

Call for Papers

Under the Influence:

A Comprehensive Look at Social Media Influencers

German Communication Association DGPuK Advertising Communication Division

6 – 8 October 2022 Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Social media influencer (SMI) marketing is one of the fastest growing marketing tools. With the help of social media, digital stars give their followers an insight into their daily lives and share with them experiences and opinions from their everyday lives and talk about a wide range of topics (De Veirman et al., 2017). Advertisements for products and services also appear repeatedly in their content, and thus social media influencers (SMIs) act as independent third parties who promote brands on social media. They are seen by their followers as a source of entertainment and inspiration, and therefore have some persuasive power on their audience (De Veirman et al., 2019). SMIs have multiple promotional roles (Campbell & Grimm, 2020). They are content creators, moderators, protagonists, and strategic communicators (Enke & Borchers, 2019) who post in exchange for compensation (Campbell & Grimm, 2019). SMIs create embedded promotional content where the line between commercial and non-commercial content is very blurred and thus their content is not always clearly identifiable as advertising.

Research on SMI marketing, which provides detailed insights into its value, use, and effectiveness, has developed significantly in recent years (Hudders et al., 2020). A robust body of scholarship has been developed that focuses on sponsorship disclosure and the effectiveness of SMI marketing. However, given the emergence of a new generation of SMIs and the success of new platforms (e.g., TikTok), this area faces new developments that are occurring very rapidly. New insights on this topic are therefore needed, focusing on SMI as a source of communication, on different types of messages and channels, and on the effectiveness of

influencer marketing. In their comprehensive literature review of SMIs, Hudders et al. (2020) identified several areas that should be considered research gaps. Accordingly, this call for papers aims to address, but is not limited to, the following research perspectives:

- Studies that shed light on the professionalization of influencer marketing and consider the perspectives of influencer agencies, advertisers, and the SMIs themselves
- The role of SMIs not only in commercial advertising campaigns, but also in political and social campaigns and how SMIs influence social behavior change (e.g., by promoting sustainable products and behaviors)
- Studies that consider a cross-platform approach and give insights on platforms such as TikTok, Telegram, Twitch, etc.
- Messaging strategies in influencer marketing
- The challenges of (trans)-parasocial relationships
- SMIs and virtual reality

Submissions that incorporate cross-disciplinary and/or methodological perspectives are especially welcome.

Additional Open Call:

Additionally, there will be an open panel for each organizing division of the German Communication Association DGPuK (*Advertising Communication Division*). Submissions for the open panel should be clearly marked as such on the title page and follow the same guidelines as the extended abstracts described below regarding length and submission date.

Submissions:

Extended Abstracts (anonymized) in English (**max. 1.000 words** excluding references) should be sent to smiconference@fspac.ro as a pdf-file. Please send a separate pdf-file designated “Title Page” including the topic designation (“Call” or “Open Call”) and author’s/authors’ details.



Deutsche Gesellschaft für Publizistik- und Kommunikationswissenschaft e.V.

Deadline:

The deadline for submissions is 01.06.2022. Notification of acceptance will be sent to authors by mid-August. The **conference** will take place from **6.-8.10.2022** in **Cluj-Napoca (Romania)**. Attendance fees for the conference in October will be 40€.

Contact:

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the organizers Brigitte Naderer (brigitte.naderer@ifkw.lmu.de) and Alice Binder (Alice.Binder@aau.at) for the *Advertising Communication Division*.

Please direct questions regarding the conference location, traveling, and accommodations at Delia Balaban (balaban@fspac.ro).

References:

- Boerman, S. C., Helberger, N., van Noort, G. & Hoofnagle, C. J. (2018a). Sponsored blog content: What do the regulations say: And what do bloggers say. *Journal of Intellectual Property, Information Technology and Electronic Commerce Law*, 9(2), 146-159.
- Campbell, C., & Farrell, J. R. (2020). More than meets the eye: The functional components underlying influencer marketing. *Business Horizons*, 63(4), 469-479.
- Campbell, C., & Grimm, P. E. (2019). The challenges native advertising poses: Exploring potential federal trade commission responses and identifying research needs. *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, 38(1), 110-123.
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- De Veirman, M., Hudders, L., & Nelson, M. R. (2019). What is influencer marketing and how does it target children? A review and direction for future research. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02685>
- Enke, N., & Borchers, N. S. (2019). Social media influencers in strategic communication: A conceptual framework for strategic social media influencer communication. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 13(4), 261-277.
- Hudders, L., De Pauw, P., Cauberghe, V., Panic, K., Zarouali, B., & Rozendaal, E. (2017). Shedding new light on how advertising literacy can affect children's processing of embedded advertising formats: A future research agenda. *Journal of Advertising*, 46(2), 333-349.