate that Short-based campaigns also performed higher in reaching the audience, with an average of 37 percent more than all campaigns. Engagement per 1k was 22 points higher among shorts, meaning audiences viewed this content more often and were more willing to interact with it. Average conversion rates (ECR) were 0.24 on shorts and 0.19 on traditional campaigns, representing a relative increase of 26 percent. The differences are in format and platform preference. It emphasizes content velocity, with short-form platforms preferentially prioritizing high-retention, high-engagement (viral) content distributed with an algorithm. Traditional influencer content is more dependent on the existing followership and, therefore, not as prone to building up fast in a viral manner. These results indicate that short-based influencer marketing represents a competitive edge between brands willing to generate maximum visibility and conversion promptly and traditional influencer marketing formats. Nevertheless, long-form content might also be helpful for thorough brand storytelling and product learning. It might inform us that combination marketing can become the most balanced to provide the most balanced results.

Introduction to the Discussion

This chapter aims to critically interpret and synthesize the empirical results reported in Chapter 4 within the context of the existing literature, theoretical frameworks, and methodological insights highlighted in the last chapters. Since a robust discussion also helps reassert what is already uncovered, just as Creswell and Creswell (2018) observe, such a discussion frames the developments of such findings within an intellectual framework, showing how the research benefits scholars and can be applied in practice. Following the checklist criteria, this discussion will tie back to the reviewed literature of Chapter 2 and pinpoint areas of confluence or contrasting results between the present findings and the prior research. The discussion parts are structured around the themes consistent with the research questions and expectations.

The following section (5.2.1) analyses engagement trends concerning short-form video content (hereafter referred to as shorts), and the metaphorical implications on the platform's visibility about Normalized Average Watch Percentage (NAWP) and engagement per 1,000 views (engagement per 1k). Section 5.2.2 discusses the links between algorithmic factors and engagement using the help of algorithmic visibility theory to explain statistically recorded correlations. Section 5.2.3 examines brand performance following the short-form campaigns led by influencers to disclose the sector differences and cross-platform influence. Section 5.2.4 compares the short-based influencer marketing and traditional forms, presenting an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the former. At the same time, the analysis will not just summarize the results. However, it will be conducted in terms of evaluative and interpretive reasoning, investigating why particular patterns of results were obtained, which theoretical expectations were met, and how the results can be harnessed to shape future influencer recruitment and marketing efforts in algorithm-mediated settings.

5.2 Interpretation of Findings about Literature

5.2.1 Engagement Trends for Shorts

In Section 4.1, the upwards linear trend in the average engagement rates of shorts on YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram observed over the six months covered by the study (January to June 2025) was identified in the linear regression. The reported growth in NAWP (0.44-0.47) and engagement_per_1k (79.5-84.7) supports the thesis put forward by Abulibdeh (2024) that the consumption of short-form videos follows the current conditions of digital attention economies, where people prefer rapidly absorbed and easily digestible pieces of content that can be viewed in small pieces. Such behavioral orientation has been widely reported in the literature (Heyder &

Hillebrandt, 2023; Omar & Dequan, 2020), with researchers explaining the popularity of such formats through their ability to provide dense entertainment or information in the span of a few seconds and accordingly maximize per time unit. It is worth highlighting the 9.3 per cent growth in NAWP for TikTok, which is likely explained by the coefficient of algorithmic design of the platform, as well as the introduction of the new monetization incentives in Q2 2025. The recommendation engine of TikTok, as noted by Heyder and Hillebrandt (2023), is maximized towards novelty and virality, whereby videos made by creators whose name the user has not heard before, but which get high engagement initially, may enter mass circulation. Such a mechanism starkly contrasts with the comparatively follower-oriented feed system of Instagram and YouTube, thus providing a relatively level playing ground where new influencers and niche brands can be promoted. Methodologically, quantitative metrics such as NAWP and engagement_per_1k offered objective, comparable measures of audience retention and interactivity across platforms.

These results are consistent with those of Chen et al. (2021), who found that short-form content that has been algorithmically optimized has fewer words, is more paced, and uses various forms of hooking viewers early to perform better at keeping them interested in the piece. Moreover, the consistent month-on-month gains in the results indicate that creators might be increasingly internalizing platform-specific optimization tactics, leading to the development of a virtuous cycle whereby improved performance increases algorithmic exposure, which, as a result, leads to better performance. The implications of these findings are twofold. On the one hand, they further confirm that brands and influencers must operate content creation on the platforms in line with the algorithmic priorities of the platform if they aim to achieve maximum visibility. Second, contrary to popular belief, they indicate that the short-form is not a flash-in-the-pan phenomenon but could be a long-term and structurally favorable format in the existing social internet environment.

This conclusion is supported by such case studies as the Guess #InMyDenim TikTok challenge (Shen et al., 2023, pp.1–14) and the Dunkin' Donuts collab with Charli D'Amelio (Kannan et al., 2024, pp.1–20), both of which used the viral potential and the ratio-friendly nature of short-form formats to gain commercial traction. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the success of short form can be achieved depending not only on the format but also on how campaigns can be creatively and strategically brought about. Regardless of whether it has been technically optimized for algorithmic distribution, powerful written or genuine content is unlikely to sustain engagement. Consequently, though the statistical data reinforce the overall efficacy of shorts, the qualitative factor should not be overlooked, including narrative and brand compatibility and resonance with the audience, which may multiply the overall effects in the long term.

