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Success Factors of Influencer Marketing in the Beauty Industry

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List of Abbreviations

B2C-Marketing	Business to Consumer Marketing
Blog	Web Logbook
CTR	Click-Through-Rate
e.g.	for example
eWOM	electronic Word of Mouth (or also online Word of Mouth)
i.e.	that is (lat. id est)
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
PR	Public Relations
ROI	Return on Investment
SEA	Search engine Advertising
SEM	Search Engine Marketing
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SERP	Search Engine Result Page
SMM	Social Media Marketing
SOM	Self-Organizing Map
Vlog	Video Blog
UGC	User Generated Content
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
WOM	Word of Mouth
WWW	World Wide Web

1. Introduction

Topic and its relevance

In the course of the digitalization, the internet has become the most important information and communication platform. According to estimates approximately 3.39 billion people used the internet worldwide in 2016. Forecasts assume that the amount of internet users will even increase to 4.14 billion people in 2021 (Statista, 2018). The continuous development, affordability and easy access to new technologies enables users to purchase information from various online channels at any times. Even though the original main purpose of the internet has been the provision of information, it has transformed into a participatory web which is no longer just an information medium but also the foundation of online communication around the globe. Due to the many possibilities that the Web 2.0 offers, users are able to actively intervene in the corporate communication by posting comments, reviews and valuations. Thus huge media concerns, companies and organizations have no longer the control of the published content and the resulting reputation (Lammenett, 2015, p. 243).

Consequently companies need to adjust their marketing and communication strategies most of all because traditional media became less important and therefore makes it nearly impossible to reach the relevant target group (Lammenett, 2015, p. 243). In order to go with the latest trends of Digital Marketing, companies should use the many new tools and technologies Social Media brought them and that allow for a direct communication with their customers via the internet (Meerman Scott, 2010, p. 38). One of the accomplishments of the last few years is a subtype of Digital Marketing, the Influencer Marketing, where a new generation of digital opinion leaders generates a huge community of internet users and influences their buying behavior. In the course of this Influencers publish reviews, comments and recommendations about companies, brands and products on online platforms, online communities or social networks such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Co. (Kreutzer & Land, 2017, pp. 211-212). Recommendations on online platforms and Social Media have a huge range as well as a long-term availability for the users. Moreover an enormous amount of likes and positive comments has a positive long-term impact on the corporate image (Flath & Bachem, 2017, pp. 227-228). Companies already recognized the benefits of Influencer Marketing. According to a survey 600 marketing and communication managers from 32

countries indicated that they are going to start an Influencer campaign within the next year (Kreutzer & Land, 2017, p. 225).

Until recently the public opinion was primary shaped by descriptions of professional opinion leaders in the course of discussions in the mass media. Due to the prevalence and more comprehensive use of Social Media by users who function as self-proclaimed experts, it is more challenging for previous experts to maintain their monopoly position of opinion leadership. Thus a wider variety of opinions is available online. According to latest insights online recommendations of fellow users are the most trustworthy form of advertising after a face-to-face recommendation. On this account companies need to identify which Influencers are the best to represent their brand or have a community which is relevant for their industry and integrate those in their corporate communication (Kreutzer & Land, 2017, pp. 211-212). Since Influencers have a dominant sales-supporting function there are many different ways to integrate them in corporate marketing activities such as content promotion, event management and corporate communication. Those activities primary pursue the target to enhance the brand awareness, to improve the customer engagement, to gain sales leads and to increase customer loyalty. Therefore Influencer Marketing constitute as part of the value-oriented customer management since recommendations of opinion leaders increase the value of a company and result in profitable customer relations (Kreutzer & Land, 2017, pp. 209-210).

Nowadays the main challenge of Digital Branding and therefore of Influencer Marketing is to identify the digital opinion leaders and motivate them to give positive reviews about a company and its brands, products and services. Even though incentives and other remunerations ensure a higher engagement of influencers, they also lead to critical voices of the users as paid evaluations imply bias, venality and untrustworthy. Hence a successful opinion leader does not only need thematic competence but rather credibility, authenticity and proximity (Kreutzer & Land, 2017, p. 223).

Because of the currency of the topic, Influencer Marketing has not been mentioned in scientific studies and publications frequently. Due to present research results, it however became apparent that Influencer Marketing has a huge impact on the reputation, revenue

and corporate identity of a company or brand. Besides other traditional Online Marketing instruments it can be a new essential part of the Marketing Mix.

Aim of the Thesis

This thesis will identify the backgrounds, special characteristics and success factors of Influencer Marketing especially in the beauty industry. The gained results provide a basis for future recommendations for companies. Within the paper the following questions will be answered:

(1) How do we define Influencer Marketing and how does it differ from traditional Online Marketing instruments?

(2) What are the goals of Influencer Marketing and how does it affect corporate processes?

(3) What is the position of Influencer Marketing within the beauty industry? Why is it an appropriate marketing tool?

(4) Which criteria are crucial for the success of an Influencer within the beauty industry?

Structure and Approach

The first paragraph of this paper is going to outline the principles of Online Marketing in order to point out the complexity of Influencer Marketing and its distinction according other traditional marketing forms. Special focus is put on Social Media Marketing since it encouraged the emerge of Influencer Marketing. When taking a close look at the special characteristics and advantages of Influencer Marketing it will become clearer why it is an appropriate tool for marketing activities within the beauty industry.

The empirical part of this paper which consists of a qualitative study in form of expert interviews is going to identify the effects of Influencer Marketing and thus deduces success factors especially for the beauty industry. Furthermore the methodic and data acquisition of the survey as well as the evaluation of the expert interviews will be analyzed in the fourth chapter- Empirical Investigation. Afterwards the results will be summarized. By including different types of experts such as a beauty Influencer, a Social Media Manager, an agency chief for Blogger relations and a skilled Social Media user, the empirical investigation will provide profound guidance for future marketing and communication activities as well as implications for the research.

2. Online Marketing

Since the arise of the phenomenon World Wide Web many traditional, modern and also current marketing authors tried to find their own Definition of the terminus 'Online Marketing' (Lammenett, 2015, p. 26). Until 2006 'Online Marketing' frequently was mentioned in the same context as 'Online Advertising', 'Performance Marketing' or 'Search Engine Marketing'. Even in the latest Marketing literature most of the authors do not emphasize the various facets of Online Marketing in order to come to an explicit definition (Lammenett, 2015, pp. 22-25). In his work 'Praxisorientiertes Online-Marketing' from 2014 Ralf T. Kreutzer tried to find a distinction between Online Marketing and other forms of Marketing. He pointed out that Online Marketing involves market-oriented activities such as planning, organization, implementation and controlling. Particularly in Online Marketing those activities take place in mobile and stationary devices in order to reach Marketing aims (Kreutzer, 2014 p. 4). Although this is an adequate start to narrow down the wide term Online Marketing it includes that all activities transported to a web-enabled device via internet protocol lead to the achievement of direct or indirect Marketing aims (Lammenett, 2015, p. 25). Due to discrepancies among Kreutzer and other leading Marketing authors I decided to focus on Erwin Lammenett's definition of Online Marketing over the course of my thesis since this seemed the most consistent. According to his opinion Online Marketing involves all actions that lead visitors or rather customers to the own or a particular internet presence of a company, resulting in current or future sale transactions. Usually the main objective of Online Marketing measures is the corporate Website of the stated company (Lammenett, 2015, p. 26).

2.1 Web 2.0

Currently the internet is no longer just an information medium but processed to a social web during the last three decades. A lot of things have changed since 1990 when Tim Berners-Lee uploaded the first ever Website and thus heralded the hour of birth of the World Wide Web. Even back then Berners-Lee considered that every user should be able to upload content and link it to further content of joint users. Consequently one of the main features of the Web 2.0 is user generated content (Schindler & Liller, 2012, pp. 3-4).

In 2004 Tim O' Reilly created the term 'Web 2.0' which mainly summarized changes in software development, processes and use practices compared to the initial 'Web 1.0'. The Web 2.0 caused changes for the users and their relationship to one another so it is also known as 'Social Web' (Schindler & Liller, 2012, pp. 4-5). Due to innovative technologies software companies were able to assure the emergence of the participatory internet (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 5). With the expansion of the technical infrastructure, the improvement of data processing speed and the easy access to affordable technologies, the dissemination of the Web 2.0 has been promoted (Bruhn & Hadwich, 2015, pp. 2-3). Furthermore more efficient and effective devices ease the access to the internet and its services both every time and everywhere (mobile) and thus result in accelerated user gathering. Because of the technological possibilities an increasing amount of previous consumers of the Web 1.0 became active users or rather producers of the Web 2.0 (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 6).

The original function of the internet has been information acquisition which is indeed still one of the crucial features of the Web 2.0. But changes in the manner of information flow and type of information entail that there is not just a unilateral information procurement by specialists and organizations (i.e. E-Mail-Marketing, E-Commerce, research) but also an reciprocal information flow by individuals interacting with fellow internet users (Bruhn & Hadwich, 2015, p. 1). Current internet users have modified needs and usage behavior so they not just want to consume existing information but also produce content (Bruhn & Hadwich, 2015, pp. 2-3). Since there is only a little effort of creating content and making it accessible for fellow users the World Wide Web became an interactive platform with stronger user involvement (Bruhn & Hadwich, 2015, p. 1). The user either provides or receives information (Bruhn & Hadwich, 2015, p. 1) and thus becomes a mixed form of consumer and producer the 'prosumer' (Schindler & Liller, 2012, p. 5). One of the main characteristics of the prosumer is the active attendance and his collective intelligence expressed by publishing content as well as commenting, correcting and evaluating content of joint users and hence displaying own ideas (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 5). The social component is a crucial feature of the Web 2.0 since everybody is able to publish content (texts, comments, pictures, photos, videos) and everybody is allowed to give feedback and start a conversation. Additionally information and knowledge can be shared and are freely available, flat hierarchies facilitate networking and building a reputation (Schindler &

Liller, 2012, p. 6). Media Sharing platforms as an innovation of the Web 2.0 allow the users to upload photos and videos, social networks enable them to establish an internet presence and network via the World Wide Web by creating a profile with personal information (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 6).

New forms of communication within the Social Web caused various challenges for companies and organizations which until then had the predominance of published content and opinions. They decided which information were available for the general public and thus mainly influenced the corporate image (Schindler & Liller, 2012, p. 6). Companies socialize through the Social Web and gain contacts, friend, fans, followers or even a community. Maintaining those relationships causes trust, understanding as well as goodwill and thus leads to support, appreciation and recommendation for a company within the community (Schindler & Liller, 2012, pp. 14-15). Thereby the Web 2.0 is not an instrument of the Online Marketing but an additional platform providing possibilities of reaching and incorporating the users (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 6). Due to the decreasing importance of content created by companies within the Web 2.0, the internet is mainly dominated by user generated content which means the uploaded content was produced by a nonprofessional user. As a result websites are not only edited by specialist or companies but by the community of users (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 6).

2.2 Corporate Website

The most important step to build up an internet presence is to design a Corporate Website since the content is retrievable all over the globe and thus has a great reach. Furthermore Corporate Websites are the center of the entire online appearance and communication of a company and are integrated in most of the multi-channel activities. A Corporate Website constitutes a virtual place which contains all documents and other several resources that are summarized and accessible under a consistent navigation. The website can comprise of an e-commerce platform for direct orders, a product configuration tool, a store finder and of closed user areas for members of a special communities. An additional feature can also be the integration of links to Social Media e.g. to blogs, online communities, social bookmarks and the own social performance on platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram. The development of a Corporate Website is not a temporarily limited project but rather a continuous process

of improvement and adjustments. As the Corporate Website is the online flagship of a company it is crucial that it has an appealing and structured design in order to guarantee a positive customer experience.

In most cases Corporate Websites have a particular structure. The front- or homepage functions as an introduction into the web presence of a company and can be the foundation of further online and offline activities. Many offline activities such as ads, billboards, mailings or flyers as well as online activities such as banners, search engines or review portals refer to the homepage. From there the homepage forwards to campaign specific microsites or landing pages. Links that enable a deeper advance to the Corporate Website are known as deep links (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 95-96).

2.3 Search Engine Marketing (SEM)

During the last few years Search Engine Marketing became increasingly important. Alone in 2016 the world's most used search engine Google had over 3 billion search requests (Statista, 2018). Most of the users search for products, services, reviews and to get to an online shop. Moreover search engines are a common tool to gather information previous to purchases both online or offline (Lammenett, 2015, p. 122).

SEM can be divided in Search Engine Optimization (SEO) which aims for an upper placement in the editorial context of result pages of Google, and in Search Engine Advertising (SEA) or Keyword Advertising which is a paid placement of advertisements on an anterior organic search engine result page (SERP) based on a search term. Search Engine Result Pages (SERP) involve all organic hit lists as well as keyword advertisement. Hence users of a search engine perceive results consisting of both parts that ensure a holistic search result (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 194). A good advertisement placement on Google and other search engines is crucial to attract attention and thus gain new customers (Lammenett, 2015, p. 122).

There is a huge competition among online companies for a better placement within search engines as it enables more attention. The further users have to scroll the less interest they have for the search results and the slightly lower is the probability of reading those pages (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 194). Thus a main Challenge of SEM is to

achieve a placement as high as possible on the first SERPs with the help of SEA via an auction process, since there are only ten search results that can be shown per page but there are several thousand search results or rather SERPs per search term. For a higher visibility SEO is also an appropriate marketing tool to use as it can assure a placement on the first three SERPs (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 194-196).

2.3.1 Search Engine Advertising (SEA)

Search Engine Advertising also known as keyword advertising, paid placement, sponsored links or performance marketing is a recent discipline of Online Marketing. Many companies use the paid placement of commercial advertisements in form of a text descriptions in order to get a good placement on a SERP (Lammenett, 2015, p. 124). Further goals of SEA are to increase traffic on the corporate website or a landing page and to achieve branding effects by showing ads in an area of product- and service-relevant search request in order to increase the brand awareness. Due to such marketing activities the companies also gain interest, new customers and at best sales either online or stationary (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 196). On this account is it no surprise that the market leader of search engines Google obtains more than 90 percent of its turnover by advertising revenues of Keyword Advertising. Every advertising is linked to a particular Website or to a special landing page of a Website. Moreover the advertisements are related to specific keywords so that they only appear when the search request consists of a connected keyword. Showing the users only pages that have a thematic connection to the entered search term obtains higher Click-Through-Rates (CTR) since the search results reflect the needs of the user and present the available offer (Lammenett, 2015, pp. 124-125). Furthermore companies get a wider reach and thus reach more potential customers by integrating keyword advertising campaigns on private websites or platforms (Lammenett, 2015, p. 129).

Advertisements on Google and other search engines are shown after a special auction process. The higher the companies' bid, the higher is the position of their advertisement on a SERP. Therefore there is a distinction between traditional online advertising and keyword advertising in terms of payment as companies do not pay for the amount of ad impressions but for the amount of actual clicks by the online community. This type of performance-related compensation is called Cost-Per-Click. The actual costs per click

depend on the competition for a particular keyword. Keywords of competitive industries with high margins and lots of suppliers are slightly more expensive (Lammenett, 2015, p. 127). To find out which keywords or keyword combinations are most reasonable and gain the most transactions, companies can use a Conversion-Tracking-Tool. Additionally those tool show in detail which keywords contribute in which way to which KPI at what price (Lammenett, 2015, pp. 151-153).

2.3.2 Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

The term Search Engine Optimization or SEO describes all activities that lead to a better placement of websites in organic listings on search engines with the help of relevant content. A high position on a SERP is crucial to ensure an easy discoverability of a website within the WWW. SEO is not the advertising for content for example by using banners, but a measure that helps to actually find available content online. Even though SEO is not a paid placement in organic listings, companies need to spend a particular amount of budget in order to optimize their Corporate Website and belonging Microsites by integrating particular keywords and thus make it visible and more relevant (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 250). Onsite optimization measures comprise the editing of editorial content such as texts, structures, pictures as well as the improvement of programming codes (Lammenett, 2015, p. 173). When adapting the appearance and content of a website to customer requirements, a company is able to reach a top placement on a SERP and therefore gains a huge economic benefit (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 250).

Nowadays the internet is used as a decision guidance for purchasing processes. Most of the users look online for products, services or reviews. If they do not find a satisfying or rather relevant result on the first three pages of a search engine they start a new search request (Lammenett, 2015, p. 168). Thus it is not only crucial to integrate keywords at all but a central question of SEO is also which keywords or keyword combinations should be emphasized in order to get an as high as possible placement on a SERP on the one hand but also to only attract users that are really interested in the content or products on the other hand. Only interested visitors who see relevance in the content of a website imply a higher revenue or more sales (Lammenett, 2015, pp. 164-175).

Besides profiting from the use of SEO, companies also face a lot of challenges when fighting for the best position on SERPs. There are millions of entries on SERPs but only the first 30 are economically relevant. On this account companies compete for an as high placement as possible (Lammenett, 2015, p.169). A competition does not merely exist between several online positioned companies but recently also between those companies and the search engine Google. Over the time Google also became an information provider and not only a platform that directly links to websites of companies that provide information (Lammenett, 2015, p. 157). Thus it is even harder to get a good placement.

In the course of time Google continuously improved its search algorithm while the look and feel of SERPs stayed the same (Lammenett, 2015, pp. 156-157). Apart from traditional web search, Google as the most common used search engine also offers additional filters for special searches. Due to Google Universal Search users are able to integrate various information categories and narrow down the search to Images, Maps, Shopping, News, Videos and Places to get even more relevant search results. Thus Universal-Search-Integration offers further opportunities for companies to land on the first SERPs, provided that the companies include interesting or rather relevant content from the Google categories on their website. The additional tool is also applied to traditional searches when users do not consciously filter the search results. (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 250-252).

Another tool Google evolved in the course of various updates is Google Autocomplete or Google Suggest. Since it can tremendously influence the search behavior of the users it offers further challenges but also chances for SEO. While entering a search term in the search box Google already suggests several alleged appropriate results which are regulated by an algorithm that considers which terms are searched the most often. Websites that are considered relevant thus have a better chance to be mentioned in Google Autocomplete (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 254).

In order to determine the importance of a website, search engines do not only evaluate the available content on the website itself but also integrate references of the website on third-party-providers. Thus the onsite relevance is additionally validated with the help of external references. Search engines assume that websites with more backlinks are

more relevant especially when the external reference has a huge relevance as well. To gain a better placement companies need to include Off-Site-Optimization in their marketing measures. This can primarily involve the development of backlinks on third-party-providers, e.g. links from other websites to the corporate website of a company, or the commitment of companies in social media by gaining "likes" or "pins" (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 270).

2.4 Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate Marketing describes a special form of advertising placement within the online presence of third-party providers. Advertisings are integrated in advertising spaces on Websites of partner companies also called publisher or affiliates in order to call attention to the own website or offer. The advertising company also called provider, merchant or advertiser places links or banners on websites of affiliates which lead to the own corporate website. The basis for the corporation is a contract between the affiliate and the merchant which usually includes a remuneration in form of a commission. Commissions are generally proportional to the amount of actions i.e. clicks and/or transactions i.e. sales (Kreutzer, 2014, p.213).

