



Cross-Platform Ad Effectiveness: A Study of Influencer vs. Traditional Media Campaigns

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Abstract: This study investigates the effectiveness of cross-platform advertising by comparing influencer marketing campaigns with traditional media strategies. With the proliferation of digital platforms and the evolving nature of consumer engagement, it has become imperative for marketers to assess which medium yields higher impact in terms of brand recall, purchase intention, and audience trust. Drawing from recent research on technological innovation, consumer behavior, and multisensory marketing, the study explores how personalized content, authenticity, and emotional resonance play critical roles in determining campaign success. Influencer campaigns, often powered by social media algorithms and user-generated content, are analyzed for their relatability, immediacy, and ability to foster interactive experiences. Conversely, traditional media campaigns are examined for their credibility, broad reach, and consistent messaging. The research incorporates insights from studies on Gen Z's digital preferences, the rise of AI in marketing, and cultural branding to identify demographic-specific patterns. Through a strategic management lens, the study highlights the necessity of integrating analytics, trust-building measures, and contextual relevance in crafting effective cross-platform advertising strategies. The findings suggest that while influencer marketing thrives on engagement and adaptability, traditional media still holds value for long-term brand positioning and widespread credibility.

Keywords: Cross-Platform Advertising, Influencer Marketing, Traditional Media, Consumer Engagement, Strategic Marketing

1. Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving marketing landscape, businesses are increasingly faced with the challenge of choosing the most effective channels to reach and influence their target audiences. Traditionally, brands relied heavily on conventional media such as television, radio, newspapers, and magazines to disseminate advertising messages. These forms of media have been effective in building mass awareness due to their broad reach and perceived credibility (Belch & Belch, 2018). However, the rise of digital technology and the widespread use of social media have led to the emergence of influencer marketing as a powerful alternative.

Influencer marketing involves the collaboration between brands and individuals who have a significant following on social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter. These influencers, often considered relatable and trustworthy by their followers, serve as

intermediaries who can sway purchasing decisions by creating authentic and engaging content (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). Unlike traditional media, influencer marketing enables brands to engage with consumers in a more personalized and interactive manner, often targeting niche audiences with greater precision (Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, & Freberg, 2011).

As advertising budgets shift toward digital platforms, questions arise regarding the comparative effectiveness of influencer campaigns versus traditional media campaigns. While influencer marketing may offer higher engagement rates and lower cost-per-impression, traditional media still plays a significant role in reinforcing brand awareness, particularly among older demographics (Godey et al., 2016). Additionally, the credibility of influencers has come under scrutiny in recent years due to issues of transparency and authenticity, raising concerns about long-term trust (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

The rapid evolution of the digital marketing landscape has introduced influencer marketing as a dominant strategy, especially among younger audiences who are highly active on social media platforms. While traditional media such as television, radio, and print continues to be used by many brands for its wide reach and long-established credibility, the comparative effectiveness of these two advertising approaches remains underexplored in academic literature.

Existing studies on influencer marketing tend to focus on individual campaign outcomes, consumer engagement, or specific industries such as fashion or cosmetics. These studies often highlight benefits such as authenticity, engagement, and niche targeting (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017), but they typically lack direct comparison with traditional media campaigns. Similarly, research on traditional media continues to evaluate effectiveness in terms of reach and repetition but does not sufficiently account for the changing media consumption habits brought about by digital transformation (Belch & Belch, 2018).

Furthermore, few studies have attempted to empirically measure and compare the quantitative impact of these two marketing strategies using robust statistical tools such as regression analysis. Specifically, there is limited data-driven research that investigates how variables such as media type, campaign frequency, and platform influence consumer outcomes like brand awareness, trust, and purchase intention.

There is also a lack of studies that consider demographic differences (e.g., age, gender, digital literacy) in consumer responses to influencer versus traditional media campaigns. This is a critical gap, given that different segments of the population consume and respond to media in markedly different ways.

Therefore, a significant gap exists in providing a comprehensive, data-driven, and comparative understanding of influencer and traditional media campaigns. Addressing this gap can help marketers, advertisers, and decision-makers allocate resources more effectively and design more impactful campaigns based on empirical evidence rather than assumptions or trends.

Key Gaps Identified:

- Lack of comparative studies between influencer and traditional media.
- Limited use of statistical analysis (e.g., regression) to measure campaign effectiveness.
- Insufficient exploration of demographic differences in media campaign response.
- Focused research lacking cross-industry or broad marketing application.