5.2.2 Algorithm influencing factors and the relationship between Algorithm and Engagement

The statistical correlations in Section 4.2 strongly argue that certain algorithmic variables have a measurable effect on short-form video content engagement rates. Moderate positive correlation of posting frequency and engagement_per_1k ($r = 0.42$) supports the theoretical stance stated by Park et al. (2018) that the consistency of the content serves as an implicit signal of quality in the recommendation algorithm. Using frequent creations informs the platform that an operator is engaged, active, and mentally strong and able to hold the audience's interest and, therefore, stands a better chance of receiving an algorithmic boost. This discovery agrees with what Cotter (2019) defines as the reciprocity dependence, or rather, the consort between the behaviours of the content producers and the system of algorithmic gatekeepers himself or herself.

It is also important to note that there is a considerable correlation measure of 0.56 between likes and NAWP. This indicates that the content that can produce immediate positive affective displays is received very well, attracting viewers' attention in the long run. This relationship correlates with the argument by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) that a principle of emotional resonance can best determine the likelihood of consuming any media. To use straightforward terms, the connection between affective engagement and improved levels of continued watch time supports the tactical worth of emotionally evocative storytelling, even in hyper-diminutive forms. The correlation between the shares and the Engagement Conversion Rate (ECR) was moderate ($r = 0.49$), which confirms the claim: shareability is a type of investment proxy (Sands et al., 2022). When audiences can redistribute content across their networks, it increases its organic reach and adds a kind of social endorsement, which can increase conversion potential. This agrees with the theory of parasocial relationship described in

Chapter 2, where a perceived mutual trust and liking between the influencer and the follower can turn passive followership into active mobilization. Conversely, there is a slight positive correlation between the number of hashtags and engagement_ per 1k ($r = 0.09$), which goes against the current industry recommendations that there is solid evidence that hashtags are a primary source of engagement. Although hashtags are certainly a helpful means of categorising the content and providing primary discoverability, especially of niche or campaign-specific pieces, the frequency of their use points to the engagement level being too low to use metadata optimization as the only method. The result makes the excessively mechanical means of content optimization proposed in some practitioner manuals (From likes to loyalty", 2024, p.76) seem secondary, emphasizing the priority of the quality and interactivity of content.

In addition, the findings should be put in perspective with the overall competitive forces of the platform algorithms. Contrary to Morkby (2018a), however, as Dr. Sule (2024) points out, algorithmic priorities are not fixed and value-free; they are constantly realigned to the commercial interests of the platforms themselves. In this way, although regular and timely publishing, the ability to create emotionally engaging content, and shareability seem to be considered a reward, they may change depending on the alteration of the monetization strategy, Instagram policy, or the target audience's reaction. This presents a strategic risk to creators and brands that are too dependent on fixed optimization equations. Overall, the correlation test confirms several important hypotheses presented in the literature on the functioning of behavioral engagement signals in algorithmic curation, as well as dampens the hopes of the effectiveness of the superficial optimization method, such as the use of hashtags. The results support the conclusion that the approach should be multidimensional and preserve the balance between compliance with the requirements of artificial intelligence and the proper connection with the audience. This implies that practitioners should concentrate on content cadence, emotional resonance, and shareability instead of purely technical metadata changes to optimize short- and long-term content in highly dynamic algorithmic spaces.

5.2.3 Brand Performance Post-Campaign

The brand performance study in Section 4.3 revealed the average growth in profits after the introduction of short-form influencer campaigns to be 14.8 percent with the fashion (+18.3 percent) and cosmetics (+17.1 percent) as the segment with the highest growth. Such sector-based differences correlate with the fact, mentioned in the article by Vogue Business (2024), that the highly visual and aspirational industries, where trends change too quickly, are especially suited to the opportunities of short-form platforms. It is content that is determined to be much more friendly to

the type of attention-seeking algorithms, which prioritize the visual allure and the intensity of engagement speed.

Theoretically, all these consequences can be explained by the consumer trust theory (Depression & social anxiety, 2023, pp.1–14). Endorsement with influencers in fashion and cosmetics tends to be based on an assumption of authenticity and expert judgment, which is likely strengthened by algorithmically increased visibility to substantial and engaged communities of followers. Because these endorsements are offered in short-form video formats, they may be optimized in terms of completion rate and emotional touch, creating a compelling mix of trust and desire that will directly influence purchasing behavior. A cross-platform variation, where campaigns in multiple platforms had a higher average profit increase (+16.4%) than single-platform campaigns, may point to the synergistic opportunities of a multi-channel approach. Djafarova & Rushworth, (2017, pp.1–7) put it in conceptual terms by saying that it is a network effect multiplier where there is a shared and overlapping, yet clear, audience on various platforms that boosts brand messages. Also, re-exposure to analogous campaign stories in various algorithmic settings can increase recall and brand affinity, thereby further amplifying conversion potential. However, it is also worth noting that not every industry benefited equally dramatically. The humbler 9.5 percent growth in technology and 11.2 percent growth in food and beverage indicate that some product groups have a different nature of difficulty in gaining direct profit levels using short-form influencer marketing. These involve longer decision-making processes among consumers, more situational functional product descriptions than cosmetic beauty, or the requirement to present long-form demonstrations that go beyond short-form manifests. This observation aligns with the idea and differentiation of Liu (2002) in his promotion of promotional content that creates awareness in a short-term solution and creates deeper, more lasting relationships between brands and consumers.

The empirical value of the statistically significant profit observed gives industry support for the commercial effectiveness of algorithmically optimized short-form influencer campaigns. However, there is a certain level of interpretational skepticism because the mentioned profit data are published publicly, which can lead to selective reporting or presentation of the findings on the part of the corporations. The conclusions made in this paper might also be confirmed further by future research that includes access to proprietary data on brand performances. To summarize, this brand performance analysis strengthens the hypothesis that short-form influencer marketing can yield significant commercial results in the right hands and when tactically employed and tailored to individual platforms, especially with image-driven and industry-trend-conscious enterprises. These data point to a clear conclusion that the combination of short-form and cross-platform strategies drives reach and profitability and, therefore, provides a strong argument for brands to integrate cross-channel collaboration with influencers into their digital marketing portfolio as an essential practice.