Affiliate Marketing primarily takes place in the B2C Marketing and is apart from SEA and Social Media Marketing one of the most used instruments of the external Online Marketing. In comparison to sponsored links which only appear in search engines when the search term includes relevant keywords, the affiliate network offers the opportunity to spread the own offer on thousands of websites.

The basic structure of Affiliate Marketing is divided into five steps. First the Affiliate integrates a product or text link of the Merchant on his website. At best a user is visiting the website of the affiliate and can perceive the placed advertising. If the user clicks on the advertising in the third step he is forwarded to a microsite or landing page of the provider. In the fourth step the user can enter a transaction with the advertiser by clicking on an element, downloading an information, signing up for a newsletter or by ordering products or services of the merchant. Depending on the cooperation contract the remuneration of the Affiliate follows mostly by paying for the type and amount of

transactions. In order to understand which user interactions are related to which affiliate, the advertisements are equipped with a partner code (Kreutzer, 2014, pp.213-214).

The main goal of Affiliate Marketing is to extent the online performance and the reach of a company within the internet by placing ads on websites of affiliates. The aim for the Affiliate, in turn, is to gain advertising revenues. Those marketing measures are essential in order to gain potential customers and cause immediate online purchases or prepare offline purchases. Response booster or incentives such as coupons with price advantages or the participation in online lotteries are used to trigger instant user reaction (Kreutzer, 2014, p.215).

2.5 Social Media Marketing and its platforms

Definition

Social Media outlines all online media and online technologies that enable internet users to conduct information exchanges online. It surpasses traditional E-Mail communication both in speed and in reach and allows for a many-to-many communication (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 338). In times of a connected or rather networked world Social Media gains more and more importance. Due to Social Media geographic borders between people dissolve and new online communities arise. Besides Social Networks and Media-Sharing-Platforms Social Media also includes Blogs, Online Communities, Online Forums, user-generated websites and podcasts (Weinberg, 2010, p.1)

Companies use Social Media Marketing (SMM) in order to implement their Marketing goals via Social Media (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 338). They can promote their products and services on Social Networks and thus reach out to a huge community especially to those who have lost their trust in the traditional media (Weinberg, 2010, pp. 4-7). SMM can be seen as a component of Search Engine Marketing but also as an extra category. It does not just have an impact on SEO in order to gain a better placement on search engines but it is also mainly influenced by word of mouth which has fundamentally changed the internet (Weinberg, 2010, p. 5)

Online Communication

Before Social Networks emerged it was very costly for private users to upload content on the internet. In order to build up an online presence you had to commission competent web developers as well as graphic designers and you had to buy an expensive domain name. Hence until the turn of the millennium the World Wide Web was only dominated by professional websites of companies. In the course of the last few years many things have changed rapidly. Since the rise of Social Sites users have the opportunity to create their own Web Space within the internet and connect with other users. By now the internet has become an inexpensive and fast technology and users do not need particular technical knowhow to use it. The dimension of the communication is inconceivably high as the internet enhanced the online dialog (Weinberg, 2010, pp. 14-15). For the first time all levels of population and all stakeholders have access to effective and powerful instruments to evaluate performances as well as to make contacts and communicate around the world (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 338). Everyone has the power to take part in online discussions and to start a blog or create a profile to express an opinion on a product or service (Weinberg, 2010, p. 17). On this account Social Media comprises either value-creating or value-devastating content. Companies can partially influence which content and thus which reputation prevails. They need to decide if and how they want to participate within Social Media: just listening or proactively taking part in the happening (reaction and action) (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 338-349).

The first option is listening or Web-Monitoring. It is the minimum level of engagement within Social Media which all companies should implement regardless of their remaining internet activities. The aim of Web-Monitoring is to find out how users talk about a companies' performance on Social Media as even without self-participation people publish their opinion on products or services both written and visualized. Web-Monitoring provides a foundation for the two other uses of Social Media Marketing since companies should not start a dialogue with their target group without knowing their views on products or services (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 350)

If companies step out of the passivity of Web Monitoring and become involved in the communicative process within the Social Media it is an active participation or rather a reaction which is called integration or Reputation Management (Weinberg, 2010, p. 17). Sometimes it is necessary to take part in online events particular if defamatory

discussions or disparagements occur. Companies are able to make a statement in blogs or via Social Networks such as Facebook or Twitter and thus influence the direction of communication. Apart from that companies can use already existing platforms to position themselves with their offer and consequently reach their significant target group for instance by creating an own Facebook, Pinterest or YouTube page (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 351)

An even more comprehensive form of engagement comprises the development of own platforms within Social Media such as own forums or communities in order to actively participate and thus influence the public opinion. This includes the creation of corporate blogs or YouTube channels (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 351). Regardless of the strategy a company pursues it is by all means crucial to take part in the online communication processes as online reviews can highly influence the purchasing decisions of the community and in the worst case convince a fellow user to switch to a competitor who is not affected by negative critiques (Weinberg, 2010, p. 17).

Goals

There are plenty of goals a company can strive for when using SMM and deciding for a particular participation strategy. First and foremost Social Media goals should definitely be derived from the main goals of a company. Most of the companies in Germany aim for an increased awareness of their brand or company itself, furthermore they want to acquire new customers and build a strong relationship. Besides customer relationship companies want to improve their placement in search engines and manage their corporate image (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 351-352)

User Generated Content and electronic Word of Mouth

User Generated Content (UGC) describes how end-users, without professional routines and practices, use Social Media in order to upload self-created content which is publicly accessible for everyone (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). UGC is also known as user created content or user generated media and can occur in form of blog posts or reviews on products and services (Dennhardt, 2014, p. 3). Due to the rapid technological process, the easier access to the internet or further web applications and the emergence of generations with a high level of technical affinity UGC has fundamentally changed during the past 30 years (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61).

Especially Social Media encouraged UGC to become one of the main influences when using the WWW. New forms of online communication such as UGC and online Word of Mouth can be both a chance as well as a challenge for companies. On the one hand companies can benefit from positive user contributions which seduce joint users to have a positive first impression or at best contribute to a buying decision. On the other hand companies lose control over published content and its dissemination especially the defamatory one as every user is able to upload reviews, opinions or recommendations (Dennhardt, 2014, p. 3).

Since consumers spend more time on social platforms like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube they interactively share and exchange experiences as well as opinions. Due to the increased content creation and online communication among users either as individuals or in communities, consumers more and more gain the power to influence brand awareness, purchase decisions and both positive and negative word of mouth. Furthermore the prevalence of UGC among Social Media has promoted increased research request on organizational performances and highly influenced consumer and buying behavior. Research processes in this case involve published user reviews, Social Media as platform for consumer empowerment and internet users who function as a judgmental instance or prosumers. (Dennhardt, 2014, p. 4 & 8)

In addition product recommendations are not only transferred by traditional word of mouth but in an even faster and extensive way. Besides verbal face to face communication new form of information exchange occurred. Consumers nowadays mainly get in touch via internet and read user generated content of joint web participants in form of reviews and experience reports in order to make a purchase decision. Those online conversations and exchanges of opinions are called online word of mouth or electronic word of mouth (eWOM) (Reichelt, 2013, p. 1). eWOM has an incredible wide reach as it is not only heard by a limited amount of direct communication partners like in verbal WOM (Reichelt, 2013, p. 3). Online Word of Mouth can be read by an indefinite amount of addressees everywhere and at any time via the internet and especially over Social Media platforms (Reichelt, 2013, p. 17). This viral distribution is caused by the fact that every user can recommend, spread, post and share own content or content created by other users multiple times (Grabs & Bannour, 2011, pp. 26-27).

Consequently negative as well as positive statements of potential or former customers about companies and their products or services are spread all over the WWW and are permanent available for various persons and institutions (Reichelt, 2013, p. 1). Online Word of Mouth is used even more often than the actual Corporate Website since a personal conversation among users is more trustworthy and moreover independent of commercial interest or aims (Reichelt, 2013, p. 2).

Appearance of Social Media

While the internet has massively changed during the last decades, yet its main function is to provide information. Even though the way of information flow and the information have modified in times of Social Media, users still access available data or obtain information from joint users. In addition to information provision Social Media revolutionized the way people interact within the WWW (Bruhn & Hadwich, 2015, p.1). The means of communication can vary from platform to platform and appear in form of texts, pictures, audios or videos. There is no longer a disparity between senders and recipients as everyone has the opportunity to function as producer of their own content. Within Social Media users mainly exchange opinions, impressions and experiences (Schindler & Liller, 2012, p. 31). Thus one-way information flow evolved into mutual communication which can take place on several Social Media Instruments or specifically on Social Media Platforms (Bruhn & Hadwich, 2015, p. 1)

Social Media Platforms particularly differ in the degree of interaction and individuality. Social Networks (e.g. Facebook), Web forums and File-Sharing-Communities (e.g. YouTube) have the highest level of interaction and individuality and mostly include UGC whereas Podcasts and Knowledge Communities have the lowest level of interaction and individuality and are mainly managed by companies (Bruhn & Hadwich, 2015, pp. 4-5).

Those company-driven content is the communication on the part of companies by providing information on an online-based platform. Users then have the opportunity to actively participate in the communication process by interacting with the company as well as with joint users. In such a direct communication companies moderate the public discussions between users/customers and the company. Conversations are only feasible when companies set up feedback channels in order to facilitate the user to function as

messengers. Consequently the traditional communication model turns into a two-sided communication model (Bruhn & Hadwich, 2015, pp. 4-5).

In addition to traditional media companies also integrate different forms of Social Media like Blogs, Podcasts and other Social Networks in their corporate communication and thus act crossmedial which further enables storytelling and the development of dramaturgies. By connecting with their community companies are able to gather loyal friends, fans, follower or subscribers depending on the platform they use and therefore reinforce brand awareness and strengthen the customer relationship (Schindler & Liller, 2012, pp. 14-15).

2.5.1 Blogs

Blogs are one of the most important development of the Web 2.0. Nowadays you can find more than 200 million Blogs worldwide. The term Blog is an abbreviation for Web Logbook which is usually used as an internet notebook or rather an internet diary (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 357-358). Initially Blogs had no particular commitment to quality. They just contain published thoughts, opinions and descriptions of individuals (Lammenett, 2015, p. 251).

Blogs can be run by individuals, groups or companies. On the one hand private Blogs which are run by individuals normally do not have commercial goals. On the other hand Corporate Blogs which are run by companies have the aim to get in contact with various stakeholders. However Blogs generally function as a communication channel rather than as a distribution or sales channel therefore companies should avoid pure advertising. In both cases Blogs constitute a crucial customer-touch-point for companies. Moreover the readership of a Blog expects social appreciation and recognition from the company or rather the owner of the Blog. If companies adhere to this, Blogs can also function as an information channel which can strengthen the awareness of a company and its products or brands. Possibly a real community is build and results in a greater emotional closeness between the company and stakeholders. Furthermore the integration of reviews about companies and their products and services on influential Blogs of authentic bloggers encourages to spread positive information

among the internet community and thus leads the opinion formation in a specific direction (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 359-362).

Moreover Blog owners as well as interested persons can write about different topics and publicly share graphics, photos or videos on a Blog. At the same time joint users are able to react to those comments, start discussions, lead conversations in different directions or link them with their own blog. Due to the easy to handle software even non-skilled end users are able to instantly create and serve a Blog by uploading self-generated content as well as posts or participate on Blogs of joint users by commenting and sharing experiences. In this manner Blogs get their interactive character. The key component of every Blog are the Blog posts or posts which are written by Bloggers. Such posts can have a lengths from just a few words to various pages and concentrate on a specific topic for example Travel, Beauty, Lifestyle & Fashion or Interior Design (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 358)

Blogs are an important source of information not only for private individuals but also for company representatives as well as specific target groups. Thus companies should ensure Blog Monitoring in order to get an overview on the overall mood or reputation concerning the company and its brands and offers. The entirety of all monitored Blogs and their connection to one another is called Blog sphere which forms communities and creates an area of activity and influence (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 358-359). Due to the strong connection within the blog sphere good as well as defamatory opinions on products and companies get around much faster. As a fact conversation about a company and its corporate activities are unavoidable within the internet and especially on Blogs. Therefore companies can only decide if and how they want to participate (Lammenett, 2015, pp. 251-254).

Even though it can have a lot of advantages for companies to be mentioned on Blogs, it also causes various challenges for them. One thing companies should never lose sight of is the fact that bloggers generally shirk the control of what a company wants them to write as they upload blog posts with their honest opinion about a company's performance. Thus the Bloggers comply with the demand of the customers to only read authentic, honest and transparent content. Only those companies which are strong and stable to cope with the confrontation of an open communication should use Blogs as

part of their corporate communication and interaction. In order to have more control about the published content, companies can resort to an own Corporate Blog. Hence, companies are able to decide which news should be distributed and which topics are important to be published (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 361).

2.5.2 Micro Blogging

Micro Blogging is a form of Blogging in which the length of the post is not allowed to surpass a certain amount of characters. Most of the time 200 characters are the norm hence it is called Micro Blogging.

Twitter

One of the best known Micro Blogging Services is Twitter (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 367). Initially Twitter was a platform on which users could write status messages on what they were doing, where they were going or whom they were meeting. Besides talking about everyday events Twitter is also able to connect people over various devices and thus creating intimacy and the feeling of closeness. Therefore people on Twitter were not only talking about their current activities but also about their feelings and thoughts on relevant topics sharing them with joint users worldwide (Weinberg, 2010, p. 141).

Furthermore important opinion leaders can exert influence on the awareness of a company via Twitter. The sphere of influence has a huge dimension in dynamic and active communities. It even exceeds the actual amount of followers as direct followers can cause viral effects by sharing content within their networks. Twitter also enables a digital real time communication as it allows for an online dispatch of short messages, the so called Tweets. This type of communication can be used by private persons as well as companies in order to disseminate text messages. The maximum amount of characters for a post on Twitter is limited to 140 characters. In order to easier find Tweets concerning specific topics or terms such post are tagged with a Hashtag (#) (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 368).

It is really easy to use Twitter and so is it to subscribe to it (Weinberg, 2010, p. 144). When using the Micro Blogging Service, a user has to create an own profile with a picture and a short biography of the person in not more than 160 signs. The personal

profile is complemented by posted Tweets. Most current posts appear on the first positions of the timeline of a member (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 368-369).

In comparison to Facebook, Twitter is not about making friends but about gathering followers as well as following joint users or companies in whose activities, opinions or information users are interested in and from which they want to get notifications on a regular basis. Thus not the sender decides who will receive a message but the recipient. A follower signs up to get messages from specific persons or a company in the future. Until then it is only a soliloquize communication process which becomes a dialogue when user react to Tweets and publish replies on the profile of the person posting the original Tweet. Another form of interaction within Twitter is to retweet content by posting it again word-by-word without any further comment. If users want to share private content with just one fellow member of Twitter they can use the feature of direct massages which are invisible for excluded joint users (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 369).

Besides functioning as a communication platform Twitter also meets commercial demands and is an important platform to address a wide audience. Every member of Twitter is not only a user or a part of the community but also a consumer. Thus Twitter works well for connecting users with companies which they are already interested in. The Micro Blogging Service consequently is able to generate revenue, help out the customer service, introduce brands and gain new customers. If companies create an added value for their followers and get involved within their community it will have a positive impact on the reputation as well as the level of awareness (Weinberg, 2010, pp. 141-150).

Snapchat

Another famous Communication App is Snapchat. This Micro Blogging Service belongs to the ephemeral media, temporary Social Media or erasable internet as its content is only available for a limited amount of time. The essential vision of Snapchat is the immediacy and the acceleration of a real time interaction which ensures that conversations are only for the moment not for eternity. Snapchat enables its user to send pictures, videos and messages in a so called Snap which erase themselves after ten seconds. Thus Snapchat can be seen as the antithesis of Facebook, Twitter and Co. as those platforms are characterized by a long-term documentation of information with the

aim to maximize the visibility of the users within the WWW. Snapchat on the other hand is conceived to allow for a transient communication which is only visible as long the sender permits it to the receiver (Gerlitz, 2015, pp. 43-45).

Unlike Facebook and other Social Media platforms, pictures, videos and messages on Snapchat are not part of the interaction including likes, shares or comments, but are the communication themselves. In order to react or rather respond to a Snap users have to produce their own Snaps. Therefore it is an interaction trough pictures, videos and text messages not about them (Gerlitz, 2015, pp. 43-45).

2.5.3 Social Network

A Social Network is a Social Media platform which allows users for building new relationships to both business partners and private persons. Furthermore it enables to connect with like-minded-people and to stay in contact with them via the internet. One of the best know Social Networks for private end users is Facebook. In 2013 Facebook could already register 1.2 billion users and thus is the most common Social Network in the private field. XING and LinkedIn on the other hand have a huge importance in the professional field as they provide a platform to build business relationships and connections (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 378).

Nearly all Social Networks have a similar basic structure as well as the same main features. If persons want to participate on a particular platform they need to create an own profile which provides information about them. Helpful information to attract joint users can be who a person is, what he or she is doing, what he or she is interested in or how the person wants to be contacted. In order to design the profile as attractive as possible users can supplement posts, photos, videos or links to their timeline. When the profile is completed the next step is to look for joint users in the respective Social Network and to connect with them. The communication can occur via private messages which are only visible for entitled person or via public messages for example on the Facebook wall which are displayed to a wider circle of users (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 379).

Since Influencer Marketing primary takes place on Social Media Platforms for the private use, this thesis will also mainly concentrate on Social Networks in the private

field. The best known and thus explained Social Networks are Facebook and Instagram. How Influencer Marketing is integrated on these platforms is going to be explained in chapter 3.

Facebook

Facebook is a platform which is usually used for self-presentation as well as communication and interaction with joint users or rather Facebook friends. The personal profile of a person can be complemented with photos or texts as well as videos and articles which can be shared on the personal timeline. In comparison to private users companies or brands do not have a profile but create a Fan-Page which functions as a push channel for interesting news. The priority goal of a Fan-Page is to gain as many likes and thus fans as possible. When visitors of a Fan-Page click the like button this is concurrently the permission for a company or a brand to post on the newsfeed of the fan. Uploads on the Facebook wall of fans in form of pictures, invitations, texts or videos help to stay in touch with them and keep them current regarding relevant business events. This dialogue is crucial in order to keep the fans and gain new once. If the content of a Fan-Page is no longer interesting users can easily turn away from those pages and unfollow them. As companies and brands want to avoid a migration of their fans they need to upload interesting content on a regular basis. Popular content is even more important since it results in likes, shares and links which entail an increased engagement and therefore additional interaction and a wider reach (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 380-382).

Instagram

With the launch of the iPhone in 2007 a new type of user engagement with phones occurred. This was the hour of birth for the Smartphone. Due to this people expected their phones to smoothly work with the internet, provide various further tools and enable them to read their e-mails or connect with their Social Media contacts everywhere and at all times. From then on most people primary use their mobile phones in order to go online and connect with people and not resort to computers or laptops anymore Instagram has been designed to be the first significant Social Network which specifically works on mobile devices. Thus Instagram is a pioneer as other Social Media platforms like Facebook and Twitter were developed for the web use and later adapted to mobile devices. At a later stage Instagram followed the example of Facebook and Co.

and enabled their users to also log in to a web version which only allows for simple viewing of pictures and uploads (Miles, 2014, pp. 3-5).