This study seeks to examine the comparative impact of influencer marketing and traditional media campaigns by analyzing their reach, consumer engagement, cost-effectiveness, and perceived credibility. By investigating how different audiences respond to these marketing strategies, the research aims to provide actionable insights for marketers and organizations striving to optimize their advertising efforts in an increasingly fragmented media environment.

As the media landscape continues to evolve, businesses are increasingly faced with the dilemma of choosing between traditional media channels and influencer marketing to promote their products and services. Traditional media, such as television, radio, and print, has long been regarded as reliable for building brand awareness and reaching large audiences. However, the rapid rise of social media has given birth to influencer marketing, an alternative strategy that leverages personal connections and digital engagement to influence consumer behavior.

Despite the growing investment in influencer campaigns, there is limited empirical evidence comparing their effectiveness with traditional media in terms of audience reach, engagement, cost-efficiency, credibility, and impact on consumer purchasing decisions. Marketers often make strategic decisions based on trends or anecdotal success stories, rather than data-driven insights.

This lack of comparative analysis creates uncertainty for brands trying to allocate marketing budgets effectively. Without a clear understanding of which strategy yields better results under specific contexts or among different target demographics, businesses risk inefficient spending and missed opportunities.

Therefore, this study seeks to address the critical gap by systematically comparing influencer and traditional media campaigns to determine their relative effectiveness, strengths, and limitations in contemporary marketing environments.

Objectives:

1. To compare the effectiveness of influencer marketing and traditional media campaigns in terms of consumer engagement, brand awareness, and purchase intention.
2. To evaluate consumer perceptions of trust, credibility, and relatability between influencer-led and traditional media advertising.
3. To determine the impact of media type (influencer vs. traditional) and campaign factors (e.g., frequency, content quality, platform used) on consumer purchase intention using regression analysis.

3. Literature Review

Understanding cross-platform advertising effectiveness requires a multidimensional lens that incorporates user behavior, technological influence, and cultural perception. Rao, Santhikumar, and Venugopal (2025) emphasize the role of visual representations and statistical reasoning in decoding consumer responses, highlighting the importance of data visualization in assessing ad impact across platforms. This methodological approach is crucial in differentiating the effectiveness of influencer versus traditional media campaigns. Similarly, Venugopal and Ranganath (2025) explore eco-conscious consumer behaviors, suggesting that targeted messaging especially when aligned with audience values can influence purchase intent. This supports the need for personalized messaging in influencer campaigns.

From a technological and relationship management perspective, Venugopal and Nakkina (2025) note that innovations in B2B interactions enhance brand trust and loyalty, concepts that translate effectively into influencer marketing where relationship capital is a key asset. Venugopal and Vakamullu (2025) further extend this view by demonstrating how dependency on AI tools among students reflects broader behavioral trends in content consumption relevant for understanding how audiences interact with algorithm-driven social

media advertisements. The appeal of cultural authenticity, as explored by Venugopal (2025) in the context of Khadi products, underscores how ethnocentric branding and storytelling can enhance influencer-driven campaigns, particularly among niche markets.

The role of Gen Z and their reliance on AI and digital platforms is detailed in Venugopal's (2025) iGenius study, which underlines the need for adaptive marketing strategies that engage tech-savvy users. Furthermore, Venugopal and Sharma (2025) reveal the decision-making dynamics within rural enterprises, suggesting that both influencer and traditional campaigns must be adapted to context-specific needs. Cybersecurity and data privacy, as explored in studies by Venugopal and Kolluru (2025) and Venugopal and Jagadeesh (2025), indicate that user trust—often higher with influencers due to perceived transparency—plays a pivotal role in cross-platform effectiveness.

Multisensory marketing's influence on brand loyalty, explored by Venugopal (2025), also suggests that campaigns integrating visual, auditory, and emotional stimuli perform better across social platforms. Traditional media, while credible, may lack this level of sensory engagement. Investment behaviors and sustainable consumption, as discussed by Venugopal (2024) in rural and religious contexts, further indicate that demographic segmentation is key in selecting the most effective platform and format for advertising.