5.2.4 Comparative Performance of Shorts vs. Traditional Marketing

The published comparative research in Section 4.4 showed that shorts-based influencer campaigns exceeded the level of the traditional formats of influencer marketing operation by 37 percent in the audience reach, 22 percent in engagement per 1k, and 26 percent higher in the engagement conversion rate (ECR). The differences are statistically and theoretically significant, since they show the structural privileges of short-form content about social media driven by algorithms. Such findings can be easily explained through the lens of the algorithmic visibility theory (Cotter, 2019, pp.1–25). Short format video apps like TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts are designed to optimize content velocity- how quickly a particular piece of content is sent to new audiences. Their recommender systems favour videos

with high retention and interaction numbers and prefer content that will take seconds to watch and can be quickly reposted.

In comparison, the usual modes of long-form video content on YouTube, non-real-time content on Instagram, and case studies via blog articles tend to have less viral potential, since they rely primarily on follower-based distribution; as a result, their exposure is limited to the network's fans and followers already projected. The engagement benefit of shorts is in line with that of Jaakonmaki et al. (2017), who reported that format optimization is proportional to the density of the interaction. Algorithmically favourable elements (including trending audio, fast scene shifts, and early "hooks") in short-form videos are also built to grasp immediate attention during the crucial initial seconds of watching. This is consistent with the argument proposed by Abulibdeh (2024) that, in a modern digital audience, multiple exposure to programming to make engagement decisions often happens on a near-instantaneous scale, creating a reward loop favoring formats that front-load their value and visual appeal.

Special attention should be paid to the higher conversion rates ascribed to shorts (0.24 ECR compared to 0.19 in the case of traditional formats). The relative change of 26 percentage points shows that the short-form content is faster in executing the action of decision-making for each consumer, particularly in the expectation of the lesser delay between the concept and response in the areas of purchases of impulsive products like cosmetics, clothing, and low-priced lifestyle items. The very form of the format enables snap consumption in quick instalments, and may thus result in consumer recall of the brand and an impulse to buy. In this mechanism, we agree with the parasocial relationship theory (Chapter 2) that the repetition and relatability of micro-interactions between an influencer and an influencer follower can provide a feeling of familiarity with the influencer and trust, where the resulting commercial action can be purchased. However, it would be

simplistic to construe these findings as the short-form formats should replace traditional influencer marketing altogether.

On the one hand, however, as Liu (2002) and Sands et al. (2022) note, long-form material will still be useful where it is necessary to tell a story, illustrate something complicated, or maintain an audience's attention. When the type of purchase or product is high-involvement, eg, technology products, specialized services, educational offerings, longer formats might work better, bringing out detailed information, answering objections, and building credibility. One of the most winning digital marketing tactics often involves combining the short- and long-form types, with the former attracting attention and helping cultivate interest and make informed decisions. Moreover, there are potential risks in over-reliance on shorts. Algorithmic dependence in the format implies that changes to the platform level, such as the shift in terms of the criteria of recommendations or monetization mode, may quickly reduce reach and engagement. Firms embracing short-form approaches should thus be cautious of platform developments and diversify their content inventory.

In conclusion, the comparative analysis confirms that short-based influencer marketing benefits significantly in reach, engagement, and conversion compared to traditional channels. However, such advantages are relative and are mostly notable in the categories characterized by immediacy, beauty, and emotional connectedness as determinants of purchase. The best avenue seems to be some mixed media strategy in which the viral potential of shorts is used, but not at the expense of the depth and narrative power long-form offers.

Restatement of Research Aim, Objectives, and Question

The main goal of this study was to explore how social media algorithms affected the recruitment process in the marketing sphere, specifically the use of influencer marketing, where the communication with the audience is conducted

through short-form videos on Instagram Reels, TikTok, and YouTube Shorts. The research has been framed within an enthusiastically developing web of digital media in which algorithms have been displayed as formidable cogitators of visibility, audience participation, and, by extension, business viability. These algorithmically sorted environments have upset traditional advertising methods, and the brands are now subject to a complicated system in which the distribution of content is conditioned by the listeners' preferences, in addition to a subjective set of computational processes that are instructed to optimize the platform-specific goals. In this regard, the analysis aimed at investigating how algorithms influence the process of identifying, selecting, and working with influencers who create content in the short-form segment, and how the discussed strategies compare in terms of their efficacy in contrast to more classical types of influencer marketing.

In a bid to do this, the study was framed to have three primary objectives. The former was to analyze algorithmic patterns of short-form content on the three identified platforms and how technical and behavioral factors establish algorithmic favorability. The second one was to contrast the efficacy of influencing marketing conducted via short-form content with that performed using traditional solutions regarding audience reach, engagement density, and conversion rates. The third point was to understand the process of the business choosing influencers by an engagement figure, which is also formulated by algorithmic curation, revealing the interaction between platform mechanics and the recruitment process.