Pictures are able to transport messages, describe even complicated topics in an easy way and increase the interaction of users online. This facts are the foundation for the acclaimed Social Network and Media-Sharing Platform Instagram which has been published in October 2010 (Faßmann & Moss, 2016, p. 13). In less than two years Instagram gained more than 100 million users (Miles, 2014, p. 3). Due to the immense success story of the platform Facebook decided to take over Instagram for one billion US Dollars in 2012. Afterwards the number of users rose beyond measures and even outshined the growth of Facebook and Twitter.

Instagram does mainly focus on image content and the dissemination of visuals (Faßmann & Moss, 2016, pp. 13-14). Private users on Instagram are able to share pictures of past events, friends and family, products they like or places they visited with fellow users who have the same interests. Uploaded pictures and videos can be taken immediately with the phone camera or can be images from the library. Afterwards pictured can be edited with camera effects or can be left with no editing effects applied. (Miles, 2014, pp. 6-7). As Instagram emphasizes the expressiveness of images and not words the optional description text is only allowed to have maximum 2200 characters as well as 30 Hashtags. Hashtags on Social Networks provide a way to categorize uploaded images and expand the reach of a post as everyone who is interested in the topic of the Hashtag is able to see the image by searching for the Hashtag term. When the uploading process is completed images are automatically shared with every joint user following the particular Instagram account who are now able to comment on the image or press the like button (Miles, 20.4, pp. 7-8). Moreover users can add links which unfortunately are not shown as hyperlinks but as normal texts. On this account marketing activities on Instagram do usually not lead to a higher attendance on the Corporate Website of a company but rather to an increased awareness, an enhancement of the brand image and an extension of Onsite Campaigns (Faßmann & Moss, 2016, pp. 13-15).

As Instagram primary concentrates on persons and their emotions and is not conceived for commercial purposes it is hard for companies and brands to find a way to represent

themselves. Therefore companies need to act like persons, create entertaining and interesting brand experience and put emphasis on storytelling in order to have success on Instagram (Faßmann & Moss, 2016, p. 15). A good way to involve the users is to share behind the scenes pictures or videos of product creation or to show how campaigns are developed. This will allow for an insider's view. Moreover companies can integrate Instagram to their corporate website and thus gain followers who stay current on business activities. If companies additionally look for Hashtags regarding their industry they can actively participate in ongoing discussions and thus find out about the customer's wants and needs (Miles, 2014, pp. 10-11).

2.5.4 Media-Sharing Platform

Media-Sharing platforms allow companies as well as private users to upload content such as videos, photos, presentations and audio files to the internet and thus make it accessible to joint users. Media-Sharing platforms can be used in two different ways. On the one hand companies can create and publish content and therefore make information on brands and offers available for interested users in order to build their image, to inform about concrete product uses or to extend campaigns which have been implemented on other marketing channels. On the other hand end users are able to create content independent of a company but in the best case advantageous for the image of the company or brand. Through this users can be integrated in creative business processes. Posts of users can also refute promotional statements of companies and expose failures. The wide public has various opportunities to express critic via Media-Sharing platforms (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 410-411).

YouTube

The most important Media-Sharing platform is the video portal YouTube which enables the users to share moving pictures with the community. Since 2006 YouTube belongs to Google and constitutes the second largest search engine which is financed through sponsored Videos (Asadi, 2015, p. 11). With the Slogan "Broadcast Yourself" YouTube invites its users to present own creations in video format to a huge number of joint community members. Those videos can be streamed online via web browsers. YouTube itself does not create any content but only provides a platform for the videos. For the

younger target group it partially functions as substitute for traditional television (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 411).

YouTube provides the option to create both user accounts for private persons and brand accounts for companies. The simplest form of an account is the User Channel which enables private persons to upload videos, like as well as comment on posts of joint users and add content to their playlists. Another opportunity is to create a Brand Channel. Thus companies have the opportunity to design their own performance and lay out an individualized background with the corporate logo. Opening either a User Channel or a Brand Channel is for free. If companies want to directly advertise their brand with the help of videos they can create a Custom Brand Channel which requires financial expenses. Instead of producing video messages like seen in TV spots companies should rather tell behind the scenes stories and therefore enable a different point of view on their company and offer. This kind of Storytelling encourages the viral spread of relevant content. All types of channels should primarily motivate the users to participate in YouTube intern processes (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 411-412). Especially the subscription system encourages the viewers to stay current on persons, brands or companies they like and therefore subscribe to their channels. Thus users accumulate their favorite content in their list of subscribed channels (Asadi, 2015, p. 11)

As YouTube is based on UGC it is no surprise that it put forth a new kind of self-expression- the Vlogging. Vlogging comprises the words **V**ideo and B**logging.** It describes online diary entries as well as recorded news, opinions or experiences about a particular topic which can be seen by the YouTube community after been published on a YouTube channel. Vlogging can be both casually talking into a camera or recording professional tutorials, short films, music videos and much more. Since its beginning, Vlogging has become a popular branch of the entertainment industry (Asadi, 2015, p. 8).

Particularly in Influencer Marketing YouTube plays a significant role. Vloggers who often are successful Influencers as well do not only upload videos in which they talk about personal topics but most of the time they share their opinions, experiences and thoughts on products, brands, companies and services of a certain industry for example the Beauty Industry.

3. Influencer Marketing

After examining different Online Marketing Tools and having a look at various Social Media Instruments in chapter 2, this chapter is going to investigate the topic of Influencer Marketing especially how companies integrate Influencers in their marketing activities by entering into Cooperations.

Many companies count on the multiplication effect of Social Media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Facebook & Co. when implementing ad campaigns. Influencers have an audience of millions of people on these platforms and thus constitute a new form of fan culture which can make a huge impact on the branding of major companies. An Influencer can be both a single person and also a group of persons who mainly communicates via digitalized media, who moreover is able to cause viral effects with content published on Social Media platforms in form of texts, pictures or videos and thus emotionally charges brands or products (Suppes, 2015). These days Influencers function as a kind of Testimonials for the digital world and are deployed in order to influence the opinion of a far-reaching community in the course of marketing and communication activities. Macro Influencers have a tremendous reach of several millions of users and also Micro Influencers who approximately achieve 30,000 followers are able to gather a considerable amount of prospective buyers particularly as the community of Micro Influencers has a higher engagement rate than members of the Macro Influencer's community. Influencers can be normal Social Media users, journalists, Bloggers, YouTubers or celebrities (Online Marketing Lexikon, 2018). Either of those web authors have a high reputation as well as reach within a particular target group or subject. Their reputation as experts in a delimited area makes them not only Bloggers but Influencers. If they additionally have a wide reach within a knowledge community Influencers are also opinion makers and multiplier (Reckenthäler, 2015, p. 67).

Furthermore a special characteristic of Influencers is the enormous trust of their community. This constitutes the foundation to increase the significance and credibility of brand messages. Due to the high impact on the customer's opinions as well as decisions, Influencers are more and more integrated in business activities to spread the brand message (Online Marketing Lexikon, 2018). As a result of the development of

Social Networks like Facebook and Twitter Influencers do not only publish content and interact with their community on their own blogs, but they also use various Social Media platforms for communication (Reckenthäler, 2015, p. 67).

3.1 Instruments of Influencer Marketing

Due to the emerge of the Web 2.0 the corporate communication has drastically changed. Not only have the role distributions been redefined but also the functions of the protagonists of the participatory web. Companies nowadays do no longer have the control over the direct corporate communication and the clear structures of communication processes since every user has the chance to express his opinion and thus influence the reputation of a company or brand both in a positive or a negative way. In addition user do not gather information from traditional channels anymore but obtain them from blogs, forums, Social Networks or Media-Sharing platforms. On this account companies can apply new, efficient media, tools or channels as a platform for effective corporate communication and at the same time integrate multipliers to address potential customers (Haffa & Höfflin, pp. 170-171).

Influencers use the different Social Media as a platform for their content and opinions. They have an expert status in a particular thematic area and users within the community trust their judgment. Hence Influencer Marketing enables companies and brands to employ opinion leaders with a wide reach within Social Networks and use them for their marketing and communication activities. Above all this should help to gain advocates who positively evaluate a brand, product or service and share the review with their community (Online Marketing Lexikon, 2018).

Influencers usually create content such as pictures for Instagram and Facebook, videos for YouTube or blog posts on their own. Thus the published content matches the addressed group of persons and seems credible and authentic. With this in mind Influencers create the kind of presentation or rather storytelling which works the best and most effective and therefore causes the highest customer engagement. The more restrictions a cooperation partners defines the less authentic is the final product (Suppes, 2015).

Furthermore Influencers constitute idols for their community and thus were treated like well known celebrities. Especially Macro Influencers have a huge fan base that recognizes them in the streets. Companies use this advantage and let Influencers show products on their Social Media channels. Due to that companies can reach potential customers through various online platforms. Not only the Influencers' position as opinion leaders and prominent personalities encourages their followers to buy suggested products from introduced brands and companies but also the given trust (Suppes, 2015). A cooperation makes the most sense when the displayed products or services go well with the topic in which the Influencer is an expert. Moreover companies search for Influencers as cooperation partners when the particular target group is mostly reachable through Social Media.

3.2 Specialties towards other Online Marketing Instruments

Influencer Marketing can be clearly differentiated from other Online Marketing Instruments. The differences which are examined in this thesis are the way of communication, the content or rather the media categories and the duration of effect.

Communication

Companies can actively communicate within the internet for instance by creating a Corporate Website or by placing advertising banners. On the other hand they can implement indirect communication activities by using Search Engine Optimization within their online presence. Along with online communication we distinguish between different types of user inclusion- actively seeking, actively accepting and actively reading user behavior. Some available   information require an actively seeking user. Such information can include the Corporate Website as it needs to be retrieved via the appropriate web address. Even if users look for something through a search engine like Google and only open the link to the Corporate Website when the result appears on the SERP they are actively seeking. When implementing an advertising banner companies rely on actively accepting users who make use of the informational offer. Actively seeking as well as actively accepting users belong to pull communication since they need to extract the needed information out of the WWW. The contrary type of communication is called push communication. In order to reach the communication goals companies rely on actively reading users. This can be the case when companies

use pop-up banners or e-mail newsletters to get in touch with their customers or rather potential customers (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 89-90).

Influencer Marketing creates a new kind of indirect communication. Users look for reviews on products, services, brand or companies and come across postings of either Influencers they follow or new ones. It is an indirect communication because the published content is not created by the company or brand itself but by an external person or group of persons. If the users actively accept the provided content of the Influencer, they can become aware of the particular product, service, brand or company (Haffa & Höfflin, p. 170).

Content

Another distinguishing criterion between Influencer Marketing and other Online Marketing instruments in the content. Usually companies are responsible for their corporate presence and published content for example on their Corporate Website, on Social Media platforms or in online campaigns. As companies are often not close enough to their customers they are hardly able to communicate relevant content for their target group. Moreover they are apprehensive of losing the power of their negotiating position. Thus the customers' demand for custom-fit offers and an open, honest and transparent communication remains unfulfilled (Pieper, 2011, p.15). On this account companies experience difficulties since their advertising is both not recognized and not considered credible anymore (LinkiLike, 2017).

Influencers on the other hand constitute external observers who give recommendations on companies, brands or products in form of content. The content such as pictures, videos or blog posts is self produced and presented in the own style of the Blogger. Furthermore Influencers usually only tell about content that is interesting for their followers, fits into a particular topic are and creates an added value (LinkiLike, 2017). Thus contributions of Influencers to an ad campaign are normally considered customer-oriented, trustworthy and authentic.

Media Categories

Social Media Marketing can be divided in three different media categories. All online activities that are in the responsibility of a company are called Owned Media. Owned Media comprises the Corporate Website, E-Communication or the Online Shop. Also advertised and paid postings on Facebook, Twitter and Co. rank among Owned Media even though companies do not acquire property of any structure or data published on such Social Media platforms. They only have the same user rights as any other private person. The second media category, Paid Media, describes all measures that companies purchase from third parties for example banners, sponsored links as well as paid and promoted posts. Earned Media is the last category and includes user generated content or posts on a company or brand which are written by users and published on the internet especially on Social Media platforms, forums and blogs. There is an overlap between Earned and Owned Media when users create and post content upon request by companies or brands (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 348-349).

Influencer Marketing can be assigned to more than one media category. It belongs to Earned Media when an Influencer talks about a product or service without being asked by a company or brand. Additionally Influencer Marketing can be ranked among the overlap between Owned Media and Earned Media when companies remunerate Influencers in order to get a promotionally effective post.

Duration of effect

The diverse Online Marketing activities can have different durations of effect regarding the market and the customers. Online Marketing instruments such as E-Mail, Corporate Website, Search Engine Marketing and Banner Advertising have a short- to medium-term duration of affect whilst Social Networks and references from Influencers have a long-term effect on the market situation (Grimm, 2011, p. 194).

E-Mail Marketing and the Corporate Website mainly help to strengthen the customer loyalty and satisfaction. Banner Advertising, Affiliate Marketing and also Influencer Marketing on the other hand attract users and gain new customers. The Social Media performance of a company can be seen as a measure to do both strengthen the customer loyalty and also attract potential customers.

3.3 Effects and Goals of Influencer Marketing

In addition to the already mentioned goals like attracting new customers and creating a connection between a company and the users or rather customers, Influencer Marketing has further goals which will be pointed out below. Moreover some unique effects compared to the Online Marketing strategies will be examined.

Effects

Companies nowadays struggle to construct a recipient-oriented communication rather than a sender-oriented communication. They should not only communicate what they want but also what the customers want to hear in order to reach the receiver. Furthermore companies need to find a way to authentically convey their Marketing messages. Thus it is crucial to reflect upon the communication channels and balance out between direct communication through the company and indirect communication through a third party. Most of the time companies hesitate to implement indirect communication activities because they fear a loss of control and do not want to reach the limits of indirect communication. (Pieper, 2011, pp. 13-14).

To bridge the discrepancies between the information offer and the actual information demand, companies integrate Influencers in the communication process. Statement of Influencers who function as an indirect communication channel are more authentic and credible than the direct communication through a company. As consumers trust the Influencers they are also perceived as credible and therefore their posts and reviews are considered valid (Pieper, 2011, p. 15).

Influencers are considered as independent brand ambassadors because they usually do not have a personal interest in the messages they communicate. Thus they are seen as neutral parties with a high level of integrity which do not embellish any products, services, or brands. Furthermore Influencers have a lot of experience and know how regarding particular products and services as they constantly try out new items for their community. Above all users trust Influencers as they have a certain personal proximity to their community. Due to the personal insights Influencers grant to their community barriers, that still exist between consumers and companies, are removed. Users believe

in the judgment of Influencers without questioning it similar to a friend or family member who give recommendations (Pieper, 2011, pp. 15-16).

Goals

One of the main goals of Influencer Marketing is to get closer to the consumers and give them the feeling of being on an equal basis. As a consequence Influencers need to obtain the trust of their community and thus are seen as kind of friend or adviser who gives recommendations in purchasing decisions. In addition Influencer Marketing creates a relationship of trust and a personal closeness which would not be possible with traditional marketing activities and a direct corporate communication. The Influencers act as intermediaries between companies and consumers. A stable foundation of trust is by now a crucial part in the buying process of customers. Companies recognized the importance of Influencers as multipliers and thus integrate them into their communication strategy in order to deliver credibility and authenticity (Pieper, 2011, pp. 15-16). As a consequence users can become aware of products and services through traditional marketing channels and find reviews of particular Influencers when looking for experience reports online or they get to know products and when following Influencers who introduce them within their Social Media appearance.

Another goal when integrating Influencer Marketing in the corporate communication is to gain a wider reach especially on various Social Media platforms and thus obtain more likes and shares. Due to the strong specialization of the majority of Influencers also special niche target groups can be addressed. Thus Influencers allow for access to new communities and extend the reach within the web presence of a company even more (Nirschl & Steinberg, 2018, p. 34). By further linking to Social Media pages of brands and companies and inserting Hashtags of a particular topic, Influencers contribute to a higher level of awareness and a wider reach of a company and its communication activities (Internet World Business, 2016).

Furthermore companies integrate Influencers in their Marketing activities in order to register an increase in sales. Products and services get significantly more reach and attention when Influencers talk about them in their Social Media or Blog posts. Such posts can either be voluntary when an Influencer likes a particular product and wants to introduce it to the community or it can be in return for payment. Sponsored posts need

to be marked as such since they mainly include purchase recommendations (Reckenthäler, 2015, p. 70).

3.4 Blogger Relations

Blogger Relations comprise the identification, contacting and maintenance of relationships between brands or companies and Bloggers which at best result in a cooperation (Seokratie, 2017). The new kind of indirect communication provides many possibilities in addition to the traditional corporate communication. A major reason why companies enter into Blogger Relations and integrate them to their marketing and communication activities is that Influencers use storytelling in order to introduce products or services on their Social Media channels and thus enhances the interaction, more specifically dialogue with their community (Reckenthäler, 2015, p. 70). Apart from striving for a wide reach and a high number of followers Influencers also want to achieve a close connection to their community. The level of interaction and customer engagement are indications of how important and influential a Blogger and his posts are. A Blog or Social Media channel which generates a lot of comments, shares, discussions and likes with its posts is closely linked with its community and thus relevant (Schall, Müller, Knapp & Knobloch, 2011, p. 94). It has to be taken in account that a cooperation with a Blogger takes a lot of research work as not every Blog is suitable for every campaign. Despite the substantial amount of Blogs not every Blogger is worth considering to work with regarding the predominant topic, the reach and the relevance (Pleil, 2012, pp. 240-242). Particularly popular topics of Blogs are beauty, fashion, travel, interior design or food.

Many companies nowadays already recognized the potential of Bloggers as multipliers, opinion leaders and authentic critics. Bloggers convey authenticity and significantly influence the buying behavior of a huge internet community. Thus companies integrate Influencers in corporate communication processes and use Blogger Relations in order to place products, brands and services on relevant and topical suitable Blogs and Social Media channels. By posting and sharing such product placements on Facebook, Twitter and Co. and interacting with their followers, Bloggers are able to increase the credibility of a products as well as lastingly influence the image, reputation and publicity of a brand. Since Influencers talk to their followers on the same level and mainly promote

products and services of which they are convinced, Influencers are perceived credible as well as trustworthy and thus the consumers trust their judgment. On this account companies and brands do not just want to cooperate with Influencers but also want to win their confidence to encourage the publishing of positive content on their Social Media channels. A long lasting relationship and a transparent communication between Bloggers and companies can strengthen such foundation of trust (Reckenthäler, 2015, pp. 68-73).