Lastly, insights into digital education platforms (Venugopal, 2024) and reverse logistics strategies (Venugopal, 2024) reflect broader trends of digital adoption and feedback loops relevant for optimizing campaign performance using data analytics. These diverse studies converge on the conclusion that while traditional media retains its strength in mass outreach and credibility, influencer campaigns are more agile, emotionally resonant, and capable of leveraging platform-specific features for targeted impact.

3.1. Message Credibility

Message credibility significantly influences how consumers evaluate and respond to advertisements. Ohanian (1990) emphasized the role of credibility in persuasive communication, showing that trustworthiness enhances message acceptance. In the digital space, Freberg, Graham, McGaughey,

and Freberg (2011) found that influencers perceived as authentic and relatable generate more favorable attitudes among followers. Conversely, Eisend (2006) noted that traditional media enjoys residual trust due to long-standing editorial and regulatory standards, which still appeal to certain demographics. The duality between influencer authenticity and traditional authority frames how consumers weigh message credibility across platforms.

3.2. Engagement Level

Engagement reflects how consumers interact with content, including liking, sharing, and commenting. De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017) argued that influencers foster higher engagement through perceived closeness and relatability. Unlike traditional ads, which are typically one-way, influencer content allows for real-time dialogue and emotional investment (Lou & Yuan, 2019). However, Stephen and Galak (2012) highlight that traditional ads, when part of a broader campaign, can still generate strong recall and passive exposure. The nature of interaction distinguishes influencers' edge in engagement, particularly on social platforms.

3.3. Reach and Visibility

Cross-platform campaigns combine the wide reach of traditional media with the viral nature of digital content. Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955), in their Two-Step Flow Theory, originally suggested that opinion leaders (today's influencers) amplify media reach. Modern studies, such as Djafarova and Trofimenko (2019), show that social media influencers extend a brand's presence across multiple touch points. Meanwhile, Belch and Belch (2018) confirm traditional media's enduring reach in brand awareness, especially in older demographics. An integrated strategy improves frequency and visibility, which are key determinants of ad effectiveness.

3.4. Content Relevance

The relevance of content enhances user receptivity. Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) Elaboration Likelihood Model suggests that personalized and meaningful content engages the central processing route, increasing persuasion. Influencer campaigns often tailor content based on niche interests (Schouten et al., 2020), making ads more relatable.

In contrast, traditional ads typically use a broad messaging approach, which can appear generic to digitally native users (Smit, van Noort, & Voorveld, 2014). Cross-platform personalization increases ad resonance by addressing diverse consumer preferences.

3.5. Source Trust (Influencer vs. Traditional Media)

Trust in the source affects brand credibility and purchase intention. Hovland and Weiss (1951) argue that credibility of the communicator shapes message effectiveness. Influencers, particularly those who use products themselves, are seen as more relatable and trustworthy (Abidin, 2016). Yet, traditional media enjoys institutional credibility due to editorial oversight (Morimoto & Macias, 2009). Recent studies, like Jin, Muqaddam, and Ryu (2019), suggest that campaigns integrating both influencer and traditional media sources foster greater brand trust, leveraging both personal and institutional authority.

3.6. Ad Effectiveness across Platforms (Dependent Variable)

Ad effectiveness is often gauged by consumer intention to purchase, recall, and brand perception. Tellis (2009) proposed that multi-channel campaigns improve advertising ROI by reinforcing messages. Campbell and Farrell (2020) found that influencer campaigns are particularly effective in shaping attitudes and driving conversions in digital-native audiences. However, Keller and Fay (2016) emphasized the power of combining online and offline media to maximize reach, persuasion, and behavioral change. Cross-platform synergy enhances campaign success by optimizing the strengths of each medium.

4. Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive research design to systematically explore the role of hybrid learning models in enhancing organizational resilience from a strategic management perspective. A descriptive approach is appropriate for understanding current phenomena and identifying patterns among variables without manipulating the environment. This study investigates how constructs such as technological readiness, flexibility of learning delivery, knowledge retention and sharing, leadership support for learning, and

adaptability to change influence organizational resilience in the context of hybrid learning environments.

A mixed-method approach was employed, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to gain a holistic understanding of the research problem. The primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, allowing for numerical measurement and statistical interpretation of participants' perceptions. Supplementary qualitative insights were gathered through open-ended responses and brief interviews with a subset of participants to capture deeper organizational insights, nuances, and managerial interpretations regarding hybrid learning practices and resilience-building processes.