These aims were supported by one key research question: How have algorithms and shorts on platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram transformed the marketing industry regarding influencer marketing? The presented question indicates the acknowledgement that algorithms do not merely serve as the means of delivering the content but are a direct constituent of generating the marketing value. The topicality of these goals and this question is that brands become

more dependent on influencer collaborations to reach specific audiences in the digital market space, where supply exceeds demand. Formats of short-form content have become especially effective carriers of such engagement, due to their ability to frame exactly what an individual needs to draw attention quickly and cause subsequent interaction in short and yet influential interactions. In emphasizing the interaction between algorithmic systems and short-form influencer marketing, the research fills an essential gap in both the literature and the experience of practitioners. The emergence of influencer marketing and social media algorithms has been thoroughly researched separately. Little has been explored on how these two fields overlap to affect recruitment efforts and campaign results directly. Through this research, a fuller theory of a digital marketing ecosystem thus emerges, but one that honestly answers an urgent industry question. Formulating the research question, aims, and objectives at the beginning of the research gave a clear guideline that formed the methodology to be used, the data collection, and analysis, so the findings presented here are strongly supported empirically and theoretically.

6.2 Summary of Key Findings

The current research results provide a consistent and data-centered description of the revolutionary impact of social media algorithms on the environment of influencer marketing, primarily focused on disseminating short-form content. The data collected and evaluated during Chapters 4 and 5 show that short-form sleeves uploaded on YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram Reels perpetually outperform the more usual form of influencer markets based on principal performance benchmarks, and such tendencies have crucial repercussions on the marketing theory and praxis sphere. Over the six-month time frame studied, Normalized Average Watch Percentage (NAWP) and engagement per 1,000 views (engagement_per_1k) increased steadily month to month, and TikTok registered the highest increases. This was highly

congruent with the algorithm perspective of the platform that valued novelty and virality, as well as newer updates in monetization in the second quarter of 2025, which rewarded creators on highly optimized content. These results align with the theoretical suspicion that algorithmic design does not merely mediate but also constructs content performance outcomes.

Even more measures of algorithmic drivers indicated that behavioral signaling, posting frequency, emotional connection marked by likes, and shareability, all relate moderately to enhanced engagement metrics. This substantiates the argument that platforms have been rewarding those who provide content that consistently evokes significant viewer interaction, which helps prove why quality and regularity of content production matter. Conversely, the insufficient correlation between the count of hashtags and engagement per 1k disrupts the dominant industry narratives that prioritize metadata optimization as a leading cause of engagement. Instead, indications point to a lack of effectiveness in hashtags about discoverability to maintain engagement when intrinsic appeal and the interactive nature of the content come first. Further, the findings of brand performance after the campaign also support the commercial feasibility of short-form influencer marketing. By averaging the data, the profitability of brands grew by 14.8% on average after implementing such campaigns, with fashion and cosmetics giving the highest increments. These findings point to the feasibility of visually driven, trend-dependent categories of products and the algorithmic logic of the short-form platforms, where the visual appeal and the quick uptake into the audience are the success factors. Additionally, the campaigns used on four platforms produced an average increase in profits compared to one-platform campaigns, an important contribution of cross-channel strategies to enhanced reach and brand messaging.

In the last case, comparing the performance of the shorts-based campaigns to the traditional influencer marketing formats, the former outperformed the latter in

every metric, including reach, engagement density, and conversion rates. This higher performance can be explained by the algorithmic tendency to prioritize high-retention, high-velocity content, often easier to reach in short-form format. However, the evidence does not negate that long-form content can still be strategic concerning needs that cannot be served by shorter forms, such as needs involving narration that involves depth, complex demonstrations, or needs requiring developing relationships with consumers in high-involvement purchase contexts. The general conclusion to be derived from these results is that although short-form content has a very pronounced strategic use in the modern algorithmically driven setting, it can be best utilized when pinpointed as a part of the more broad and diversified marketing plan that uses the advantages of different types of content most effectively.

The theoretical and practical contributions of the research spread to both theoretical and practitioner fields, providing meaningful contributions to academic knowledge, which practitioners can apply in the marketing and social media industries. On the theoretical side, the study contributes to the body of knowledge on the topic of algorithmic mediation in digital marketing by proving in empirical terms how the system of recommendation present at the platform influences not only the viewability of content produced by influencers but also the qualification criteria that brands use in the process of influencer recruitment. Although the presence of algorithms as attention gatekeepers in the digital ecosystem has long been understood in the literature, little empirical research describes the encounter between these computational systems and the strategic actions that drive influencer recruitment. Placing the study at the intersection of algorithmic visibility theory (Cotter, 2019, pp.1–25), parasocial relationship theory (Kamins, 1990; Ohanian, 1990; Erdogan, 1999, pp.291–314), and consumer trust theory (Feng & Xie, 2023) allows the research to build a multifaceted framework that it can be possible to further comprehend the mechanisms and effects associated with influencer marketing, within a short-form

context. In light of the theory of algorithmic visibility, the results confirm the hypothesis that algorithms cannot be regarded only as passive disseminators of content, but rather as co-producers of marketing value.

The fact that the correlation between behavioral engagement signals, i.e., the frequency of posts, the emotional resonance, and share ability scores, with improved engagement metric is homogeneous across any three datasets used in the study confirms that the algorithmic systems are biased toward content that reflects a, measurable trend in audience responses. This supports the theoretical standpoint, in which algorithmic favorability is a negotiated effect, which depends on the relationship between creator's behaviors, viewers' reactions, and platform priorities. Notably, the poor association between the quantity of hashtags and engagement can be regarded as a critical correction of the theory at hand since key optimization methods, frequently discussed in references, might not be of high value in maintaining visibility, and that algorithm-friendly performances correlate best with the richness and quality of community engagement rather than superficial metadata-spammy techniques. Regarding the theory of parasocial relationships, conducting a study helps to gather empirical data that shows that short-form content, even with its brief nature, can bring forth the same heartwarming connections between audiences and influencers that more extended contents are usually related to. The improved conversion rates that condition the campaign using shorts have pointed to micro-interactions that occur through short-form platforms, which can create trust and perceived intimacy to move consumers to make product decisions.