When it comes to Influencer Marketing we distinguish between paid and earned content or inorganic and organic content. An Influencers can be reimburse by providing products or services and additionally compensating them with payment. Companies need to take into account that a paid Influencer cooperation should only be with Influencers who are really convinced of the product, brand or service and do not just agree to a cooperation because of the payment otherwise it seems unauthentic to the followers. Some Influencers have such a great recognition within their community so that the users even trust them when they are aware of the paid cooperation. Organic content on the other hand means that an Influencer talks or writes about a product without any payment just because he knows the product and is convinced of its quality (Pophal, 2016).

3.5 Influencer Marketing and the Beauty Industry

In 2017 the revenue on decorative cosmetic products in Germany has been 1.84 billion Euros. Thus decorative cosmetic is the third most important segment in the market of body and beauty care products. The market volume of decorative cosmetics around the globe amounts approximately 66 billion US Dollars and is estimated at 85 billion US Dollars in 2024 (Statista, 2018). As the Beauty Industry is such a booming business Influencer Marketing can be integrated in many ways when it comes to the communication strategies of leading beauty companies. Due to the emerge of the Web 2.0 as well as the growth of Social Media, Influencers nowadays constitute celebrities or beauty gurus who use their advanced skills in makeup to collaborate with famous cosmetic brands in order to build brand awareness and introduce their products to the beauty community. Huge concerns integrate bloggers with a high number of subscribers to produce content and star in tutorials as such self-made social media celebrities are

professionals in brand storytelling. Therefore their thoughts and opinions on cosmetic products and beauty brands are more persuasive to potential customers than the direct communication from cosmetic brands themselves. With this in mind companies try to find a way to use Influencers' contribution to word of mouth through posts, photos and videos on Social Media to enhance the brand dialogue in the digital space surrounding their brand. Integrated communication strategies include the use of Influencers to promote current trends and newly released products among various Social Media platforms especially by the use of advertorials on the Media-Sharing-Platform YouTube (Forbes, 2016, p. 78).

When cosmetic brands include Social Media beauty gurus in marketing and communication activities, the Influencers represent a third party which is able to shape and influence the attitudes as well as the opinions of the audience. Influencers become popular through their participation on Social Media and enhance their fame through content posts and online media, e.g. videos and pictures on platforms like YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. Since they produce all of their content on their own, they allow their subscribers to get personal insights, showing them their normal lives and thus making themselves more relatable to ordinary consumers (Forbes, 2016, pp. 78-79).

One way to monetize beauty content of a brand is through advertorials which are highly personalized and evaluative promotions of products/services that Influencers create for a fee and free samples of the shown products/services. Even though Influencers in the beauty industry use their wide reach, their position as opinion leaders and their Social Media appearance to support brands and their messages, many also see their blogs and channels as a way to express themselves as makeup artist, to connect with their community and to share their honest opinion. Influencers who maintain their sense of identity to their community even when cooperating with famous brands, are considered relatable and credible and thus become an important messenger as well as advisor when customers look for recommendations and reviews on beauty products online (Forbes, 2016, p. 79).

It is crucial for cosmetics companies to choose appropriate brand ambassadors for their campaigns. Selecting the right Influencers is determined by a few factors for instance their popularity and the kind of makeup trends and videos the Influencer prefers. The number of subscribers on an Influencer's channel can highly affect the reach of his messages and thus how influential his posts will be. Furthermore the posting frequency, the engagement with the community and the number of referral links also decide how successful an Influencer actually is. The whole selection process is worth the effort as Influencers can help brands of all industries to improve their reach to relevant target audiences and to attain a greater campaign effectiveness (Forbes, 2016, p. 79).

Influencers lead by example, give recommendation on products that they like or advise against products which they dislike in their advertorials. This method of sponsored content production is easy to apply to various industries particularly when social Influencers talk about body and beauty products. Beauty brands use this strategy as they want viewers who watch videos of their favorite Influencers to adopt their behavior or take on their opinions. Thus Influencers have a strong role in forming and affecting the consumers' opinions on products, brands and services and have the ability to keep online discussions positive in order to maintain existing customer relations and also persuade new consumers to try products of the brand (Forbes, 2016, p. 80).

YouTube as a Media-Sharing-Platform is a great instrument to use when cooperating with a beauty Influencer. The audience has the opportunity to watch, listen, read and write about the presented products or brands, through the voice of a Blogger who constitutes an influential as well as persuasive consumer. Showing products and their application through videos is a advantageous brand messaging method and helps the consumers to visualize themselves with the products mentioned in the tutorial. Visual as well as verbal step-by-step instructions by swatching, showing color samples as well as presenting the packaging further enable the followers to understand how to get the best use out of the product and helps them to understand what the product will look like in real life (Forbes, 2016, pp. 83-85).

When Influencers cooperate with beauty companies and create an advertorial, they usually capture a current makeup trend and correspond it with a product of the brand they are working with. In the best case the video has a wide reach and thus is seen by a

large number of potential customers. As it is required by law, Influencers need to note in the description box below the advertorial that the video is sponsored by a brand but all opinions are based on the own feelings of the Influencer. Being relatable makes Influencers appealing to their community and therefore builds trust in what they say. Special abilities in body and verbal language make the consumers feel as though they listen to a friend who teaches them how to use makeup in a relaxed environment. In order to integrate the followers in the makeup filming process, a lot of Bloggers ask their audience questions about products, trends and application methods. Not only that the followers feel involved and like their opinion counts, but they also have the opportunity to actually give feedback and write down their thoughts and feelings in the commenting section which then can be read by the Influencers and more importantly the brands. This shows the Influencers' effort to build a relationship to their community and simultaneously initiates a brand conversation about the beauty products presented in the tutorial. Showing an interest in the followers' point of view and forming a relationship to them makes the Influencers become a part of the community or rather a peer who gives the users a voice in the brand conversation on the one hand and provides insights into the feedback of the consumer conversations for the brand on the other hand (Forbes, 2016, pp. 81-82).

Another advantage of cooperating with beauty influencers is that they have a high degree of knowledge regarding cosmetic products and thus are able to give clear and certain facts about those products. Influencer demonstrate the application of body and beauty products while also describing product design details. Bloggers who have an understanding of how products work, enable the audience to see what to expect from such products when buying them. Moreover experienced beauty Influencers are able to give advices on makeup application methods and which brushes and applicators are the best to use. This helps the audience to further understand how particular beauty products can be used and in which different ways. If Influencers additionally pay attention to global makeup trend and monitor market competitors in the beauty industry, they can build credibility as this shows that their content is not just what their sponsors told them but is created out of research and knowledge of current trends and news of the beauty world outside of the brand the Influencer is promoting. The audience then gets a holistic look at the products which are shown in the advertorial in an extended context than just the brand or their regular makeup uses. In addition thinking outside the box and

cooperating with Influencers who have an encompassing knowledge reflects a beauty brands' effort to develop and integrate global aspects of makeup rather than just concentrating on the domestic market (Forbes, 2016, p. 82).

3.6 Opportunities and Risks of Influencer Marketing

+ Influencers as Multipliers and Opinion Leaders

Many users search online for reviews, evaluations and discussions regarding brands, products, services and companies. With the help of various Social Media platforms online communities are able to look up experience reports and recommendations of Influencers particularly from those who they already follow. Most of the followers trust the Influencers as they are considered as authentic as well as credible multipliers and opinion leaders (Meinen, 2016, p. 5).

+ Reaching New Customers and Niche Target Groups

Since Influencers have a huge community within the internet companies gain a wider reach especially on various Social Media platforms when integrating Influencer Marketing in their communication activities. Moreover Influencers obtain a lot of likes as well as shares and thus attain an even enhanced reach. Due to the strong specialization of the majority of Influencers also special niche target groups can be addressed. Thus Influencers help companies to get access to new communities and extend the reach within the web presence of a company even more (Nirschl & Steinberg, 2018, p. 34).

+ Authenticity and Credibility

Influencers constitute idols for their followers and have a status as opinion leaders within their community. Thus companies can definitely benefit from the credibility of Influencers. As they constantly share their private life and thoughts online they build up a strong relationship to their fans and even reach a closeness to the consumers which companies could never accomplish. Users trust their judgment and see Influencers as advisors who give purchase recommendations and suggest products and brands (Suppes, 2015).

+ Increasing Brand Awareness and Reputation

Social Media Influencers already have a lot of followers and thus the attention of huge audience. Therefore companies can safe time when cooperating with influencers and including them into communication processes in order to increase the brand awareness. So if a Blogger creates a post about a company, brand or product he makes it available for a great number of people at the same time even to those who had never heard of a company. The community then can share the post with their friends and random Social Media contacts and generate a lot of attention for the company. Those viral effects cause that many potential customers get familiar with the company and its products and services (Crowe, 2017).

+ SEO

As Influencers post additional content about a company or brand on their Social Media platforms and Blogs they also influence the search results on search engines like Google. Influencers mostly link their post to the Corporate Website of the company they cooperate with and thus increase the relevance and obtain higher positions on SERPs. Therefore more attention, easier access and Search Engine Optimization is achieved (Reckenthäler, 2015, p. 69).

+ Storytelling

Integrating Influencer Marketing in the corporate communication offers new opportunities of entering into dialogue with the customers. By continuously posting pictures and videos from their private live and giving their opinions on current topics and trends, Influencers create a close relationship to their followers and function as advisory familiars or close friends. (Reckenthäler, 2015, p. 70). Moreover Influencers mainly publish content which matches the addressed group of persons and thus seems authentic and trustworthy (Suppes, 2015). As Influencers use storytelling in order to introduce and recommend products or services on their Social Media channels, they enhances the interaction with their community and leave them with a positive brand experience (Reckenthäler, 2015, p. 70).

+ Lower Advertising Costs

Influencer Marketing causes slightly lower Advertising cost since Influencers mainly produce their content on their own or in a small group of people. They already have the

needed equipment and implementation concept. This means that the costs and the effort of a huge production with a high number of crew members become no longer necessary.

+ Evading Ad Blocker

Companies been forces to reconsider their traditional Online Marketing measures such as placing banners online as they were not shown on most end users' devices due to Ad Blockers. The answer to this problem seems to be Influencer Marketing since they position their ads in pictures, posts and videos on Social Media platforms and their blogs and thus are not affected (PMYB, 2017).

+ Long Duration of Effect

Traditional advertising in form of TV spots, radio ads or Google AdWords is only shown for the period of payment. Influencer Marketing on the other hand has a long duration of effect as the post of an Influencer about a product or brand stay in his timeline and thus can be retrieved from his followers even after the cooperation or campaign is finished (Pixeltale, 2018).

- Loss of Control

Companies can indirectly communicate with their customers as well as with potential customers through Influencers. Such indirect communication which includes a third party can cause a loss of control for the company as Influencers most of the time post their honest opinion and thoughts on a product, service or brand even if the review contains some critical remarks. An interference in the content production process by the company can cause disastrous effects on the reputation of both the company and the Influencer as it appears unreliable and unauthentic (Pieper, 2011, p. 19).

- Limited Compatibility

Even though most Influencers have a wide reach and get a lot of attention on several Social Media platforms this does not mean that the particular Influencer is appropriate for representing every brand. There needs to be an additional conformity regarding the topic of the blog or channel and the business activities of the company in order to reach the relevant target group and not appear disingenuous (Griffin, 2016).

- Risk of Manipulation

The more subscribers a Social Media channel has the higher can be the remuneration which the Influencer can charge. Therefore several Influencer try to manipulate the number of followers in order to enhance their market value and to artificially increase the price for the ad campaign. This leads to the reach of less customers than expected and moreover to the addressing of a considerable different target group. On this account Social Media channels which come into question for a cooperation should be thoroughly examined to avoid unnecessary additional costs. If the relation between comments and followers or between likes and comments is unbalanced, the number of subscribers is probably purchased and thus faked. Furthermore companies should monitor potential channels and get a feeling for an appropriate amount of the involvement and engagement of the community (Suppes, 2015).

- Unfair Advertising/ Surreptitious Advertising

Surreptitious Advertising is when Influencers place and advertise products, services as well as brands on their channels or link to Corporate Websites of companies in their post while the viewers are not informed about the promotional character. Such deception in form of unmarked advertising is prohibited by competition law. Especially on Social Media platforms surreptitious advertising is an important topic as Influencers are able to reach a huge number of potential customers with their advertising messages. Users should be aware of advertising on blogs and Social Media channels because recommendations of third parties are seen as more trustworthy and honest since they usually do not have a personal interest in potential purchase decisions of their subscribers. Moreover Influencers were met with more trust than companies. Due to the authenticity and credibility of Influencers, companies try to increase their own credibility when entering a cooperation (Strack, 2017). Not only the legal factor of surreptitious advertising matters but also the moral. The followers can lose their trust in Influencers if they enter to many cooperations as such behavior can be seen as profit-oriented and unauthentic (Bauer, 2016).

3.7 Measuring Instruments of Success

There are a few measuring instruments which can point out the success of a campaign of a company in cooperation with an Influencer. Companies use such measurements in order to decide if it an integration of Influencer Marketing in their marketing activities is profitable both monetary and in terms of soft factors such as reputation and publicity.

3.7.1 Awareness of a Company

The awareness of a company can be verified with the help of several factors. Social Media reach for instance can show if a company or brand is appreciated and accepted by the users. If user like, share and comment on post, the awareness level of a company is considered high. Positive responses and feedback of the online community are also a sign of increasing popularity (Schindler & Liller, 2014, pp. 345-346).

When Influencers advertise a product on their Blogs it is possible to define the reach of their post by using various tools, such as Google Analytics. Due to this tool companies as well as Bloggers are able to determine how many visitors a blog had during the course of a campaign, how long the average stay on a product page was, if the comments on the product were mainly positive or negative and how high the exit and bounce rate were (GS Lexikon, 2018).

Product placements can also take place on Social Media platforms such as Facebook. Facebook enables companies and Influencers to identify the success of a campaign on the basis of likes under the post, the amount of shares and comments. Furthermore information like the reach and the age and gender of the visitors can also be gathered from Facebook statistics (Schindler & Liller, 2014, p. 354).

Media-Sharing-Platforms such as YouTube allow for a determination of success through YouTube Analytics which outlines key figures like the amount of views and comments as well as the number of shared content (Schindler & Liller, 2014, p. 354). However, only the publisher of the posts has the ability to access those information and thus can decide if he wants to share them with a company or brand.

3.7.2 Revenue

The revenue can be measured by the Return on Investment or ROI. It expresses as a percentage with how much investment a company made a profit and therefore is a crucial Key Performance Indicator. With the help of this KPI companies are able to calculate how much costs they need to raise in order to integrate an Influencer campaign. Furthermore companies should determine which revenue has been obtained with the advertised products of the Influencer particularly regarding the direct online presence. To measure the ROI it is necessary to draw up a list of the costs which are related to the Influencer campaign for instance working hours to compile a campaign and find the right Influencer, the payment of the Influencer himself and the budget for the products and services provided to the Influencer. Afterwards companies need to prepare a list with the revenues of the Influencer measure in order to evaluate the cost and the earnings (Schindler & Liller, 2014, pp. 364-366).

Moreover it is possible to generate special URLs with tool like bit.ly which then can be integrated in particular Influencer campaigns in order to create a clear distinction between the content as well as the traffic of the Influencer and other sources. An Influencer can enter the generated link to an Online Shop and thus the company is able to comprehend how many persons have been forwarded from the channels of the Influencer and also how many of them actually purchased the product. Another option is to use promo codes to track purchasing processes after the expiration of a Influencer campaign and then directly relate it to the advertising measure of the Influencer. Thus maximal transparence is guaranteed (Blogvertising, 2018).

3.7.3 Reach and Engagement Rate

Besides operating a Blog, Influencers are only present on several Social Media Platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram as well as on Media-Sharing-Platforms like YouTube in order to build a community and stay in contact with them. Due to the variety of channels Bloggers are able to expand their reach and gain more subscribers. The reach of a Blog can be measured through different criteria for example the amount of visitors, the number of likes and comments and the type of comments. Moreover the length of stay on a Blog provides information on how interested the visitors are in the

posted content and on how well-considered the user experience is (Kreutzer, 2014, p. 366).

On the Social Networks and Video-Sharing-Platforms Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube the reach is measured by the amount of followers or subscribers. Moreover the engagement rate of the community plays a decisive role when having a look at the success of a channel of an Influencer. The engagement rate on Social Media Platforms can be measured by the amount of likes, comments and shared posts, the engagement rate on Media-Sharing-Platforms on the other hand is also determined by the amount of likes, comments and the number of page impressions which shows if the subscribers are interested in the produced content (Kreutzer, 2014, pp. 376-380).

3.8 Success Factor Research

In the last few years a lot of success factor studies emerged which have been develop with questionable methods and thus determined random correlations between variables which then have been declared as hypotheses. Even though the success factor research is a much conducted empirical master technique it also causes strong criticism among marketing and management researchers. The success factor research is not a homogenous master technique. However, it represents the assumption that despite of the multidimensionality of success and the multicausality of potential success factors there still exist a few success factors which have an impact on the long-term success. The purpose of success factor research therefore is to determine such success factors which have a context-independent influence on the success. Context-independence refers to temporal, personal and object-related independence (Baumgarth & Evanschitzky, 2009, pp. 237-238).

The practical implementation of a success factor study should include a four-stage process comprising the deduction of a success factor model, the operationalization of potential success factors and success indicators, the implementation and evaluation of the success factor research and the publication. Operationalizing the potential success factors and success indicators can be implemented with objective procedures for instance by involving data of the internal accounting as well as subjective procedures for instance statements of managers. Moreover we distinguish between primary sources

such as own collection of data in a company and secondary sources such as research in data bases. (Baumgarth & Evanschitzky, 2009, pp. 240-242).

In research practice especially the discussion about the use of subjective opinions instead of objective performance indicators plays a crucial role. Those two groups of success indicators have been compared many times with the conclusion that both have a medium to high and mainly significant correlation. Consequently, the use of subjective opinions or rather judgments can provide valid statements which additionally need to be proven and validated with the help of objective data. The content-related dimension can be examined with various indicators which reach from hart financial ratios, e.g. the profitability and the stock price over market ratios, e.g. the brand value and the growth in sales to soft indicators, e.g. satisfaction with the corporate success. Most widely used are the success indicators revenue, market share, profit and the intention to buy (Baumgarth & Evanschitzky, 2009, pp. 242-243).

The scientific discussions mainly deal with critical publications from March/Sutton (1997), Woywode (2002) and Nicolai/Kieser (2002) about the methodology and the content of success factor research. Methodological points of criticism which are unjustified as they would entail a not valid research procedure are the use of a not representative samples, the use of inadequate methods and the use of inadequate scale patterns (Baumgarth & Evanschitzky, 2009, p. 247).

Another point of critique is the lack of theoretical substance which means the risk of getting a state of knowledge out of random relationships between dependent and independent variables particularly when a lot of these factors are tested. Thus a theoretical assumption needs to reason the hypothetical relation between different variables. The theory-led hypothesis formulation is the starting point of a confirmatory investigation (Baumgarth & Evanschitzky, 2009, p. 248).