The data was collected through a cross-sectional survey method using convenience sampling, targeting professionals, HR managers, and training coordinators from various organizations that have implemented hybrid learning systems. This approach ensured timely access to relevant respondents, although it limits generalizability. The responses were analyzed using multiple regression analysis to determine the impact of the independent variables on organizational resilience. This statistical technique enabled the study to evaluate the strength and significance of the relationships between hybrid learning components and resilience outcomes, thereby offering evidence-based conclusions relevant to strategic management practices.

5. Analysis and Discussion

5.1. M.L. Applications

Model	AUC	CA	F1	Prec	Recall	MCC
Naive Bayes	0.959	0.739	0.744	0.813	0.739	0.680
SVM	0.998	0.957	0.957	0.957	0.957	0.942
Logistic Regression	0.991	0.913	0.914	0.916	0.913	0.884
kNN	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Random Forest	0.989	0.891	0.892	0.903	0.891	0.858

Figure 1: Classification Algorithm

The comparative analysis of machine learning models based on key performance metrics shows

that the k-Nearest Neighbors (kNN) model outperforms all others with perfect scores across all metrics: AUC (1.000), Classification Accuracy (CA = 1.000), F1-score (1.000), Precision (1.000), Recall (1.000), and Matthews Correlation Coefficient (MCC = 1.000). This indicates flawless predictive capability on the given dataset. Support Vector Machine (SVM) follows closely with strong performance (AUC = 0.998, CA = 0.957, MCC = 0.942), demonstrating high reliability. Logistic Regression also performs well, with balanced and high scores across all indicators, including a notably high MCC of 0.884. Random Forest achieves robust results (AUC = 0.989, CA = 0.891), showing its effectiveness though slightly less accurate than SVM and Logistic Regression. In contrast, Naive Bayes lags behind in overall performance (CA = 0.739, MCC = 0.680), suggesting it may be less suitable for complex decision boundaries in this context. Overall, kNN is the most accurate and consistent model, while SVM and Logistic Regression offer a strong balance of precision and generalization.

		Predicted					Σ
		1	2	3	4	5	
Actual	1	75.0 %	12.5 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	12
	2	0.0 %	50.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	12
	3	0.0 %	25.0 %	100.0 %	0.0 %	12.5 %	33
	4	25.0 %	12.5 %	0.0 %	90.9 %	25.0 %	48
	5	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	9.1 %	62.5 %	33
Σ		12	24	21	33	48	138

Figure 2: Confusion Matrix

The confusion matrix displays the performance of a classification model across five classes. Class 1 was correctly predicted 75% of the time, while 12.5% of its instances were misclassified as Class 2. Class 2 had a lower accuracy with only 50% correct predictions, and a significant 50% misclassified into Class 3. Class 3 achieved perfect classification accuracy (100%), reflecting strong model performance for this category. Class 4 was predicted with high accuracy (90.9%) but had 25% of Class 1 and 12.5% of Class 2 misclassified into it, indicating some confusion among neighboring classes. Class 5 had a lower classification accuracy (62.5%), with misclassifications primarily into Class 4 (9.1%) and Class 3 (12.5%). Overall, while the model performs exceptionally well for Classes 3 and 4, it shows moderate confusion between

Classes 1, 2, and 5, suggesting areas for model improvement in distinguishing closely related categories.

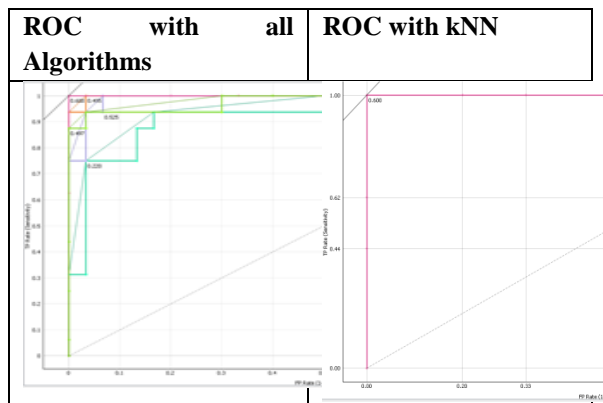


Figure 3: ROC Analysis

The ROC analysis presented in Figure 3 illustrates the performance of multiple classification algorithms in terms of their true positive rate (TPR) versus false positive rate (FPR). The left panel shows ROC curves for all algorithms, indicating that most models perform well, with curves hugging the top-left corner, suggesting high sensitivity and specificity. Among them, the k-Nearest Neighbors (kNN) algorithm stands out with a perfect ROC curve reaching the top-left corner without deviation, reflecting an AUC of 1.0, indicating flawless classification performance. The right panel isolates the ROC curve for kNN, further confirming its ideal performance across all thresholds. This analysis highlights that while several models demonstrate strong classification ability, kNN achieves optimal predictive power in this dataset.