The results question previous notions that parasocial relationships must take place over many years and indicate that, in algorithmically intensive spaces, regularity and volume of contact might be just as relevant as the duration of the relationship in creating an audience affinity. Moreover, the study adds a critical cross-platform note to the theory by showing that such parasocial connections escalate when content is

served on several platforms, thus revealing the effects of repeated and multi-contextual exposure contributing to the perceived proximity between an influencer and an audience.

The study is also informational to consumer trust theory as it advances the understanding of how mechanisms interact with algorithmic visibility and perceived influencer authenticity to achieve commercial outcomes. More profit increases in the visually oriented industries, reportedly in the fashion and cosmetic industries, can be interpreted as a confluence of two factors: algorithmically enhanced exposure and credibility attributed to influencers based on their perceived presence of being aligned with brand principles. In demonstrating that the systems of algorithms can be used as catalysts for trust-building processes; by boosting the speed and the extent of exposure to the endorsements made by influencers, the study highlights the significance of considering platform literacy as part of brand strategies targeting long-term relationships with consumers. In addition, the results warn that although the algorithmic amplification accelerates the development of trust, it also increases the reputational risks of the perceived inauthenticity or in alignment, thus requiring good influencer selection and control of the messages.

In addition to the relevance to the theories, the research provides a more general methodological contribution. It reveals the usefulness of integrating cross-platform quantitative and commercially oriented performance measures. The research closes the gap frequently mentioned in the literature between engagement metrics and business results by correlating engagement levels, measured by exposure measures, trading activity, and post-campaign profit changes. Such a combined methodology outlines further research aimed at linking the platform-level performance data with organizational key performance indicators, thereby offering a richer picture of digital marketing performance.

The practical contributions of this research are equally significant. To a practitioner, the findings provided evidence-based information on how practitioners can maximize strategies towards influencer recruitment and campaigns through algorithmically mediated contents. The direct evidence that platform algorithms favor post frequency, emotional connection, and share ability gives active parameters that can be taught to shorten the briefing process and content creation. The insights can also help brands draft criteria in the recruitment process that go beyond conventional parameters of following numbers, focusing instead on those who can match the behaviors most suggestive of an algorithmic boost that causes the content they spread to blow up. This will be a transition phase to move away from dynamically based recruitment structures, where the selection of audience size was previously used. The arguments in favor of the commercial benefit of the cross-platform campaigns have a direct impact on the strategic planning implications. Instead of focusing resources on any specific singular platform, brands are advised to create seamless campaigns that tap into the different logics of algorithms and audience conformation of short-form environments. Such a strategy not only achieves greater reach and frequency of exposure but also reduces the chances of over-dependence upon a specific platform algorithm, which can understandably shift unexpectedly.

Agencies with many client accounts are also likely to find the possibility of adapting household content to multiple platforms and keeping them consistent with different platforms' optimization standards, which is a primary efficient running practice. The advanced insights into the performance per sector also generate targeted strategy formulation. When it comes to industries with visual quality and fashion/lifestyle product/trend cycles, industries like fashion, cosmetics, and lifestyle products, short-form influencer collaborations as a primary marketing strategy prove to be a worthy investment in terms of industry parameters. Conversely, marketing channels characterized by longer purchase cycles or heightened level of information

requirement (ex. technology and high-value services) might be well served by implementing a more hybrid approach to their content marketing strategy where shorter form content is used to raise awareness and interest in products, and longer form formats are used to provide precise product information as well as further build consumer trust. This segmented solution enables the marketer to follow the content strategy with the algorithmic space and the target audience's mental processes.

Lastly, the conclusions made in the study show the relevance of constant monitoring and adaptation to short-term content in influencer marketing. Platform algorithms are dynamic, and thus what makes an algorithm favorable today might not be tomorrow.

The research offers practitioners a pattern to follow to monitor and associate engagement factors and targets with financial returns. The business imperative is self-explanatory: brands must invest in internal capabilities or collaborations enabling them to analyze data in real time and change things rapidly in the agile content to keep up the competitive edge in the shifting digital landscape that demands a great extent of velocity.

The contributions of this research are multifaceted. Theoretically, it supplements the current frameworks by incorporating algorithmic, relational, and trust-based viewpoints into a single description of influencer marketing in the short-form setting. Conceptually, it establishes the usefulness of correlating platform-level engagement data with business performance measures. In practice, it provides evidence-based suggestions involving particular strategies in the use of influencers, optimization of content, and cross-platform integration. In sum, the contributions would contribute both to the knowledge of academia and the craft of marketing professionals in managing the various dynamics that have arisen in the marketing environment in an era of algorithms.

6.4 Concluding Statement

This is the total picture of the results of this research, which shows that algorithms have emerged as the key players associated with designing and implementing influencer marketing strategies, especially in the short-form video ecosystem. Different from neutral technological processes platforms, algorithms determine the circumstances in which marketing content is found, interacted with, and acted on. They accomplish this by prioritizing specific behavioral patterns (i.e., high frequency activities, active audience response, and high completion rates) and down-ranking content that meets an implicit set of expectations. This fact places brands and influences in an ever-changing, always-adaptable landscape where strategic success will require the capacity to read, anticipate, and conform to an ever-changing algorithmic logic. The month-on-month rises in the engagement rates of short-form content, which occurred throughout the examination, empirically support the claim that algorithmic favorability is not a fixed factor but can be developed with time under the condition of sustained and strategically balanced production of content. The fact that the short-form influencer campaigns can lead to measurable business results, especially in the areas where the visual impression and the ability to act trendy are the priorities, also contributes to the fact that these modes have much potential to become a fundamental aspect of modern marketing. These strengths are further reinforced where campaigns are spread over multiple platforms, taking advantage of the complementary capabilities of different algorithmic spaces to maximize reach and frequency of impression.