The second point of criticism is a not valid operationalisation of success factors meaning the inadequate operationalization of constructs or the distortion of the measurements which leads to contentual wrong conclusions. As a theory-led hypothesis is the foundation for a quantitative confirmatory investigation, the operationalisation of constructs is not random when it comes to the selection of indicators, but is based on

operationalisation principles or empirical preliminary studies (Baumgarth & Evanschitzky, 2009, p. 247).

A distortion of statements about the corporate success of a company can occur when the selection of the respondents is not well considered for example when the informant is an employee of the company and has to make a statement on dependent and independent variables, e. g. about a particular marketing measure and the change of a subjective success ratio. The Key Informant Bias can be reduced by the inclusion of various different data sources when measuring success factors and success indicators (Baumgarth & Evanschitzky, 2009, p. 247).

The Non-Response Bias on the other hand assumes that the answering behavior is changed when really successful companies do not participate in the study. Moreover another difficulty when surveying success relevant factors is the fact that independent variables usually are influenced by disturbance variables. If such variables are not mentioned in the success factor model, the endogeneity problem occurs. This weak point can be counteracted with a conscious consideration between specificity and general validity of the study. In addition success factor studies mostly only examine companies which still exist in the market. Therefore the study has a systematical non-representativeness also called Survival Bias. According to Ahlert/Schröder a magnitude of influence distinguishes between excellent and less excellent companies. They hypothesize that less excellent companies are able to exist in the market since excellent companies are otherwise not able to meet the market demands (Baumgarth & Evanschitzky, 2009, pp. 247-249).

Even if the already stated methodological point of critique can be eliminated there still are a few content-related points of criticism which weaken the concept of the success factor research. Success factor which are publicly announced lose their effectiveness as the discovery of a competitive advantage is only useful when fellow competitors did not already anticipate the advantage. Thus it would be impractical if the success factor research would figure out specific indicators which are responsible for an outstanding performance. This assumes that a particular resource is transferable from one market participant to another. Scientific approaches thus need to be simplified with the help of different theories in order to identify success factors. It is not possible to find out if

scientists chose the write theory and the write specification. This point of critique which should not be underestimated can be encountered with the implementation of various preliminary studies for instance expert interviews. Therefore it is guaranteed that theoretical preliminary considerations are combined with specific expert knowledge in order to get a valid conceptualization of the success construct (Baumgarth & Evanschitzky, 2009, pp. 250-251).

Either the identification or the composition of success factors requires a huge amount of scientific decisions. Identified success factors undergo a quasi-mechanistic, truth-producing process, in which researchers only implement one appropriate method to gain a confirmation or rejection of the determined hypothesis. The arbitrariness in choosing the success factors as well as the measurement indicators is criticized. This point of critique can be prevented when conducting a two-step procedure (Baumgarth & Evanschitzky, 2009, p. 251).

Even though the success factor research encounters a lot of criticism, the empirical part of this thesis will rely on the success factor research in order to determine universal success factors for Influencer Marketing in the Beauty Industry.

4. Empirical Investigation

As the market situation nowadays is extremely dynamic and international, the demand for knowledge about the constantly transforming customer needs, the competitive market environment and the own positioning of a brand or company strongly increased. Therefore the academic as well as commercial market and marketing research gained in significance since they provide extensive data and the context in which the results can be interpreted. The primary goal of qualitative research is the knowledge acquisition through a deeper understanding of the examined phenomenon. Moreover data gathering in form of interviews, expert interviews or studies ensures an insight view into the expertise of the involved parties. (Auer-Srnka, 2009, pp. 161-162). In this thesis such a qualitative data acquisition is used in order to investigate which criteria are crucial for the success of an Influencer within the beauty industry resulting in the elaboration of different success factors.

In the following the research approach and the research design are going to be explained and the sample, guideline and method of data collection will be described. Afterwards the evaluation procedure of the gathered data is elucidated.

Technique
The empiric research can be divided in quantitative and qualitative methods. In general the goal of every research is to gain findings as well as knowledge regardless of the applied method. Knowledge arises out of the connection of information and information in turn can be obtained out the concatenation of data. Even though the main goal is the same, both methods strive for different particular goals and have disparate generic procedures (Albers, 2007, p. 4).

The goal of the **qualitative research** is to outline and interpret the current state of research and moreover to gain further hypothesis as well as to discover unknown factors based on the acquired findings. This method is particularly applied in unexplored fields (Albers, 2007, p. 4).

Quantitative research on the other hand concentrates on already existing theoretical hypotheses which should be confirmed or falsified through data collection and

evaluation. Correlations are identified with the help of special interrogations and questionnaires. The gathered knowledge and findings should evince the degree of truth of the made assumptions (Albers, 2007, p. 4).

As Influencer Marketing is a relatively unexplored subject the qualitative research offers an appropriate option to gain new findings and contribute to reduce the gap in research. In the course of the elaboration of the theoretical basics it became clear that the topic has not been examined in several subareas for instance Influencer Marketing and the Success Factor Research. Therefore the acquisition of data has been designed to gain additional knowledge for the practice.

4.1 Research Design

As mentioned before the empirical investigation is going to be conducted through the quantitative survey method in form of expert interviews. The theoretical contemplation should be further reinforced with the help of selected experts (Meuser & Nagel, 2009, S. 466).

The main aim of the data acquisition is to figure out and formulate success factors of Influencer Marketing particularly in the beauty industry. The foundation for the investigation is to clarify what the conditions, concepts and advantages are for Influencers and companies as well as Influencers and agencies when entering a cooperation. Moreover the data will consider potential success factors and assess which indicators really constitute an effective cooperation. The developed research questions can be empirically examined through the expert knowledge of the interview partners. As a result the interviews combine the know-how of the experts with the aim of the research. The investigator gets an insight into the involved parties as well as the initial situation and thus gains additional knowledge concerning the integrated processes (Gläser & Laudel, 2010, p. 40).

The specific selection of experts underlies the assumption that each of them is able to give adequate and knowledgeable statements regarding the research issue and thus helps to provide a valuable contribution to the research (Bogner, Littig & Menz, 2014).

Group of Experts

The group of experts consist of five different parties in order to give an holistic overview about the research issue but not becoming confusing at the same time. Each of the interview partners has special knowledge and fields of expertise and thus is qualified to function as an expert in this thesis.

1st Interview Partner (Influencer 1): Elina Neumann, operates the beauty, lifestyle and travel Blog **bareminds.de** were she gives advices on products, application methods and the newest trends in hair care, skincare and makeup. Her fascination for everything around Beauty, Health and Lifestyle brought her to blogging about two years ago. At the same time she works as a self-employed in the field Online und Content Marketing and as an Influencer Consultant. Before she started her career as a Blogger she had long-standing experiences as an advisor for huge companies in the course of an employment relationship in a PR agency.

2nd Interview Partner (Influencer 2): Talisa Minoush Garbsch, is a beauty and lifestyle Blogger who operates the YouTube channel **Talisa Minoush** since 2011 were she deals with topics like cruelty free, natural and vegan makeup products, vegan diet and socio-critical themes. Her community comprises nearly 30,000 subscribers on YouTube and 22,000 subscribers on Instagram. Besides running a YouTube channel and various other Social Media channels, she is also the Junior Social Media Manager of a renowned beauty company and thus also works with Influencers in her professional career.

3rd Interview Partner (Company): Talisa Minoush Garbsch, is the Junior Social Media Manager of the well known beauty company **Flaconi** based in Berlin. Her main task is to manage the Influencers and Blogger Relations as well as to take charge of the Flaconi YouTube channel. Apart from her activity at **Flaconi**, she also runs her own YouTube channel and is a successful Influencer in the field of sustainability and conscious lifestyle.

4th Interview Partner (Agency): Marco Podavka is the CEO of the Influencer agency **Bloggerkartei** based in Leipzig. The professional Blogger agency comprises more than 200 registered Influencers who have a total reach of 25 million subscribers. Therefore

Bloggerkartei ranks among the top Influencer agencies in Germany and mainly focuses on SOM-Relations and PR-Management.

5th Interview Partner (User): Katharina Pocha works in an Online company and is a passionate user of various Social Media platforms. Due to her long-standing experience with Bloggers and her especially in the field of Beauty and her passion for everything around makeup, hair and care she is able to judge the conditions in the beauty industry particularly regarding Influencer cooperations and successful Influencer Marketing.

Interview Partner	Elina Neumann	Talisa Minoush Garbsch	Talisa Minoush Garbsch	Marco Podavka	Katharina Fricke
Type of communication	By telephone	Personal Meeting	Personal Meeting	E-Mail communication	Personal Meeting
Profession	Influencer	Influencer	Junior Social Media Manager	CEO Influencer Agency	User
Company	Bare Minds	Talisa Minoush	Flaconi	Bloggerkartei	-
Gender	female	female	female	male	female
Date of Interview	16th February 2018	19th February 2018	19th February 2018	2nd February 2018	2nd March 2018
Duration of Interview	58:05 minutes	23:14 minutes	12:42 minutes	-	21:38 minutes

Table 1: Overview of the sample (Own Research)

In order to investigate conditions, concepts and advantages as well as potential success factors and future forecasts of Influencer Marketing. The open questions ensure a natural course of conversation but also provide an orientation guide. On this account the experts have been questioned on the topic with this kind of survey method (Kruse, 2014, pp. 206-207).

The Interview question have been divided into four different subsections:

I.   Conditions, Concepts and Advantages of entering a Cooperation

II.   Potential Success Factors

III.   Conflict between Credibility and Professionalism

IV.   The Future of Influencer Marketing

The following interview questions belong to the mentioned subsections:

I.   <u>Conditions, Concepts and Advantages of entering a Cooperation</u>

Question 1:
➢ *How did you start blogging? Why did you decide to mainly produce content around the topic Beauty?*
➢ *Why does your company enter cooperations with beauty Influencers? How does the cooperation proceed?*
➢ *What is the concept of your agency for Blogger Relations? How does the cooperation between you and Influencers proceed?*

Question 2:
➢ *Which advantages provides your agencies for Bloggers? Which advantages provides your agencies for companies?*

Question 11:
➢ *How do Bloggers contact you? Or did you develop a particular system to acquire Bloggers, e.g. Social Media Monitoring?*

Question 17:
➢ *Which criteria does an agency or a company need to meet so that you enter a cooperation with them?*
➢ *Which criteria do beauty Bloggers need to meet so that you enter a cooperation with them?*

II. Potential Success Factors

Question 3:
- ➤ *Which Social Media channels do you mainly use to upload content and why? What do you think is the most popular channel among your community?*
- ➤ *Which Social Media channels do you think are the best for successful Influencer Marketing and why?*
- ➤ *Which Social Media channels do you use the most?*

Question 4:
- ➤ *How have you heard from the beauty Influencers you follow?*

Question 5:
- ➤ *After which criteria do you decide if you subscribe to a channel of a Blogger?*

Question 6:
- ➤ *Which type of content do you preferably produce and why? What do you think prefer your subscribers?*
- ➤ *Which type of content do you prefer when following a beauty Blogger?*

Question 7:
- ➤ *Which type of content do you prefer when following a beauty Blogger?*
- ➤ *When entering a cooperation, do you prefer Influencers who create content from different topics in order to ensure some kind of variety or is it important to you that they are pure beauty Bloggers?*
- ➤ *Do you want Beauty Bloggers to produce content from other topics than beauty? If yes, which topics would be interesting for you?*

Question 8:
- ➤ *Do you upload content on a regular basis? How do you decide at what intervals you post (adapted to the requirements of the users/companies/agencies or only when you have something interesting to share)?*
- ➤ *How important are regular uploads in form of pictures, posts and videos for successful Influencer Marketing? How regular should uploads be in order to be seen as adequate? Do you require your cooperation partners to post in certain intervals?*
- ➤ *How important are regular uploads in form of pictures, posts and videos for you? How regular should uploads be in order to be seen as adequate?*

Question 9:
- ➤ *Have you ever purchased a beauty product just because a Blogger drew attention to it or recommended it? Is it of particular importance if the content has been sponsored or not?*

Question 10:
- ➤ *How important do you think is the communication and interaction with your followers?*
- ➤ *How important do you think is the communication and interaction of Influencers with their followers?*

Question 12:
- ➤ *What do you think about the approach to pay Influencers based on the communication level and engagement rate of their community and not for the amount of their*

subscribers? Do you aim for a huge community and a wide reach (Macro-Influencer) or do you rather want to have a smaller community which consist of a proportionally large target group (Micro-Influencer)?

➢ *Do you prefer cooperations with Micro-Influencers or with Macro-Influencers, the so called "Social Media Superstars"? Why?*

Question 13:
➢ *How do you measure the success of a Blogger cooperation? Are there particular KPIs that you consider?*

Question 14:
➢ *Do you want your subscribers to see you as a star/idol or do you rather want to be approachable like a friend?*

Question 15:
➢ *What do you think, how important is credibility and authenticity? What do you do in order to be credible and authentic?*
➢ *How important are credibility and authenticity of beauty Bloggers? What do you think is credible and authentic?*

Question 18:
➢ *Do you think that cooperation with prestigious companies are important for Influencers?*
➢ *How important are cooperation of Bloggers with prestigious companies?*

Question 19:
➢ *Do you think that insights into your private life contribute to your success?*
➢ *How important are insights into the private life of Bloggers you follow?*

Question 20:
➢ *Do you have an education or special know-how in the field of beauty? How did you acquire your knowledge?*
➢ *What level of know-how and expertise do beauty Bloggers need to have so that you enter a cooperation with them?*
➢ *How important are know-how and expertise of beauty Influencers?*

Question 21:
➢ *What do you think makes up a successful Influencer in the field of beauty?*

III. <u>Conflict between Credibility and Professionalism</u>

Question 16:
➢ *Do you think there is a conflict between the credibility of Bloggers and the cooperation with an agency or a company since there are many persons in the background who help to conceive and implement a campaign and not only the Influencer?*
➢ *Do you think there is a conflict between the credibility of Bloggers and the cooperation with your company? How much co-determination do Influencers have regarding the planning process and the implementation of the content?*
➢ *Do you think there is a conflict between the credibility of Bloggers and the cooperation with your agency since there are many persons in the background who help to conceive and implement a campaign and not only the Influencer?*

IV. The Future of Influencer Marketing

Question 22:
➢ *What do you think how Influencer Marketing will develop in the future? Do you have wishes and improvement suggestions?*

Data acquisition and procedure of analysis

Interview 1 has been conducted through telephone, while interview 2 and 3 were held face-to-face and took place in the main office of the beauty company Flaconi in Berlin. Interview 5 which also has been carried out personally was in a cafe in Berlin. Each of these interviews has been recorded on audio tape in order to maintain the answers but also have the opportunity to achieve an open dialogue. Interview 4 could only be implemented through e-mail communication. On this account the answers have been documented right from the start.

Every Interview was realized with the help of the guideline. The questions were aligned with the respective interview partner and some questions are only asked to particular interviewees. After the greeting and the opening of the interview followed a short explanation of the interview procedure. In order to break the ice and gather crucial information such as the name, the position and the expertise of the counterpart the interview began with a casual introduction of the interview partner. Due to the open guideline the interview attained a flexible approach and additional results could be obtained. In case of uncertainties and unresolved issues it was possible to ask supplementary questions and thus reach further findings.

The analysis of the collected data should work out similarities and differences (Meuser & Nagel, 2009, p. 467). The most important findings have been documented in form of notes in a table. It took about two to three hours to write down the recorded interviews and remove irrelevant side notes and small talk. The complete elaboration of the interviews can be find in the appendix.

Limitation

The limited amount of Interview partners can lead to the assumption that the results of the expert survey are not significant. In order to get representative results, extensive interviews need to underline the empirical investigation. However this would exceed the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, the available results are significant since they

emphasize the theory and additionally complement them. Apart from that this thesis provides well-founded expertise and can be the starting point for further investigations in the field of Influencer Marketing.

4.2 Presentation of the empirical Results

With the help of the interview guideline the empirical results are divided into four subsections. The elaborated research questions are going to be answered and discussed within the presentation of the findings. Due to the gained results it is possible to identify similarities as well as differences regarding the theory.

4.2.1 Conditions, Concepts and Advantages of entering a Cooperation

Influencer Marketing is currently the most effective marketing tool and became even more important than traditional advertising. Hence companies integrate Influencers in their marketing and communication activities in order to position themselves in the market and create awareness around the brand. As Influencers usually have a huge fan base brands are able to reach their followers and thus new potential customers (Garbsch, 2018).

When looking for a suitable cooperation partner, companies first thoroughly research to find a Blogger whose reach, professionalism, type of content and personality matches the corporate values the best. Usually brands have catalogues of selection criteria which help to find the right Blogger for a campaign. After making a decision companies contact the relevant Influencers and start a conversation on the key data as well as the conditions of the of the cooperation (Garbsch, 2018). Influencer Relations agencies work with a similar concept as the companies. One main difference is the fact that an agency does not search for Bloggers, but they contact the agency and apply in order to be included in their file of potential cooperation partners. Besides processing the several requests, agencies also decide if an Influencer matches their requirements and the demands of a company. When getting a request of a brand which is looking for an appropriate cooperation partner, the agency is searching their file for a Blogger that meets the requirements of the upcoming cooperation and facilitates the contact. Every cooperation has a separate contract which determines the key information such as the

duration of the campaign, the guidelines of the procedure or the remuneration for the Influencer. Blogger Relation agencies calculated the remuneration of an Influencer based on many factors for instance the reach on his Instagram or YouTube channel, the engagement rate of the community, the length of an editorial blogpost or the amount of included links and pictures (Podavka, 2018).

Influencer agencies look after the relaying and support of Bloggers and help them to generate new jobs in form of cooperations in order to satisfy their economical interests. Furthermore they provide assistance in legal and organizational matters and support Influencers with their expertise in order to keep and extend the number of community members. Brands also benefit from working together with an agency. One of the advantages is the time saving factor as companies can hand over administrative expenses to an agency. Moreover agencies offer a holistic support during the process of brand development, expansion of reach and launch of products. In addition agencies have an extensive file of Bloggers for potential cooperations and support the selection process of an appropriate Influencer by providing expertise and know-how. Furthermore agencies ask their Bloggers to integrate backlinks on their channels when posting about a brand to improve the online visibility and thus reach a continuous search engine optimization (Podavka, 2018).

In terms of making contact companies and agencies have similar procedures. When looking for a suitable Influencer to work with brand either directly contact the Influencer or get in touch with the management after a detailed and themed Social Media research and a look at the industry as there is a huge selections of Bloggers for several topics like natural cosmetics, hair or high end products (Garbsch, 2018). If companies want to pass the responsibility for Influencer search they can approach agencies which than find a appropriate cooperation partner for a campaign. Agencies get daily enquiries from many interested Influencers who want to be taken into the file and then are brought together with brands. Due to the large number of Influencers who are suitable for mainstream campaigns, most of the agencies only accept request from Influencers who can be used for niche content (Podavka, 2018). Influencers do not only get in touch with agencies to enter a cooperation but also directly contact brands and express their interest in a working relationship. In such cases companies have a look at the profiles and public appearances of the Bloggers and examines if there are suitable

forthcoming campaigns. If not the Influencers are included in a database so that the brand can refer to them in case of a future conformance (Garbsch, 2018).