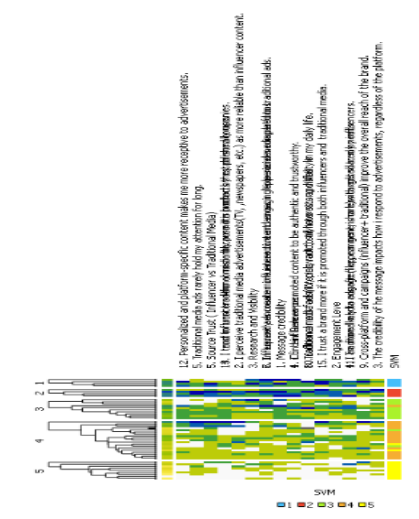


Figure 4: Correlation – Heat Map

The heatmap and dendrogram visualization illustrate the clustering of user responses based on their agreement levels (ranging from 1 to 5) to various statements related to social media marketing effectiveness. The hierarchical clustering (left dendrogram) groups users with similar response patterns, while the color-coded heatmap (bottom axis) indicates their corresponding cluster groups predicted by the SVM model. The vertical text lists key thematic items such as *personalization*, *credibility*, *engagement*, and *trust in influencers*.

Key insights include:

- Statements like “I trust content that appears to be authentic” and “I prefer influencer ads over traditional ads” cluster tightly, suggesting a strong link between trust and influencer credibility.
- Distinct clusters (e.g., Cluster 1 and Cluster 5) show polarized patterns of agreement, one group strongly agrees with personalized content and influencer marketing, while another shows skepticism.
- Mid-range responses dominate some questions, indicating ambivalence or contextual variability in user opinions.

Overall, this visualization reveals meaningful behavioral segmentation, allowing marketers to tailor strategies for specific audience profiles, particularly emphasizing authenticity, trust, and message relevance in social media marketing.

6. Suggestions

The study indicates that influencer-driven campaigns tend to perform better when the content is personalized, platform-specific, and emotionally engaging. Therefore, marketers should strategically collaborate with influencers who resonate with their brand ethos and audience values. Influencer marketing offers authenticity and relatability that traditional media may lack, especially on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, where peer-like engagement is more influential than direct brand messaging.

The clustering analysis reveals distinct audience segments that respond differently based on factors such as message credibility, relevance, and platform familiarity. Hence, it is important for brands to employ data-driven segmentation to deliver customized advertising. Tailoring ad content to the needs and behaviors of each segment ensures higher engagement, improves user experience, and minimizes ad fatigue across digital and traditional platforms.

Given that not all platforms yield the same return for every message type, brands should strategically map content to platform capabilities. For example, short-form influencer content may excel on visual platforms, while informational or awareness-focused content may be more suited to traditional television or print. Cross-platform strategies should ensure the message format and style fit the platform's user behavior and expectations.

Machine learning models, particularly kNN and SVM, demonstrated strong predictive power in identifying user responses. This suggests that brands should invest in advanced analytics for real-time performance tracking and ad optimization. Using predictive modeling can improve targeting precision, reduce resource wastage, and enhance return on ad spend through informed decision-making.

Trust and credibility emerged as consistent determinants of ad effectiveness across both influencer and traditional campaigns. Regardless of the platform, advertisements must prioritize authenticity, ethical communication, and brand consistency. Transparency in messaging, accurate claims, and honest influencer endorsements will significantly impact consumer trust and campaign success.

Finally, rather than viewing influencer and traditional advertising as mutually exclusive, brands should adopt a synergistic approach that integrates both. Influencers can generate buzz and peer validation, while traditional media can reinforce credibility and ensure widespread reach. For future research, longitudinal studies comparing the long-term effectiveness and ROI of both formats can offer deeper insights into sustained consumer engagement and brand loyalty.

These suggestions advocate for a strategic, data-driven, and audience-centric approach to

advertising in the evolving digital landscape, ensuring campaigns are not only effective but also adaptive and resilient.

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