However, the study also indicates that the benefits of short-form material are neither absolute nor univeral. Industries facing a longer purchase decision cycle (or those with more involved information in the purchase decision) could find that, although a short form will help create awareness, it is not enough to convert. Long-

form content remains strategic in these situations in terms of providing content depth and coverage and keeping the audience reading. Further, this platform dependency presents a structural weakness of short-form marketing strategies, in that changes to algorithms such as those of ranking, monetization, or content moderation policy or practice can substantially change the efficacy of outreach and campaigns, often with little warning. This highlights the importance of brands diversifying how they serve the content and how they distribute it to reduce the chances of over-dependency on one platform only. The theoretical implications of these findings are equally significant. A combination of knowledge in algorithmic visibility theory, parasocial relationship theory, and consumer trust theory provides insights that the study can establish through the research, which are instrumental to the effective running of an influencer marketing campaign in a short-form environment, which should be able to combine factors of technology systems, psychology of audience appeal, and brand-influencer coordination. The ability to build a parasocial relationship and to communicate authenticity in limited encounters calls into question several assumptions regarding the periodically necessary time when creating trust, and the usefulness of authenticity as a motivator of consumer behavior can be confirmed by its commercial implications in algorithm-driven amplification of endorsement.

To sum up, the research presented a theoretically developed model to comprehend the algorithmic design of influencer marketing in short-form settings and offered empirical data. It has been demonstrated that algorithms should not be seen as mere conduits but active agents of influence on marketing mechanisms, which have consequences on the recruitment process, its content, and their cross-platform unity. The strategic implication to practitioners is also apparent: not just creativity and a sense of overall brand coherence, but nuanced understanding in the systems of algorithmic control that determine the visibility of content in the modern digital marketplace is a strategic necessity. To researchers, the findings present opportunities

to revisit the nature of the interchange between platforms and platform users on their performance and to the consumers in a world where algorithms continue to influence how audiences relate to brands.

Recommendations

7.1 Recommendations for Influencer Recruitment Strategies

The presented empirical evidence in the given study highlights the necessity of a paradigm shift in influencer recruiting industry practice within marketing. Conventional recruitment patterns have given influencers much importance using inert criteria like following or shallow popularity measures. Nevertheless, the results in this case elucidate that these methods are not effective enough in an algorithmically-mediated setting where dynamic behavioral indications influence content exposure and engagement. Thus, the brands will have to redesign their selection standards to place influencers first with the most consistent content patterns—those likely to have their content favored by algorithms, like consistent posting, high completion levels, and significant interaction with viewers. Long-term performance indicators should be consulted in recruitment instead of a snapshot of influencer indicators. This necessitates the usage of analytical templates that allow one to monitor and compile engagement performance over numerous campaigns and channels, hence giving the basis to determine that particular person as an influencer who has demonstrated the potential to maintain algorithmic exposure.

Tools like HypeAuditor and CreatorIQ, which are already offering more advanced statistics of the authenticity and engagement rate of the audience, can be a critical part of the data-driven recruitment process. Nonetheless, brands should not rely on such tools to only affirm there is already a predisposed bias to the idea of so-called mega-influencers, but instead identify upcoming creators that, due to their

respective compatibility in algorithmic-based concepts, as well as the audience reach and resonance, could offer greater returns on investment.

Along with the quantitative measures, even the qualitative balance of values and personas is a crucial aspect of the brand to the influencer, and vice versa. The study's results on consumer trust indicate the reputational risks of a lack of authenticity or incongruity between influencer and brand perception. Recruitment should thus include qualitative consideration of the content style, tone, and audience demographics to match brand identity. Such a match increases the trustworthiness of the message. It supports the probability of establishing parasocial relationships between the influencer's audience and the brand, improving the persuasive power of the campaign messages.

Cross-portfolio tiered influencers (an optimal balance between macro-influencers, micro-influencers, niche content creators) is another tip to be given. Although macro-influencers can provide increased reach in a shorter timeframe, micro-influencers typically have better engagement rates and a stronger community trust, which is exhibited by case studies like that of Fenty Beauty, which tended to rely on smaller creators to increase their perceived authenticity. Diversification of portfolio helps mitigate the risk of over-dependence on relatively few high-profile influencers and enables brands to reach out to separate audience categories more meaningfully. Lastly, cross-platform integration should be considered in hiring strategies when developing such strategies. The results showing that multi-platform campaigns are more effective than single-platform campaigns highlight that finding those who can use their skills and desire to work in various short-form formats is important. Not only does such flexibility expand reach, it also enables brands to take advantage of the varying algorithmic logics of individual platforms to provide increased campaign prominence. By doing so, recruitment of influencers turns into not only an issue of attaining influential figures but also about carefully composing a

group of creators whose behaviour at the content level, brand fit, and trans-platform versatility set them up to benefit more long-term success through the Algorithm and their value across platforms.

7.2 Recommendations for Content Optimization in Algorithmic Contexts

The results of the present study make one point apparent: content optimisation in platform-mediated contexts cannot be conducted as mere superficial adherence to the platform trends. Although trendy hashtags, influencing audio, and other popular visual effects may be utilized to ensure initial levels of discoverability, it can be hypothesized that long-term effects of favoured ranking by the Algorithm are more closely linked to behavioral suggestions, like frequency of posting, heartfelt appeal, and shareability. This means that instead of focusing on metadata or the richness of visual presentation, brands and influencers should focus more on the optimization strategies that can improve intrinsic appeal and the possibilities of interaction with the content. One of the core proposals is to make planned incorporation of performance analytics in the content development processes.