Before entering a cooperation agencies as well as companies do an in-depth research on potential Influencers. They concentrate on different criteria in order to chose the right cooperation partner. Many companies demand KPIs such as a reach of at least 10,000 followers which constitutes the group of Micro-Influencers, a good engagement rate and a particular amount of likes, comments, shares and impressions (Podavka, 2018). Furthermore companies look for Bloggers who have a true passion for beauty and an expertise in a particular topic, e.g. care and decorative cosmetics as cooperations are not just the simple presentation of a product in front of a camera but need to rest on well-founded knowledge. In addition companies work with Bloggers who carefully selected their previous cooperations and just work with brands that match them rather than with sheer advertising spaces. Influencers should be authentic, reliable, professional and approachable cooperation partners, not artificial advertisers. A strong personality is crucial in order to share stable values. Besides personal qualities a Blogger need technical knowledge on how to produce high quality content such as atmospheric high-definition photos and well researched editorial content (Garbsch, 2018).

Influencers on the other hand have their own set of criteria which need to be fulfilled when working together with a brand. Most of the Bloggers who insist of their credibility would only work with a company from which they know that the products are good quality in order to authentically advertise a product. Furthermore Influencers want to be free in creating texts and pictures to give their honest opinion, recommendations and tips (Neumann, 2018). Apart from this Influencers pay attention to the public appearance and the values of a brand- did the company have any scandals in the past, for what does the company stand, are the products cruelty free, vegan and produced under fair conditions (Garbsch, 2018).

4.2.2 Potential Success Factors

Successful Influencer Marketing can have many reasons. With the help of the knowledge and experience of the interviewed experts this chapter will have a look at potential success factors such as the type of content, the expertise of the Bloggers or the presence of Influencers on various channels.

Web Presence and Content Creation

Due to the fast-moving time many Social Media users prefer Instagram as communication platform since it is the channel where users can consume many information in a short time. Instagram offers the opportunity to present content through picture language in form of aesthetic photos and short videos. Most of the users look for shortened content on Instagram or Insta-Story rather than for a detailed blogpost. On Insta-Story the followers are able to give immediate feedback and thus can understand each step of a makeup look or a application of a product. There are only a few faithful reader who enjoy an extensive processing of a topic on a blog. Apart from that a blog is still an important tool to introduce new issues as beauty is a topic which needs a lot of explanation (Neumann, 2018). Moreover YouTube gained more importance in the past as many users like moving pictures and a visual presentation of a topic. Especially beauty can be presented in video format by showing and explaining products, trends and techniques with a step-by-step description (Garbsch, 2018).

Companies also prefer Influencers who are present on Instagram which constitutes the most popular channel among the online community and thus ensures a wide reach. Furthermore Insta-Story a new tool of Instagram became more important as it combines the advantages of YouTube and Instagram- moving pictures in a short video. YouTube is also a relevant platform as it provides the opportunity to describe processes in detail and to create in-depth videos on a topic. Particularly Beauty lovers enjoy step-by-step instructions and a visual representation of content. Blogs with a faithful and stable readership are popular tools to introduce uncommercial content and advertise niche products (Garbsch, 2018).

Agencies concur with the brands opinion that editorial blogpost are suitable for product which need a lot of explanation. Moreover blogs have a high engagement rate and

provide a trustworthy atmosphere. Thus they also have a community which most likely purchases the advertised products. Instagram on the other hand mainly builds brand awareness, attracts attention and causes emotional attachment to the Influencer and brand (Podavka, 2018).

Users mainly consume beauty content from YouTube as it provides Tutorials and other detailed how-to videos. Instagram has only a supportive role to be up to date and look at pictures of makeup and hair looks on a daily basis. As mentioned before beauty blogs consist of extensive editorial content and thus is mostly interesting for users who like to read long texts on a topic. On this account blogs do not have a huge readership but a faithful (Pocha, 2018).

All experts agreed on the fact that Facebook is considerably irrelevant as it does not reach the target group for beauty. It is only integrated in the implementation of a campaign in order to ensure the share function.

The most popular Social Media channels are also the ones that help Influencers to gain more followers. YouTube for instance offers suggestions for new videos to watch on the welcome page of the users. The suggestions are mainly coordinated with the already consumed content. If users subscribed to several beauty Influencers they will most likely get recommendations on other YouTubers in the field of beauty and can subscribe. Sometimes beauty Bloggers obtain a wider reach and thus a larger community as a consequence of cooperations with other popular beauty Influencers or through appearances in the media. Hence Influencers can benefit from each other. Online-affine users with a high interest in beauty also look up new Beauty Influencers on purpose to widen their portfolio. An Influencer needs to have various features to become popular among the community and extent his fan base. Users usually first watch videos, posts and pictures and on this basis decide if a Blogger is likable and authentic. Moreover Bloggers should have a special feature, e.g. a special talent in makeup and explanation, extreme humor or a funny pet since this creates a recognition value. As most of the user already have an affinity and basic knowledge in beauty they are most likely looking for entertainment when following a beauty Blogger (Pocha, 2018).

In addition to the channel and the type of content Influencers need to decide how regular they want to approach their community. Even though it is possible to upload content on a daily basis, many Bloggers limit their blogposts and YouTube uploads to several times a week or a month as they like to create well researched texts and videos as beauty needs a lot of explanation, especially when writing about ingredients or more complicating scientific topics (Neumann, 2018). The uploads on Social Media channels like Instagram are more constant and are scheduled to once or twice a day since it does not take that much time to create a post in form of a photo or an Insta-Story (Garbsch, 2018).

Agencies consider it important to uploads content on a regular basis as this keeps the community engaged and binds them to the Influencers. Posts on Instagram should be every two days and were supplemented through Insta-Story-Uploads in-between (Podavka, 2018). If companies work campaign driven they usually pay for one post and maybe an Instagram-Story or for a YouTube video which needs to be uploaded during the term of the campaign. If companies work product-specific they would want the Bloggers to post several times after the launch of a new product in order to increase the sales (Garbsch, 2018).

The particular topic of the content plays a crucial role for every included party of Influencer Marketing. Companies in the beauty industry like a mixture of topics as long as beauty is the main theme on a channel. The quality of the content as well as the personality of the Influencer are more important than cooperating with a pure beauty blog (Garbsch, 2018). Influencers also like to create content from different fields. Even though beauty is the primary topic, there are many other topics which can be combined without losing the focus. Themes like fashion, travel, interior design or food can be subtle integrated into posts for instance when describing how healthy food improves the skin or when mentioning the best beauty spots of a holiday destination. Moreover when uploading posts on trends in beauty the content is normally applicable to fashion as the trends are almost the same. When subtle including different topics into the content, Influencers do not only create more variety on their channel but also create an added value in the field of beauty and do not post completely off-topic (Neumann, 2018). Furthermore Influencers can vary the content within the field of beauty, e.g. by posting content of subcategories such as natural cosmetics, vegan and cruelty free cosmetics or

environmental protection and fair conditions during the production of beauty products (Garbsch, 2018). Even though most of the users follow a beauty Blogger to consume content in the field of beauty, they still accept content from various other topics as creative beauty Blogger can also be creative in other topics, e.g. fashion. Moreover a content variation allows the community to see more facets of an Influencer (Pocha, 2018).

As Influencers are mostly seen as trustworthy persons a lot of users are willing to buy product after a beauty Blogger recommended them in a video, picture or editorial post. The advantage of showing a product in a video is that the visual presentation in moving pictures helps to become aware of the product and see how it performs. It usually does not matter if the recommendation is sponsored or not since users rely on the Influencer and hope that he is professional enough to only enter a cooperation with a company or brand when he is really convinced of the product and likes the application (Pocha, 2018).

Cooperations

It is advantageous if a beauty Influencers work together with prestigious beauty companies that match their values. On the one hand beauty Bloggers can be suitable brand ambassadors who represent a beauty brand in the course of a campaign and advertise their products. On the other hand beauty Bloggers who have a special talent for a specific makeup application should get the opportunity to launch a suitable product with a prestigious beauty brand. In any case cooperations should be authentic, credible and just occur between parties that are totally convinced of each other and have a trustworthy relationship (Pocha, 2018). The better the reference in form of a cooperation with a prestigious company the higher is the market value of the Influencer and the more other companies are interested in a cooperation (Podavka, 2018).

Credibility and Authenticity

Credibility and Authenticity are the most important attribute of an Influencer. Agencies only accepting cooperations that suit the values, content and personality of a Blogger regardless of the remuneration. Moreover they do not allow campaigns with more than one brand within a competitive market (Podavka, 2018). Companies also like strong personalities who stick to their values. Authenticity and credibility are appreciated

attributes as they also go down well with the customers. Thus it is much easier to achieve positive results with a cooperation that included authentic Influencers (Garbsch, 2018). Influencer who want to appear authentic do not enters a cooperation when they are not totally convinces of a product and brand. Reputable Bloggers rather refuse paid cooperations when they do not like a product after testing it than to mention or recommend it on the blog (Neumann, 2018). The Community also like authentic and credible Influencers as such characteristics contribute to their sympathy. Of course many users are aware of the fact that not every Influencer is honest all the time and sometimes just create the impression of authenticity. But if they are good at pretending it helps them to sell themselves and products. Bloggers are authentic and credible if they are able to admit faults and have a critical attitude towards the products and brands they advertise- yes-men and people who pretend to be perfect all the time are unauthentic (Pocha, 2018).

Interaction and Personal Insights

The interaction with a community significantly contributes to the success of a blog or Social Media channel. If users would not give any input if they are interested in topics or if they would not give feedback then it would be difficult for a Blogger to create proper content that meets the demands of the community. Operators of a professional blog cannot just rely on the own preferences but need to show interest in what the community wants to see or read. On this account success-oriented Influencers interact with their followers and answer comments since it helps to encourages the community to give further input and thus provides a basis for improvements (Neumann, 2018). Furthermore even silent community members like to read answers of Influencers on comments or if Influencers addresses answers to the whole community in a following posts as this means the Influencer is interested in the opinions of subscribers (Pocha, 2018).

Besides being integrated in the determination of relevant content, users also enjoy it when Bloggers show snapshot of their daily life. Moreover private insights make Influencers approachable and it is easier for the community to identify with them. Of course everyone has the right of privacy but a little bit openness is likable and kind of differentiates Influencers from traditional celebrities (Pocha, 2018). Influencers also recognized the importance of insights in the private life as being curious is the natural

bent of most of the people. The more personal and private moments a Blogger shares the more interest do the followers have. A strong bond helps to build a closer relationship and makes Influencers approachable. Apart from that brands also like Influencers who show their private site and are not professional and formal all the time. Showing flaws makes Bloggers approachable and the community can identify with them more easily. Nevertheless Influencers need to decide what they want to share and what they want to keep private (Neumann, 2018).

Besides deciding how personal they want to get, Influencers also need to define the relationship level with their community. Bloggers nowadays have such a huge fan base that they can keep up with traditional celebrities. Regardless of this most Influencers aim for an eye-to-eye relationship their followers and do not want to be seen as arrogant or unapproachable. Furthermore Influencers want to inspire their community like a friend who gives tips and recommendations on topic like beauty. As a blog benefit from an active communication, the followers should not feel like they could not contact an Influencer (Neumann, 2018). However, Influencer should be aware of their position as role model as well as their reach and thus inspire their community to dare changes and take responsibility for fellow humans and the environment (Garbsch, 2018).

Education and Know-How

Many Influencers especially in the field of beauty do not have a school-education in beauty but acquired knowledge and know-how through a lot of research and practicing and thus develop with their community (Garbsch, 2018). As a lot of information on beauty products and brands as well as on application methods are available all over the internet, it is easy to gain further knowledge and skills. On the other hand it does not have a negative impact if Influencers already have all the knowledge due to a special education and function as an expert (Neumann, 2018). Even though the creation of content is possible with no special education in beauty and makeup, it can be advantageous to have experience in cutting techniques and editing as this is crucial in order to finalize content (Garbsch, 2018).

Agencies and companies usually also do not require a completed apprenticeship from their Influencers but a technical know-how can be advantageous as brand ambassadors appear more natural and credible when they knows what to do (Podavka, 2018). A high

awareness level, the long-standing involvement of beauty products and trends on their blog and know-how acquired through research, practice and experience is more important than education. It is only necessary that Influencers are able to transport knowledge through editorial texts, pictures and posts and implement a campaign according to the demands of the cooperation partner (Garbsch, 2018).

As everyone can acquire knowledge autodidactically, users find it important that an Influencer can teach them application methods, the latest trends, makeup techniques as well as essential product and brand names and thus creates an added value (Pocha, 2018).

Micro-Influencers vs. Macro-Influencers

From the marketing perspective companies and brands should ensure that their cooperation partners are really what they pretend to be. Consequently it is better to enter a cooperation with Influencers who have a smaller community with a high engagement rate. Especially the community of small Bloggers the so called Micro-Influencers is very communicative, gives a lot of input and is highly interested in the content of the Blogger. Social Media Superstars on the other hand have a more anonymous community. On this account cooperations can get lost on their huge accounts and do not get the required attention. Therefore the interactive community of a Micro-Influencer is more important than the wide reach of a Macro-Influencer (Neumann, 2018).

As mentioned above the quantity of a community does not say a lot about the quality. If smaller Micro-Influencers have a well researched blog with journalistic content that provides a basis for a good communication with their community, they should also be paid properly and not have a disadvantage compared with Macro-Influencers. Especially Bloggers who operate a blog in a niche segment have not the possibility to generate as many followers as Bloggers of a commercial blog. As Micro-Influencers are approachable and normally have a closer relationship to their followers, they also generate a higher engagement rate (Garbsch, 2018). Moreover for agencies it is really difficult to work with Macro-Influencers as they have unrealistic salary expectations which the companies are not willing to pay Podavka, 2018).

Characteristics of Successful Influencers

Successful beauty Influencers need to have a special knowledge in beauty that they can share with their community in order to create an added value. Users follow a Blog because of atmospheric and high-quality pictures or because a Blogger writes interesting blogposts but in addition a community usually wants to benefit from the relationship. Therefore Influencers can keep and increase their community when sharing tips and know-how that the followers can apply in their everyday life (Neumann, 2018).

Furthermore authenticity is an important characteristic of Influencers regardless of the industry. A successful Influencer needs to have a unique personality and should also create unique content based on a unique expertise to stand out from the crowd. Additionally Influencers should have a special visual language in their pictures and a thoughtful Corporate Identity in form of color and filter selection which is constantly present on all channels. A pleasant voice as well as intonation and an attractive appearance also lead to followers who like to listen and watch to uploads on a regular basis. Apart from that mimic and gesture must be taken into account as Instagram with daily picture uploads and Inst-Story as well as YouTube with video-content become more and more important (Garbsch, 2018).

Companies and agencies moreover like to work with Influencers who have fair prices and strive for a profitable long-term relationship for both sites. Professionals, punctuality and honesty are also a foundation for a stable working relationship (Podavka, 2018).

Users appreciate beauty Influencer who have a unique characteristic and a special talent for makeup. In addition a successful Influencers is someone who does not just create beauty content as a daily force to earn money but sees makeup as an artistic expression that can chance external features and give people more self-confidence. Furthermore the content of a beauty Influencer should have a learning factor and a lot of humor in order to create an added value- life is serious enough, make up should be fun (Pocha, 2018).

4.2.3 Conflict between Credibility and Professionalism

During a cooperation a lot of people work in the background and help to realize a campaign. If Influencers do not work together with companies or agencies that regulate how to implement content and integrate a product or brand into their online presence, there is enough free space for Influencers to be authentic and credible even in the course of a professional cooperation. Moreover Influencers should ensure to only enter a cooperation with brands who offer good quality products. This enables Influencers to give their honest opinion. Fortunately most of the reputable brands do not want to work together with Influencers who just constitute an advertising space but give constructive feedback (Neumann, 2018). Under this conditions there is no conflict but rather the chance to create valuable content for the community and potential customers (Garbsch, 2018).

Furthermore companies that are not producer- but campaign-driven can ensure a high degree of authenticity as the brand does not pick the products for the Influencers but is able to let them chose from all the products in the shop. On this account Bloggers do not struggle to give positive feedback on an imposed product which they do not like or would never use but evaluate a product of which they are convinced (Garbsch, 2018).

In some cases agencies face difficulties when entering a professional cooperation as the company requests need to be fulfilled while companies want to have co-determination rights in choosing pictures and in creating the content on the one hand and Influencers want to be seen as independent artists and have creative free space on the other hand. During the implementation of a campaign, agencies constitute a mediator and co-creator in order to represent the interests of the customer (company) but still ensure that the Influencers feel good with the campaign. The main task of an agency is to coordinate the campaign and develop a strategy draft. Afterwards Influencers are in full charge of the implementation. The agency slightly intervenes in case of serious mistakes. Thus the credibility remains even with a professional team in the background (Podavka, 2018).

4.2.4 The Future of Influencer Marketing

Influencer Marketing constitutes a growing market and will still be an exciting topic in the future. Perhaps new apps or platforms appear which provide the opportunity to listen to podcasts or watch videos without having to read anything (Neumann, 2018). Moreover Influencers will further replace journalists, models and famous celebrities in many areas as they are in demand and people can relate to them. Many brands already recognized the extreme potential of Influencer Marketing and integrate it more in their marketing and communication activities (Garbsch, 2018) but only enter a cooperation with Influencers who match regarding credibility, community, values and suitability of the advertised product (Podavka, 2018). Social Media will remain the most important communication channel for Influencer Marketing and new channels will come along (Podavka, 2018). Influencers will further capture the market and replace traditional celebrities. In addition more Influencers will have their own products in cooperation with prestigious companies or their own brands in the future (Pocha, 2018)

An improvement suggestion for brands is that they should more thoroughly prove the Influencers with whom they enter a cooperation regarding the credibility and authenticity, the conformity of the values of the brand and the engagement rate. Companies often invest a lot in cooperations with Influencers and sometimes the cooperation has not more added value for the brand than a pretty Instagram picture (Neumann, 2018). Moreover Influencers should be more aware of their reach and Influence and use it carefully and reasonable for instance by emphasizing social issues or address topics like environment or animal protection and not just aiming for more clicks, paid cooperations and an increasing community (Garbsch, 2018). Apart from that the content should remain creative as well as innovative and fun should be more important than remuneration (Pocha).

5. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to investigate which criteria are crucial for successful Influencer Marketing within the beauty industry resulting in the elaboration of action recommendations for the cooperations between Influencers on the one hand and companies as well as agencies on the other hand.

At this time Influencer Marketing is the most effective Marketing tool to create awareness around a brand or product. Before entering cooperation, companies first examine if the Influencer matches their requirements in terms of the reach, the engagement of the community, the content type and the personality. Apart from that there are also criteria a company needs to fulfill to get an Influencer to work with it for instance a good reputation, free space in creating content when implementing a campaign and good-quality products. In case of conformance and interest, the contacting process can be started from all parties either brands, agencies or Influencers.