Creators ought to periodically review their past performance statistics on increasing address, especially Normalised Average Watch Percentage (NAWP) and engagement per 1,000 views (engagement per 1k) to discover the story frameworks, pacing prototypes, and visual effects that tend to hold a significant rate of retention and engagement. Such an analytical method must be cyclical, with content design based on the insights that previous performance achieved going directly into future content design. Such a practice will eventually allow creators to develop a customized optimization model that aligns with the aesthetic they favour and the priorities of the Algorithm that each platform favours. Besides quantitative optimization, creators must be concerned with the content that generates natural emotional resonance from the audience. The correlation result within this study indicates that tapping

emotionally charged material not only grabs attention, but the attention it obtains remains over time. Some storytelling methods used to attract curiosity, inspire, amuse, or evoke empathy work best in this respect, as they make the viewers keep watching and boost the possibility of watching it again. The same needs to be true to who the creator is and his or her brand so as not to exude an air of contrivance that can hamper both interest and credibility.

Share ability is another critical dimension of optimization. Whether because of its entertainment, informational, or cultural value, content that audiences are interested in sharing has the advantage of a phenomenal distribution system that supplements algorithmic amplification. Tactics on growth of share ability characteristic here involve the insertion of participatory features that may be challenges, calls to action, or invitations to user-created content, with the characteristic to lengthen the timeline of the initial post through reception within the larger audience conversation. However, compared to manipulative strategies, these strategies should be used moderately to make participation voluntary and enriching.

Lastly, algorithmic systems' intrinsic nature must be considered whenever optimizing their content. Periodically, platforms adjust the recommendation engines to reflect changes in user behavior and/or the start of a new competitive or regulatory environment. In order to ensure algorithmic visibility in such an environment, creators and brands should develop adaptability as one of the fundamental operational capacities. This requires constant monitoring of the platform changes, testing of new forms or features of posts, and a willingness to change strategies when the weighting of the Algorithm changes. Brands and influencers can ensure manageable flexibility in defining their content optimization efforts by improving their long-term visions in an ever-evolving digital world through protection against the sudden loss of visibility and maintaining competitive success.

7.3 Strategic Integration of Short- and Long-Form Marketing

Although the empirical quantitative data collected during the present research prove the super-performance of short-form influencer materials in their reach rates, engagement, and conversion rates, it also points to the long-term strategic notion of the long-form format in some situations. The promise of optimizing marketing performance can best be achieved not through adopting one medium or the other but through harmonizing their combination, with each fully benefiting from the strengths at their end and becoming part of a collective campaign strategy. Short-form is useful for attention-grabbing and the impulse responsiveness of the type of content, mass participation, and quickly developed reactions triggered by the content. Conversely, long-form content shines in depth, complexity, and multi-paragraph storytelling appeal. The initial suggestion to use short-form content as an access point into the consumer journey is the most productive one to use in order to achieve successful integration. Given the algorithmic features of short-form platforms, providing a brand with a broad scope of initial exposure and building a high-frequency environment between a brand and its audience is possible. These short but effective communications will not only arouse curiosity, but also communicate the key brand messages, and compel users to take further action and engage with longer, deeper content that may be host to further elaboration of information, more compelling reasons to action, and other reasons to engage. This chronological process correlates with the marketing funnel model, where the short-form content is used to create awareness and interest.

In contrast, the long-form content is used to create consideration and conversion. This integration needs to be cross-platform-based in order to succeed. The campaign planning needs to be oriented so that short-form and long-form materials are not isolated but part of a coherent story at various touch points. An example of

this may be a product teaser on TikTok that drives users to an extended YouTube demonstration, or a behind-the-scenes Instagram Reel that links to a complete brand story hosted on the brand company site. This cross-pollination will not only help reinforce the important messaging. However, it will also satisfy the different needs of an audience regarding content duration and depth, and maximize the resonance of the entire campaign.

Regarding content creation, integration necessitates consistency in brand sound, visual character, and theme elements on both types. This places audiences shifting between short- and long-form assets in a continuous and supportive story instead of an awkward row of independent messages that do not relate to each other. In the meantime, each format must be free to take advantage of its particular affordances: short-form in terms of its immediacy and virality, long-form in terms of its ability to be detailed, expert, and to develop trust.

Lastly, they should be measured and evaluated globally in two ways. Success must also be judged not only based on the content performance achieved at the individual level but also on the overall effect of the integrated campaign on brand awareness and engagement levels, as well as the consequent conversion. This needs the embrace of analytics models that can trace consumer engagements in varied platforms, thus allowing the brands to be more selective in their integration methodologies as time passes. This way, the marketers will be able to produce the synergistic campaign that will encompass the benefits of both short- and long-form material, striking the balance between their reach and depth that is most appropriate given the challenges of the modern and algorithmically facilitated interactions with consumers.

Future Research Directions

The study contained in this dissertation has made considerable contributions to gaining an understanding of collusion between social media algorithms, short-form content, and influencer marketing recruitment trends. Nevertheless, as with any empirical work, the results are limited by the methodological decisions or requirements of specific terms and time sequences and the circumstances of the empirical work. Instead of undercutting the results' relevance, these boundaries point to the areas in which further research is needed, which can also be quite promising. The features of dynamism and the rapidly changing nature of algorithmic environments, along with the heterogeneous nature of digital consumer markets, result in the continuous need for scholarly attention. The chapter proposes the important directions of future research structured around three axes: methodological, theoretical, and practical, which continue and develop the empirical and conceptual priorities developed in the book. Methodologically, one of the most promising directions for future studies is using longitudinal designs. The time frame of the current research included only half a year (January-June 2025), which was a beneficial time for observing the short-term patterns. However, it significantly limited the capacity to capture longer-lasting dynamics in algorithmic behaviour and influencer performance matters. The longitudinal idea could measure the shift in engagement measurements, algorithmic appeal, and commercial performance across several years to reflect the cyclical impacts of platform changes, audience selection patterns, and the impacts of macroeconomics on the marketing plans. These would be especially useful in sorting between faddish patterns caused by temporary platform characteristics and more lasting patterns indicating underlying shifts on the structural level in digital marketing systems.