Due to the fast-moving time, users do not want to read long texts and waste time when consuming information. Instead they prefer moving pictures and pictorial representation. Instagram and YouTube are the most popular channels for Influencer Marketing. The visual depiction of content ensures that all important information are provided comprehensible. Especially beauty is a topic that takes advantage from visual presentation an in-depth step-by-step instructions. Moreover Insta-Story with its short videos and pictures that are only available for a limited time became more important since it combines the advantages from Instagram and YouTube. Blogs are also still popular, particularly for a faithful readership and to introduce uncommercial content and niche products. In the course of time Facebook lost its importance and does not reach the relevant target group. It is only integrated in campaigns to guarantee the share-function. If Influencers are present on channels like Instagram, YouTube and uncommon Blogs, they can generate more followers and thus a wider reach. Apart from this, uploads on a regular basis, e.g. once a day on Instagram and Insta-Story and at least once a week on YouTube and Blogs, are crucial to keep the community engaged and build a relationship to the Influencer.

It contributes to the success of beauty Influencers if they work together with prestigious beauty companies that match their values in order to create authentic and credible content. The better the reference in form of a cooperation with a prestigious company the higher is the market value of an Influencer and the more other companies are interested in future cooperations.

Companies like to cooperate with Influencers who have a strong personalities and stick to their values. Authenticity and credibility are the most important attributes of an Influencer as they also go down well with the customers. Thus campaigns can achieve positive results with a suitable advertiser. Influencer who want to appear authentic should not enter cooperation when they are not totally convinces of a product and brand. Reputable Bloggers rather refuse paid cooperations when they do not like a product after testing it than to mention or recommend it on the blog. The Community also like authentic and credible Influencers as such characteristics contribute to their sympathy. Influencers are seen as authentic and credible if they are able to admit faults and have a critical attitude towards the products and brands they advertise.

The interaction with a community significantly contributes to the success of a blog or Social Media channel. If users would not give any input if they are interested in topics or if they would not give feedback then it would be difficult for a Blogger to create proper content that meets the demands of the community. Thus success-oriented Influencers interact with their followers, answer comments and encourage the community to give feedback to ensure further improvements. A continuing interest in the opinions of the follower contribute to sympathy and success. Furthermore openness is a distinctive feature of Influencers in comparison to traditional celebrities. Influencers who want to be successful need to recognized the importance of insights in the private life as being curious is the natural bent of most human beings. The more personal and private moments a Blogger shares, the more interest do the followers have. A strong bond helps to build a closer relationship and makes Influencers approachable as the community can identify with them more easily. Apart from that brands also like to work with Influencers who show their private site and are not formal all the time.

Successful beauty Influencers need to have a special knowledge in beauty and care that they can teach to their community in order to create an added value. Influencers can

keep and increase their community when sharing tips and know-how that the followers can apply in their everyday life. Furthermore authenticity is an important characteristic. Influencers who aim for a successful career should have a unique personality and create exceptional content based on a special expertise in order to stand out from the crowd. Apart from this beauty Influencers should understand makeup as an artistic expression that can give people more self-confidence. Companies and agencies moreover like to work with Influencers who have fair prices and strive for a profitable long-term relationship for both sites. Professionals is also a foundation for a stable working relationship.

Influencer Marketing constitutes a growing market and will still be an exciting topic in the future. In the course of time Influencers will further replace journalists and famous celebrities in many areas as people can easier identify with them. Many brands already recognized the extreme potential of Influencer Marketing and integrate it more in their marketing and communication activities. Social Media will remain the most important communication channel for Influencer Marketing and new channels with advanced technology will come along.

Limitation

Influencer Marketing is a new and effective marketing toll which many companies and brands already include into their marketing and communication activities. Due to the fast-moving time it is either crucial that Influencers meet the demands of brands and the end consumers or that companies continuously adapt the implementation of Influencer Marketing to the customer need. As the requirements constantly change, the conditions and factors of success will vary as well. Moreover it is uncertain how long platforms like Instagram and YouTube will be the communication for Influencer Marketing and if Influencers will still overstock the market when new channels with advanced technology will occur.

Forecast and Implications for Research and Practice

In the course of the literature research and as a result of the expert interviews it was possible to work out success factors of Influencer Marketing as well as requirements for an effective cooperation. However, there are still open research questions that need to be examined in the scientific investigation.

➢ Guidelines for cooperations between brands and Influencers need to be defined and professionalized in order to guarantee smooth work processes and to generate experiences. In this context companies should also create a catalogue of criteria which a cooperation partner needs to meet. This can constitute the foundation for further lucrative combinations of Influencer Marketing and traditional Online-Marketing measures.

➢ Furthermore companies should integrate special tools that analyze the success and profitability of an Influencer Marketing measure by including predefined success factors and evaluating the benefits as well as revenues of a campaign.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Interview Guideline

Appendix 2: Interview Summary

Appendix 1: Interview Guideline

Question 1	**Influencer 1+2**	How did you start blogging? Why did you decide to mainly produce content around the topic Beauty?
	Company	Why does your company enter cooperations with beauty Influencers? How does the cooperation proceed?
	Agency	What is the concept of your agency for Blogger Relations? How does the cooperation between you and Influencers proceed?
Question 2	**Agency**	Which advantages provides your agencies for Bloggers? Which advantages provides your agencies for companies?
Question 3	**Influencer 1+2**	Which Social Media channels do you mainly use to upload content and why? What do you think is the most popular channel among your community?
	Company **Agency**	Which Social Media channels do you think are the best for successful Influencer Marketing and why?
	User	Which Social Media channels do you use the most?
Question 4	**User**	How have you heard from the beauty Influencers you follow?
Question 5	**User**	After which criteria do you decide if you subscribe to a channel of a Blogger?
Question 6	**Influencer 1+2**	Which type of content do you preferably produce and why? What do you think prefer your subscribers?
	User	Which type of content do you prefer when following a beauty Blogger?

Question 7	**Influencer 1+2**	Do you only produce beauty content or do you also integrate topics from other subject areas (e.g. fashion, travel, interior, food)?
	Company	When entering a cooperation, do you prefer Influencers who create content from different topics in order to ensure some kind of variety or is it important to you that they are pure beauty Bloggers?
	User	Do you want Beauty Bloggers to produce content from other topics than beauty? If yes, which topics would be interesting for you?
Question 8	**Influencer 1+2**	Do you upload content on a regular basis? How do you decide at what intervals you post (adapted to the requirements of the users/companies/agencies or only when you have something interesting to share)?
	Company **Agency**	How important are regular uploads in form of pictures, posts and videos for successful Influencer Marketing? How regular should uploads be in order to be seen as adequate? Do you require your cooperation partners to post in certain intervals?
	User	How important are regular uploads in form of pictures, posts and videos for you? How regular should uploads be in order to be seen as adequate?
Question 9	**User**	Have you ever purchased a beauty product just because a Blogger drew attention to it or recommended it? Is it of particular importance if the content has been sponsored or not?

Question 10	Influencer 1+2	How important do you think is the communication and interaction with your followers?
	User	How important do you think is the communication and interaction of Influencers with their followers?
Question 11	Company	How do Bloggers contact you? Or did you develop a particular system to acquire Bloggers, e.g. Social Media Monitoring?
	Agency	
Question 12	Influencer 1+2	What do you think about the approach to pay Influencers based on the communication level and engagement rate of their community and not for the amount of their subscribers? Do you aim for a huge community and a wide reach (Macro-Influencer) or do you rather want to have a smaller community which consist of a proportionally large target group (Micro-Influencer)?
	Company	Do you prefer cooperations with Micro-Influencers or with Macro-Influencers, the so called "Social Media Superstars"? Why?
	Agency	
Question 13	Company	How do you measure the success of a Blogger cooperation? Are there particular KPIs that you consider?
Question 14	Influencer 1+2	Do you want your subscribers to see you as a star/idol or do you rather want to be approachable like a friend?
Question 15	Influencer 1+2	What do you think, how important is credibility and authenticity? What do you do in order to be credible and authentic?
	Company	How important are credibility and

	Agency	authenticity of beauty Bloggers? What do you think is credible and authentic?
	User	
Question 16	**Influencer 1+2**	Do you think there is a conflict between the credibility of Bloggers and the cooperation with an agency or a company since there are many persons in the background who help to conceive and implement a campaign and not only the Influencer?
	Company	Do you think there is a conflict between the credibility of Bloggers and the cooperation with your company? How much co-determination do Influencers have regarding the planning process and the implementation of the content?
	Agency	Do you think there is a conflict between the credibility of Bloggers and the cooperation with your agency since there are many persons in the background who help to conceive and implement a campaign and not only the Influencer?
Question 17	**Influencer 1+2**	Which criteria does an agency or a company need to meet so that you enter a cooperation with them?
	Company	Which criteria do beauty Bloggers need to meet so that you enter a cooperation with them?
	Agency	
Question 18	**Agency**	Do you think that cooperation with prestigious companies are important for Influencers?
	User	How important are cooperation of Bloggers with prestigious companies?
Question	**Influencer**	Do you think that insights into your

19	**1+2**	private life contribute to your success?
	User	How important are insights into the private life of Bloggers you follow?
Question 20	**Influencer 1+2**	Do you have an education or special know-how in the field of beauty? How did you acquire your knowledge?
	Company **Agency**	What level of know-how and expertise do beauty Bloggers need to have so that you enter a cooperation with them?
	User	How important are know-how and expertise of beauty Influencers?
Question 21	**Influencer 1+2** **Company** **Agency** **User**	What do you think makes up a successful Influencer in the field of beauty?
Question 22	**Influencer 1+2** **Company** **Agency** **User**	What do you think how Influencer Marketing will develop in the future? Do you have wishes and improvement suggestions?

Appendix 2: Interview Summary

Question Number	Asked Persons	Question & Answer
Question 1		**How did you start blogging? Why did you decide to mainly produce content around the topic Beauty?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➤ came to blogging through a friend who also is a famous photography and art blogger ➤ is well informed in the field of beauty due to a lot of research ➤ at the time not many cool and modern beauty blogs with professional photographic material available ➤ blog as a compensation for the exhausting job as a PR manager ➤ a lot of valuable contacts to other beauty bloggers who introduced her to important brands due to her job as PR manager --> blog became her career pretty fast ➤ beauty is her passion since she is concerned with it in her private life, e.g. when she had damaged hair or blemished skin
	Influencer 2 Talisa Minoush Garbsch	➤ started blogging at the age of 19 about 9 years ago ➤ at that time mainly blogged about fashion for instance OOTD pictures with clothes from H&M or Zara ➤ continued blogging while studying drama

		➢ started YouTube channel in 2011 and then mainly focused on beauty and care ➢ since 2016 specialized in natural cosmetics and sustainability in the field of beauty and lifestyle
		Why does your company enter cooperations with beauty Influencers? How does the cooperation proceed?
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ Influencer Marketing is currently the most effective marketing tool, it is even more important than traditional advertising and will become even more relevant in the future ➢ cooperations with Influencers in order to position the company and create brand awareness by reaching new fans and thus potential customers ➢ when working together with Influencers we first thoroughly research to find Bloggers whose reach, professionalism and personality matches Flaconi --> decision conforms with a catalogue of selection criteria ➢ after the decision making Flaconi contacts the chosen Influencers and hopes that they also want to enter a cooperation
		What is the concept of your agency for Blogger Relations? How does the cooperation between you and

		Influencers proceed?
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➢ our agency mainly processes requests of Influencers who want to work with us ➢ if Influencers fit in our agency, we include them in our file and procure them cooperations with relevant companies ➢ every cooperation and campaign has a separate contract ➢ the remuneration of Influencers is calculated based on many factors for instance the reach on Instagram, the length of a blogpost and the amount of links and included pictures, the engagement rate of the community
Question 2		**Which advantages provides your agencies for Bloggers? Which advantages provides your agencies for companies?**
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➢ helping the Influencers to generate new cooperations and thus satisfies economical interests ➢ provide assistance in legal and organizational matters ➢ support Influencers with expertise in order to keep and extend the number of community members ➢ time saving due to handing over administrative expenses ➢ supportive function due to expertise and professional know-how when

		choosing Influencers
		➢ offering holistic support during the process of brand development, expansion of reach and launch of products
		➢ SEO Optimization due to backlink integration
Question 3		**Which Social Media channels do you mainly use to upload content and why? What do you think is the most popular channel among your community?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➢ due to the fast-moving time community prefers Instagram as it is the channel where users can consume many information in a short time
		➢ when asking on Insta story if a topic should be presented on the blog or o Instagram, most of the users vote for the shortened version on Instagram --> but there are still faithful readers who enjoy a long and detailed blogpost
		➢ beauty is a topic which needs lots of explanation therefore the blog is an important tool to introduce new topics
		➢ loves to take professional pictures and to write extensive texts so favorite communication channels are the Blog, Instagram and Pinterest --> still knows that the sources of information and media are going through a change
	Influencer 2	➢ loves to post on Instagram and

	Talisa Minoush Garbsch	YouTube ➢ Facebook has never been a favorite medium and is not relevant anymore ➢ community also likes Instagram and YouTube since they prefer visual representation and moving pictures in form of Insta-Stories and YouTube videos
		Which Social Media channels do you think are the best for successful Influencer Marketing and why?
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ Instagram the most important and most popular channel among the online community ➢ thus Instagram ensures a wide reach ➢ Insta-Stories became more popular as it combines the advantages of YouTube and Instagram --> moving pictures in a short video ➢ After Instagram comes YouTube and then blogs with a faithful and stable readership ➢ Facebook irrelevant
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➢ depends on the product which should be advertised and on the preferences of the customers ➢ editorial blogpost are suitable for product which need a lot of explanation --> moreover blogs have a high engagement rate and provide a trustworthy atmosphere thus they also have a community which most likely purchases the advertised products

		➢ Instagram helps to build brand awareness, attracts attention and causes emotional attachment ➢ Facebook only integrated in order to ensure the share function, otherwise not relevant
		Which Social Media channels do you use the most?
	User Katharina Pocha	➢ uses Instagram most times of the day in order to check what friends and family are doing and to get current news ➢ but mainly consumes beauty content from YouTube --> watches Tutorials and other videos --> Instagram then only has a supportive role to be up to date and look at pictures of makeup and hair looks on a daily basis ➢ reads a few beauty blogs and also uses Instagram to have a daily update on the Blogger as YouTube content and blogposts were not updated on a daily basis ➢ does rarely use Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest
Question 4		**How have you heard from the beauty Influencers you follow?**
	User Katharina Pocha	➢ different ways ➢ some YouTubers in the field of beauty have been suggested from YouTube and then subscribed ➢ sometimes follows Influencers because they worked together with

		already known Beauty Bloggers
		➢ a few Influencers became known due to appearances in the media
		➢ purposely looked up new Beauty Influencers
Question 5		**After which criteria do you decide if you subscribe to a channel of a Blogger?**
	User Katharina Pocha	➢ first watches videos, posts and pictures and decides if a Blogger is likable and authentic
		➢ moreover likes when Bloggers have a special feature like special talent in makeup and explanation, extreme humor or a funny pet --> recognition value
		➢ most of the user already know how to apply mascara and lipstick thus they are looking for entertainment when following a beauty Blogger
Question 6		**Which type of content do you preferably produce and why? What do you think prefer your subscribers?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➢ loves to take and upload photos along with blogposts as beauty is a really visual topic
		➢ beauty looks are great to arrange it in an aesthetic setting
		➢ also likes to write detailed blogpost
		➢ will integrate more videos on social media channels in the future as the trend on Social Media tends to

		moving pictures --> saves time when users do not have to read long texts but get all important information out of a video --> followers give positive feedback on Insta-Story as they are able to understand each step of a makeup look or the application of a product when they are presented in a video
	Influencer 2 Talisa Minoush Garbsch	➢ likes every kind of content ➢ likes to express herself in pictures as every Influencer or Blogger is also a kind of artist who expresses his artwork in pictures as well as in editorial and journalistic content ➢ posts on Instagram in form of Insta-Stories and on YouTube since videos deliver all important information in detail ➢ recently discovered podcast as form of expression ➢ followers prefer moving pictures in form of Insta-Stories on the one hand as they concisely provide all crucial information and thus fit into the fast-moving time ➢ well researched YouTube videos on the other hand since they provide detailed information
		Which type of content do you prefer when following a beauty Blogger?
	User	➢ mostly likes videos especially

	Katharina Pocha	tutorials which present a extravagant look or technique ➤ also likes favorites videos in which the Blogger introduces his favorite brands and products in order to get recommendations
Question 7		**Do you only produce beauty content or do you also integrate topics from other subject areas (e.g. fashion, travel, interior, food)?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➤ pure beauty blog but also interested in further topics such as fashion --> tries to subtle integrate content and trends of other topics into her posts but beauty is still present --> likes to travel and want her community to take part in it but would never write a blogpost which is only about travelling --> instead she writes a post which describes the best beauty spots or spa hotels of her destination and thus creates an added value in the field of beauty ➤ also likes to post about fashion but always in connection with beauty, for example which hairstyle goes with which accessories ➤ would never post completely off-topic but thinks that beauty and fashion belong together as trends in beauty are most of the time also trends in fashion
	Influencer 2	➤ started with general beauty content

	Talisa Minoush Garbsch	but now also has a huge interest in natural cosmetics and the relevant brands ➢ moreover uploads content which is critical of society for instance in the field of sustainability, veganism, and environment protection ➢ also uploads content which critical deals with Social Media --> controversial as she is part of the Social Media universe but --> nevertheless wants to reflect her own behavior and draw attention to problems
		When entering a cooperation, do you prefer Influencers who create content from different topics in order to ensure some kind of variety or is it important to you that they are pure beauty Bloggers?
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ Flaconi does not have special preferences and likes a mixture of content but also pure beauty Bloggers --> the content is not the crucial factor but rather the personality of the Influencer and the quality of the content ➢ if Bloggers create content of different topics, beauty should definitely be one of them
		Do you want Beauty Bloggers to produce content from other topics than beauty? If yes, which topics

		would be interesting for you?
	User Katharina Pocha	➤ mainly follows beauty Bloggers to consume content in the field of beauty but lies it if a Blogger also uploads content of different topics as it constitutes variety ➤ when integrating content of different topics the Influencer opens to his community and shows some more facets ➤ likes travel vlogs, and fashion, interior and decoration tips as people who are creative in applying makeup are most of the time also creative when it comes to interior design or fashion
Question 8		**Do you upload content on a regular basis? How do you decide at what intervals you post (adapted to the requirements of the users/companies/agencies or only when you have something interesting to share)?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➤ two to three blogposts a week --> it is possible to upload content on a daily basis but likes to write well researched texts as beauty needs a lot of explanation, especially when writing about ingredients or complicating scientific topics ➤ posts more regular on Social Media channels --> at least once a day but on interesting days with a lot of events

		sometimes two times
	Influencer 2 Talisa Minoush Garbsch	➢ uploads are not random but strategic ➢ usually posts at least one picture a day on Instagram and creates an Insta-Story ➢ uploads videos on YouTube three times a month --> due to the redesign of the concept and corporate identity of the channel which is really time consuming the regularity of posts varies
		How important are regular uploads in form of pictures, posts and videos for successful Influencer Marketing? How regular should uploads be in order to be seen as adequate? Do you require your cooperation partners to post in certain intervals?
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ usually Flaconi works campaign driven throughout the year and enters Blogger cooperations in this context ➢ most of the time Flaconi pays for one post and maybe an Instagram-Story --> it is not that the Bloggers have two upload a particular amount of posts during a limited period of time ➢ if Flaconi enters a cooperations for instance on Valentine's Day they of course want the Influencers to upload a post in the course of the campaign not before or after ➢ if Flaconi would work product-

		specific they would also want the Bloggers to post several times after the launch of a new product in order to increase the sales
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➢ very important to upload on a regular basis as this keeps the community engaged and binds them to the Influencers ➢ posts on Instagram should be every two days and in-between Insta-Story-Uploads
		How important are regular uploads in form of pictures, posts and videos for you? How regular should uploads be in order to be seen as adequate?
	User Katharina Pocha	➢ not important that Bloggers post pictures and status post on Instagram, Facebook and Co. on a daily basis even though it probably contributes to a stronger relationship between the Blogger and the community ➢ since mainly using YouTube --> expects video uploads at least once a week, better would be twice ➢ irregularities should be justified
Question 9		**Have you ever purchased a beauty product just because a Blogger drew attention to it or recommended it? Is it of particular importance if the content has been sponsored or not?**
	User	➢ bought several product after a beauty