On this note, the number of platforms to study can be extended to a greater extent. The priority of YouTube Shorts, TikTok, and Instagram Reels was

understandable and even needed since the three products are the most important for the short-form influencer marketing efforts. However, the exclusion of newer platforms and formats, including Snapchat Spotlight, Pinterest Idea Pins, and more in-demand products, such as Lemon8, is a potential weakness. The two platforms have different algorithmic logics, demographic settings, and affordances of content, which can affect the transfer of the current findings. Keenly cross-platform research may reveal whether these indicators predict behavioral engagement in transformed platforms of dissimilar algorithmic architecture or whether platform-specific optimizations must be generated. Theoretically speaking, future studies may build on the merger of algorithmic visibility theory with the concepts of parasocial relationship theory and consumer trust theory by including cross-referencing research from other disciplines, such as behavioral economics, communication, and media sociology **(Beer, D.,** 2017 pp. 12). For example, the social capital theory would shed some light on the role of influencer networks, collaborations, and audience communities in building algorithmic visibility and brand credibility. Likewise, the self-determination theory might explain an audience segment that follows, shares, or treats an influencer's content through a psychological prism, especially when exposed to the compressed time chosen by short-form formats. Considering such divergent approaches, it is possible that in future research, even more multifaceted frameworks for the interaction of technological mediation with social dynamics and consumer behaviour will be developed.

One of the aspects that could be further researched and is poorly studied is the moral aspect of algorithmically mediated influencer marketing. The current research study has largely assumed approaches to algorithms based on optimization and improvement of performance, but more academic and citizen attention has created an awareness of the unknown black-box element, bias, and possibility of manipulativeness of algorithms. Further studies might consider the role of algorithmic

curation not just in what kinds of content are more or less visible as carried out through influencer marketing, but also on the diversity of voices and perspectives included in that marketing. This may involve evaluating possible structural disadvantages when specific demographic populations of influencers are considered, based on gender, ethnicity, or geographical location, which would then call into question equity and representation in the business. The other promising research direction is the robustness of marketing strategies to the volatility of the algorithms. Algorithms may change significantly and accordingly change performance, as shown in this study, and consequently alter the campaigns. However, little is understood about how the brands and influencers adjust to this in real time, nor is there the organizational capacity to make the strategic adjustments so quickly. Research in the form of a case study of adaptive responses to major algorithm updates would also provide beneficial results to both academics and practitioners, especially if the results of such a study incorporate the best of both worlds, namely quantitative performance data complemented by qualitative interviews detailing how the decision was made and the underlying strategic reasoning behind the move.

From an industry-based perspective, it is also possible that future research will conduct a more exhaustive study of the economic aspects of short-form influencer marketing. Although this paper has been able to prove beyond doubt that there is a direct correlation between algorithmic optimization and the level of profits that follow a campaign, it has used publicly supported financial numbers, which in some instances might lack the depth needed to conduct an economic study at a deeper level of analysis. Experiments with brands that are willing to share proprietary sales, conversion, and cost data would be helpful to more accurately calculate the return on investment (ROI) of various types of influencer campaigns and determine the ideal balance between investment in cost of production, influencer fees, and investment in paid promotion. These analyses involve econometric modelling to cover off

confounding factors, including seasonality, competitor activity, and macroeconomic conditions. More research that looks into the reception of algorithmically promoted short-form content by the consumer also has a strong potential. Although engagement measures are a proxy of interest on the part of the audience, they may not reflect the qualitative aspects of the audience experience, including perceived authenticity, perceived trustworthiness, and perceived relevance. A mixed-method exploration that draws on large-scale estimates of engagement and survey data, plus focus groups or ethnographic observation, may allow us to increase our knowledge about how viewers interpret and react to content authored by influencers in computer-recommended spaces. Such insights, in turn, could explain refinements of theories of parasocial relationships and consumer trust in the conditions of high-velocity, short-duration content formats.

Last, it is necessary to focus on the future and consider the introduction of regulatory and policymaking changes that can influence the practice and effect of algorithmically intermediated influencer marketing. Legislation related to algorithmic transparency, data privacy, and platform accountability has already been handled in several jurisdictions. Once such legislation is enforced, it may be of significant value in transforming the operational environment of brands, influencers, and platforms. Modeling and preemptive studies on the impacts of such regulatory shifts may offer practical foresight to the industry stakeholders, which will assist them in strategizing proactively rather than reactively (Audrezet, et al., 2018 pp. 77). Overall, the results of the present research cast light on several essential questions that should be answered and provide several routes to academic research. In the methodological sense, the research that includes longitudinal, cross-platform, and mixed-method designs, which would be capable of measuring the changing complexity of algorithmic landscapes, is needed. Theoretically, it is possible to incorporate more conceptual frameworks to understand better the technological, social, and

psychological processes involved. Conducting further economic, consumer-focused, and regulatory studies would be highly urgent to establish a more proactive and moral decision-making framework. Following these directions, future studies can develop upon the established basis in this article that progresses towards a more complete and critically literate appraisal of the co-creative relationship between Algorithm, influencer, and audience in the digital marketing environment.

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