	Katharina Pocha	Blogger recommended them in a video, but only in a video as the presentation helped to become aware of the product and to see how it performed
		➢ trusts the know-how and the recommendation of the Influencer
		➢ would never buy something when it would only be mentioned in a post or on a picture
		➢ would also not buy a product if not convinced of the product when it is used by the Blogger or criticized
		➢ does not matter if it is a sponsored recommendation or not --> hopes that the Influencers are professional enough to only enter a cooperation with a company or brand when he is really convinced of the product and likes the application
		➢ would not even follow an Influencer if he seems to be unauthentic or corruptible
Question 10		**How important do you think is the communication and interaction with your followers?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➢ really important
		➢ if the community would not give any input if they are interested in topics or if they would not give feedback then the blog would not exist anymore
		➢ when operating a professional blog an Influencer cannot just rely on the own

		preferences but needs to show interest in what the community wants to see or read ➢ contact with the community is crucial in order to create proper content ➢ likes to answer comments of her followers since she thinks it helps to encourage them to give further input ➢ contact with the followers contributes to the growth of a community and a blog
		How important do you think is the communication and interaction of Influencers with their followers?
	User Katharina Pocha	➢ is a silent follower and does not comment a lot ➢ only likes posts ➢ nevertheless likes to read answers of the Influencers on comments of other users or if the Influencer addresses answers to the whole community in a following posts
Question 11		**How do Bloggers contact you? Or did you develop a particular system to acquire Bloggers, e.g. Social Media Monitoring?**
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ we contact suitable Influencers or rather their management after a detailed and themed Social Media research and a look at the industry as there are a lot of Influencers for several topics, e.g. natural cosmetics, hair, high end products

		➤ there are also many Bloggers who contact Flaconi as they are interested in a cooperation --> in such cases Flaconi looks at the profiles and public appearances of the Influencers and examines if there are suitable campaigns --> if not the Influencers are included in a database so that we can contact them if we found a cooperation
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➤ daily enquiries from many interested Influencers ➤ already have many Influencers who are suitable for mainstream content ➤ thus only accept request from Influencer who can be used for niche cooperations
Question 12		**What do you think about the approach to pay Influencers based on the communication level and engagement rate of their community and not for the amount of their subscribers? Do you aim for a huge community and a wide reach (Macro-Influencer) or do you rather want to have a smaller community which consist of a proportionally large target group (Micro-Influencer)?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➤ from the marketing point and also as Blogger companies and brands should ensure that their cooperation partners are really what they pretend to be

		➢ on this account it is better to have a smaller community which is real and has a high engagement --> especially small Bloggers have a community which asks a lot of questions and are highly interested in the content of the Blogger
		➢ Social Media Superstars have a more anonymous community and cooperations can get lost on such huge accounts and thus do not get the required attention
		➢ communicative community is more important than a wide reach
		➢ it is a better starting situation for brands when the readers or subscribers are interested in the uploaded content and thus in the campaign
	Influencer 2 Talisa Minoush Garbsch	➢ good approach to not only pay attention to the reach of an Influencer but also have a look at the engagement rate
		➢ the quantity of the followers does not say a lot about the quality
		➢ if smaller Bloggers have a well researched blog with journalistic content and thus provide a basis for a good communication to their community then they should also be paid properly
		➢ Especially Bloggers who operate a blog in a niche segment have not the

		possibility to generate as many followers as Bloggers of a commercial blog
		➢ everyone who has a communicative community and a high-quality blog should be paid enough to earn a living
		➢ also prefers a community who is interested in her content and gets an added value out of the blog thus wants to remain a Micro-Influencer
		Do you prefer cooperations with Micro-Influencers or with Macro-Influencers, the so called "Social Media Superstars"? Why?
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ prefer the dimension of at least 10,000 followers --> more followers are as disadvantageous as less followers thus Micro-Influencers are the better cooperation partners as they are approachable, have a closer relationship to their community and thus a higher engagement rate
		➢ Influencers who test the products, stand behind them and interact with their community are more important than a wide reach
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➢ depends on the project but rather prefer Micro-Influencers as they have a closer relationship to their followers and thus generate a higher engagement rate
		➢ do not like to work with Social Media Superstars with more than 500,000

		subscribers as they have unrealistic salary expectations which the companies are not willing to pay --> even though they can be a figurehead with a representative function for huge concerns which can afford them
Question 13		**How do you measure the success of a Blogger cooperation? Are there particular KPIs that you consider?**
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ measure the success of a campaign with the help of several KPIs, e.g. the brand awareness, sales numbers and click rates
Question 14		**Do you want your subscribers to see you as a star/idol or do you rather want to be approachable like a friend?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➢ does not want to be unapproachable for her followers so that they do not dare to contact her ➢ wants to inspire her community to have fun with makeup and be seen as a friend
	Influencer 2 Talisa Minoush Garbsch	➢ wants to be approachable and not a star ➢ is aware of her reach and thus wants to inspire her community to dare changes and constitute a role model ➢ likes to show that Influencers are also just human beings ➢ wants her followers to communicate with her and give feedback an her

		content
Question 15		**What do you think, how important is credibility and authenticity? What do you do in order to be credible and authentic?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➢ most important attribute of a Blogger ➢ just enters a cooperation when she is totally convinces of the product and the brand ➢ already refused paid cooperations as she did not like a product after testing it and did not want to mention or recommend it on her blog ➢ rather has less cooperations, works with brands she is convinced of and is credible and authentic
	Influencer 2 Talisa Minoush Garbsch	➢ is just herself and does not pretend to be someone else to be authentic ➢ of course is aware of the importance to sell herself but never at the cost of credibility and authenticity
		How important are credibility and authenticity of beauty Bloggers? What do you think is credible and authentic?
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ those to characteristics are extremely important ➢ Flaconi likes strong characters who stand for something and are authentic ➢ also attributes the customers like and thus ease the cooperation
	Agency Marco	➢ highest premise ➢ only accepting cooperations which

	Podavka for Bloggerkartei	suit to a Blogger regardless of the remuneration ➢ no cooperations with more than one brand or different products from competitors at the same time
	User Katharina Pocha	➢ very important, most important characteristic of a successful Influencer ➢ authenticity strongly contributes to the sympathy of a Blogger ➢ not so naive as to believe that every Influencer is honest all the time --> Influencers sometimes only pretend to be credible and authentic --> but if they are good at it helps them to sell themselves and products ➢ Bloggers are authentic and credible if they are able to admit faults and have a critical attitude towards the products and brands they advertise ➢ yes-men and people who pretend to be perfect all the time are unauthentic
Question 16		**Do you think there is a conflict between the credibility of Bloggers and the cooperation with an agency or a company since there are many persons in the background who help to conceive and implement a campaign and not only the Influencer?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➢ it is true that during a cooperation a lot of people work in the background and help to realize the campaign

		➢ until now was always fortunate to never work together with a company that told her how to implement a product or brand into her content --> to regulations regarding any keywords that have to be mentioned
		➢ free space is the key to authenticity and credibility
		➢ only worked together with brands from which she knew that she would like the products and was free in creating texts and pictures --> enables her to give honest her opinion, recommendations and tips
		➢ most of the reputable brands do not want to work together with Influencers who just constitute an advertising space but give honest feedback
		➢ it can always happen that a product is not convincing and gets bad critique so that the brand does not want the Influencer to publish the created content --> products do not work the same for everyone --> better then becoming unreliable when publishing an dishonest article
		➢ but there are for sure Influencers who do not carefully select their cooperation partners and then post dishonest reviews
	Influencer 2 **Talisa**	➢ depends on the Blogger
		➢ for her there is no conflict but she

	Minoush Garbsch	rather thinks that valuable posts can be created when working together with a well selected and researched brand or agency
		➢ if it is a cooperation with a company she knows, she does not need to think about it a lot
		Do you think there is a conflict between the credibility of Bloggers and the cooperation with your company? How much co-determination do Influencers have regarding the planning process and the implementation of the content?
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ as Flaconi does not pick the products for the Influencers but lets them chose from all the products in the shop there should not be a conflict between the cooperation and the credibility
		➢ Bloggers do not struggle to give positive feedback on an imposed product which they do not like or would never use
		➢ Flaconi not producer-driven and thus can ensure a high degree of authenticity
		Do you think there is a conflict between the credibility of Bloggers and the cooperation with your agency since there are many persons in the background who help to conceive and implement a campaign and not only the

		Influencer?
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➢ difficult situation as the company requests need to be fulfilled --> companies want to have co-determination rights in choosing pictures and in creating the content on the one hand and Influencers want to be seen as independent artists and have creative free space on the other hand ➢ agency constitutes a mediator and co-creator of the campaign in order to represent the interests of the customer (company) but still ensure that the Influencers feel good with the campaign ➢ thus the credibility remains ➢ main task of the agency is to coordinate the campaign and develop a strategy draft --> the responsibility of the implementation lays with the Bloggers --> Agency slightly steps in case of serious mistakes
Question 17		**Which criteria does an agency or a company need to meet so that you enter a cooperation with them?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➢ only worked together with brands from which she knew that she would like the products and was free in creating texts and pictures --> enables her to give honest her opinion, recommendations and tips
	Influencer 2	➢ does an in-depth research on potential

	Talisa Minoush Garbsch	cooperation partners ➢ pays attention to the public appearance and the values of a company --> were there any scandals in the past? For what does the company stand? Are the products cruelty free and vegan?
		Which criteria do beauty Bloggers need to meet so that you enter a cooperation with them?
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ reach of 10,000 followers ➢ expertise in a particular topic, e.g. care and decorative cosmetics as cooperations are not just the simple presentation of a product in front of a camera ➢ true passion for beauty ➢ cooperation with Bloggers who carefully selected their previous cooperations and just work with brands that match them --> Flaconi does not work with sheer advertising spaces ➢ Flaconi lets the Influencers chose a product they like --> thus Influencers are able to act according to their own values and advertise products authentically ➢ wants Influencers to produce high quality content such as atmospheric high-definition photos, well researched editorial content ➢ Influencers should be authentic and

		➢ approachable cooperation partners not artificial advertisers ➢ Influencers should be strong personalities with stable values ➢ Influencers should concentrate on natural beauty and not overly dramatic makeup
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➢ high-definition image quality ➢ authenticity ➢ good KPIs such as reach, engagement rate, likes, comments and impressions ➢ soft skills like reliability, punctuality and professionalism
Question 18		**Do you think that cooperation with prestigious companies are important for Influencers?**
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➢ good references are valuable ➢ the better the reference in form of a cooperation with a prestigious company the higher the market value of the Influencer and the more other companies are interested in a cooperation with the Influencer
		How important are cooperation of Bloggers with prestigious companies?
	User Katharina Pocha	➢ it is good if a beauty Influencer works together with prestigious beauty company that matches their values ➢ on the one hand beauty Bloggers can be suitable brand ambassadors who advertise products of beauty brands ➢ on the other hand if beauty Bloggers

		have a special talent for e.g. eye makeup I think it is a great opportunity for them to launch an eye shadow palette with a prestigious beauty brand ➤ cooperations should always be authentic and credible
Question 19		**Do you think that insights into your private life contribute to your success?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➤ insights in the private life can help an Influencer to have success as the natural bent of most of the people is to be curious ➤ everyone is interested in the life of others ➤ the more personal and private moments a Blogger shares the more interest have the followers --> helps to build a stronger relationship and become approachable ➤ Influencers need to decide what they want to share and what they want to keep private ➤ likes to keep moments with the family and friends private ➤ thinks that brands also like Influencers who show their private site and are not professional and formal all the time ➤ showing flaws makes Bloggers approachable and the community can identify with them

	Influencer 2 Talisa Minoush Garbsch	➢ insights in the private life can help an Influencer to have success as the natural bent of most of the people is to be curious and sensation-seeking --> private posts satisfy such needs ➢ likes to keep her private life private and does not upload pictures or videos which show her apartment or her boyfriend just to generate additional clicks
		How important are insights into the private life of Bloggers you follow?
	User Katharina Pocha	➢ curious person thus likes if Bloggers show private insights as this kind of differentiates them from normal celebrities ➢ makes Influencers approachable and it is easier to identify with them ➢ of course everyone has the right of privacy but a little bit openness is likable
Question 20		**Do you have an education or special know-how in the field of beauty? How did you acquire your knowledge?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➢ does not have school-based education ➢ thinks it can be advantageous to grow with the community and educate together by researching and practicing on the one hand or already have all the knowledge due to a special education and thus function as an expert on the other hand

		➢ information available all over the internet thus it is easy to acquire further knowledge and skills
	Influencer 2 Talisa Minoush Garbsch	➢ does not have special education in beauty ➢ acquired knowledge and know-how through a lot of research and practicing ➢ developed with her community ➢ has education in cutting techniques and editing which helps a lot when creating content
		What level of know-how and expertise do beauty Bloggers need to have so that you enter a cooperation with them?
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ Flaconi does not a special education from their Influencers --> awareness level, the long-standing involvement of beauty products and trends on their blog and know-how acquired through research, practice and experience is more important ➢ only necessary to transport knowledge through editorial texts, pictures and posts
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➢ technical know-how is advantageous but not necessary ➢ brand ambassador appears more natural and credible when he knows what to do ➢ credibility and authenticity are more important than technical knowledge

		How important are know-how and expertise of beauty Influencers?
	User Katharina Pocha	➤ not crucial for beauty Influencers to have a professional education in makeup and hair as it is possible to acquire knowledge autodidactic ➤ it is important that Influencers have knowledge on application methods, brands, techniques, products and the newest trends
Question 21		**What do you think makes up a successful Influencer in the field of beauty?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➤ successful beauty Influencers need to have a special knowledge in beauty that they can share with their community in order to create an added value ➤ users follow a Blog because of atmospheric and high-quality pictures or because a Blogger writes interesting blogposts but a community usually wants to benefit from the relationship ➤ Bloggers can keep and increase their community when sharing tips and know-how that the followers can apply in their everyday life
	Influencer 2 Talisa Minoush Garbsch	➤ authenticity is an important characteristic of Influencers regardless of the industry ➤ a successful Influencer needs to have a unique personality and should also

		create unique content based on a unique expertise to stand out from the crowd ➤ Influencers should have a special visual language in their pictures and a thoughtful Corporate Identity in form of color and filter selection which is constantly present on all channels ➤ a pleasant voice as well as intonation and an attractive appearance also lead to followers who like to listen and watch to uploads on a regular basis ➤ mimic and gesture must be taken into account as Instagram with daily picture uploads and Inst-Story as well as YouTube become more and more important
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		➢ watch to uploads on a regular basis ➢ mimic and gesture must be taken into account as Instagram with daily picture uploads and Inst-Story as well as YouTube become more and more important
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➢ naturalness, authenticity, honesty, reliability, fair prices, striving for a long-term relationship
	User Katharina Pocha	➢ a successful Influencer needs to have a unique characteristic and a special talent for makeup ➢ if Influencers see makeup as an artistic expression and not only as a daily force to earn money or look better has good chances to become successful ➢ moreover videos and post should have a learning factor and a lot of humor in order to create an added value --> life is serious enough, make up should be fun
Question 22		**What do you think how Influencer Marketing will develop in the future? Do you have wishes and improvement suggestions?**
	Influencer 1 Elina Neumann	➢ Influencer Marketing will still be an exciting topic in the future ➢ perhaps new apps or platforms appear on which internet users can listen to podcasts or watch videos without having to read anything

		➢ improvement suggestion is that brands should more thoroughly prove the Influencers with whom they enter a cooperation --> is he or she credible and authentic, doe he or she the match the values of the brand, does the community have a good engagement rate ➢ companies often invest a lot in cooperations with Influencers and sometimes the cooperation has no more added value for the brand than a pretty Instagram picture
	Influencer 2 **Talisa** **Minoush** **Garbsch**	➢ Influencer Marketing will become more and more important regardless of the industry --> has not reached the zenith yet ➢ Influencers replace journalists, models and famous celebrities in many areas as they are in demand and people can relate to them ➢ most of the brands recognized the extreme potential of Influencer Marketing and integrate it more in their marketing and communication activities ➢ suggestions for the future are that Influencers should be aware of their reach and Influence and use it with carefully and useful for instance by identifying social issues or address topics like environment or animal protection --> not just aiming for

		more clicks, paid cooperations and an increasing community
	Company Talisa Minoush Garbsch for Flaconi	➢ Influencer Marketing will become more and more important regardless of the industry --> has not reached the zenith yet ➢ Influencers replace journalists, models and famous celebrities in many areas as they are in demand and people can relate to them ➢ most of the brands recognized the extreme potential of Influencer Marketing and integrate it more in their marketing and communication activities ➢ suggestions for the future are that Influencers should be aware of their reach and Influence and use it with carefully and useful for instance by identifying social issues or address topics like environment or animal protection --> not just aiming for more clicks, paid cooperations and an increasing community
	Agency Marco Podavka for Bloggerkartei	➢ Influencer Marketing still a growing market ➢ becomes more important that brands only enter a cooperation with Influencers who match regarding credibility, community, values and suitability of the advertised product ➢ Social Media will remain the most important communication channel for

		Influencer Marketing and new channels will come along
	User Katharina Pocha	➢ Influencers will further capture the market and constitute idols for fans of makeup, travel, food, fashion and more
		➢ additionally that more Influencers will have their own products in cooperation with prestigious companies or their own brands in the future
		➢ suggestions for Influencer Marketing from the view of the customers: more tolerance and less hate in the comment section of all platforms
		➢ suggestions for Influencer Marketing from the view of the companies: brands should more thoroughly prove the Influencers with whom they enter a cooperation regarding credibility, community, values and suitability of the advertised product
		➢ suggestions for Influencer Marketing from the view of the Influencers: Influencers should also thoroughly prove their cooperation partners and thus radiate more authenticity and credibility --> moreover the content should remain creative and innovative and fun should be more important than remuneration

Statutory Declaration

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