

IMPACTFUL KOL MARKETING FOR B2C IN SOCIAL COMMERCE: CREATE POWERFUL, VIRAL AND LONG-LASTING CAMPAIGN IN VARIOUS MEDIUM AND INDUSTRIES

Ade Nurhasanah, Dede Djuniardi
Universitas Kuningan, Indonesia
20231710011@uniku.ac.id, dede.djuniardi@uniku.ac.id

ABSTRACT

In today's digital era, marketing through Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) has become a very effective strategy in reaching a wider audience and building consumer trust. KOLs, or often known as influencers, have the unique ability to influence the purchasing decisions of their followers through the content they share on various social media platforms. This article aims to achieve significant success in KOL marketing, especially in B2C (Business-to-Consumer) in the realm of social commerce, a well-planned strategy and proper execution are required. This study uses a qualitative approach by means of an in-depth literature review related to KOL Marketing for B2C in social commerce. The results of research on Impactful KOL Marketing for B2C in Social Commerce which includes the creation of strong, viral, and sustainable campaigns across various mediums and industries and efforts to measure their impact comprehensively may not be found in many specifics. In the use of Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) for B2C marketing strategies in social commerce, it is evident that this approach has great potential to increase brand exposure, consumer engagement, and ultimately, sales.

Keywords: *KOL Marketing, B2C, Social Commerce, Viral and Long-lasting Campaign*

This article is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) 

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, marketing through Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) has become a very effective strategy in reaching a wider audience and building consumer trust. KOLs, or often known as influencers, have the unique ability to influence the purchasing decisions of their followers through the content they share on various social media platforms. In the context of Social Commerce, where social interactions and shopping transactions take place within the same platform, KOL marketing shows great potential to create campaigns that are not only high-impact, but also viral and sustainable.

The rapid growth of social media and changing consumer behavior have transformed the traditional marketing landscape. Consumers are now more likely to trust recommendations from individuals they consider experts or have credibility, compared to conventional advertising. This provides an opportunity for brands to leverage the influence of KOLs in building closer relationships with their audiences, increasing brand awareness, and driving sales.

However, to achieve significant success in KOL marketing, especially in B2C (Business-to-Consumer) in the realm of social commerce (Baharsyam & Wahyuti, 2022) (Zhao et al., 2019), a planned strategy and proper execution are needed (Lailiyah, 2023) (Meng, 2023). Campaigns should be designed to be relevant and engaging, leveraging a variety of mediums and industries to reach a wider market segment. In addition, scalability is a key factor to ensure that the positive impact of the campaign can be expanded and maintained in the long term.

This article aims to achieve significant success in KOL marketing, especially in B2C (Business-to-Consumer) in the realm of social commerce, a well-planned strategy and proper execution are required. Campaigns should be designed to be relevant and engaging, leveraging a variety of mediums and industries to reach a wider market segment. In addition, scalability is a key factor to ensure that the positive impact of the campaign can be expanded and maintained in the long term.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach by means of an in-depth literature review related to KOL Marketing for B2C in social commerce. The qualitative approach was chosen because it provides an opportunity to understand the social context, values, and perceptions that involve participants in the organizational environment (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Theories and concepts related to KOL Marketing, B2C, and Social Commerce will be the theoretical basis for this research. These theories will help in interpreting the findings of the analyzed literature and in compiling a deep understanding of the influence of KOL Marketing for B2C in social commerce by creating the power of viral and sustainable content across various media and industries.

This research aims to identify and explore the potential of KOL Marketing applied to B2C in social commerce by creating viral and sustainable content for a brand. The main focus of the research is on three main issues faced by B2C business people who apply KOL Marketing: first, the application of KOL Marketing for B2C in social commerce. Second, the effectiveness of KOL Marketing applications for B2C in social commerce and third, creating distinctive, viral and sustainable content to create brand awareness and increase product leads and conversions. By analyzing these factors, the study aims to provide in-depth insights into the internal dynamics of KOL Marketing applications for B2C and suggest the right solutions to overcome the challenges faced.

In general, the stages of making an SLR consist of 3 major parts: Planning, Conducting, and Reporting. Details of each stage are as follows:

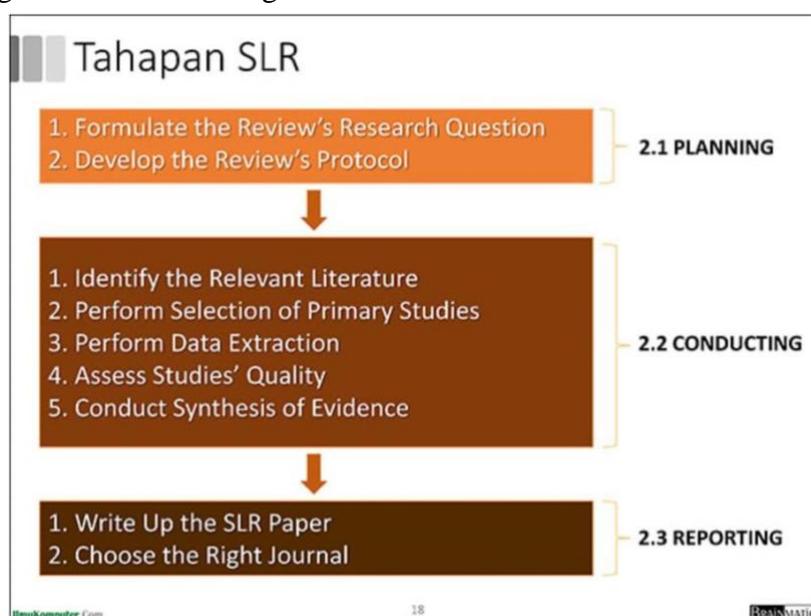


Figure 1. Stages Systematic Literature Review, Romi Satria, 2016

1. Planning

Research Questions (RQs) play an important role in initiating and guiding a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). The RQ serves as a guide for searching and extracting relevant literature (Srivastava, A. & Thomson, S.B., 2009). The results of the analysis and synthesis of data from the SLR then answer the previously determined RQ. A good RQ is one that is useful, measurable, and leads to an in-depth understanding of current research in a topic.

2. Conducting

The conducting stage in SLR involves the implementation of the SLR Protocol that has been previously determined. It starts by designing a search string based on a pre-created PICOC, and selecting a search source. The use of software such as Mendeley or Zotero is recommended for managing a large amount of literature. The literature selection strategy can be seen in the image below.

Criteria	RQ1	RQ2	RQ3	RQ4
Population or problem	Practical motivation.	Storage technologies and their key features.	Application of storage technologies in various domain.	Research issues and future direction.
Intervention or Exposure	Internal/External validation; Extracting data and synthesis.			
Comparison	Perform comparison between applications of storage tools and evaluate the storage tools on the basic of their key features.			
Outcome	Categorize big data storage technologies. Grouping their applications. Hypotheses for future research.			
Context	A systematic investigation with an exclusive focus on storage technologies and their implementation in different areas.			

Define objective and scope of SLR via PICOC criteria

Figure 2. PICOC criteria to scope and define SLR (Muhammad Imran, 2021)

After collecting literature, the next step is to filter it by creating inclusion and exclusion criteria. This helps to select relevant literature. For example, we can include literature published in the last 5 years and exclude those that are not available in English. In addition to paying attention to inclusion and exclusion criteria, the quality assessment of the hundreds of literature found is also important. According to Kitchenham et al. (2007), the assessment of literature quality should be based on the following five parameters:

1. Is the data analysis process appropriate?
2. Is residual and sensitivity analysis also performed?
3. Is statistical accuracy drawn from raw data?
4. How well is the comparison of the methods performed?
5. How large is the size of the dataset used in the study

The final stage after obtaining the desired literature is data extraction and information synthesis from the selected literature. The goal is to analyze and evaluate the results of research from various sources, as well as to select the most appropriate method to integrate the explanation and interpretation of the findings (Cruzes & Dyba, 2011). The synthesis process can be in the form of narrative or quantitative, such as meta-analysis. This last step is very important and requires attention to detail, because the quality of our systematic literature review will be greatly influenced by the results of the synthesis and analysis we do.

3. Reporting

Reporting involves writing the results of the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) in the form of writing, either for publication in scientific journals or as part of a Literature Review chapter in a thesis, thesis, or dissertation. The structure of SLR writing generally consists of three main parts: Introduction, Main Body, and Conclusion.

Research Questions

Research questions that can be made based on the narrative are:

RQ 1 : How does marketing through KOLs affect brand awareness in B2C social commerce and increase sales?

RQ 2 : To what extent do KOL marketing campaigns influence consumer purchasing decisions compared to traditional advertising methods?

RQ 3 : How does the level of interactivity between KOLs and their followers affect the sales conversion rate in social commerce?

RQ 4 : How does the trust and credibility of KOLs affect consumer perception and purchase intention?

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

This stage is carried out to decide whether the data found is suitable for use in SLR research or not. A study is eligible for selection if the following criteria are met:

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion	Exclusion
An article that discusses the use of KOL Marketing and its impact on brand awareness.	Literature that is not relevant to the context of KOL Marketing or the challenges faced.
Research on strategies to increase revenue through KOL Marketing in social commerce.	The study had no relationship with influencers in social commerce.
Literature that discusses viral product campaigns on social commerce.	Research that is not related to product campaigns in digital marketing.
A study that examines the sustainability of product campaigns.	Articles that only focus on the B2C aspect.

Quality Assessment

In SLR research, the data found will be evaluated based on quality assessment criteria questions including the following:

Table 2. Quality Assessment

Quality Assessment Criteria	Meet Criterion	
	Yes	Not
QA 1 Is the journal paper published in 2019-2024 time range?	√	
QA 2 Whether a journal paper is related to an issue or Problems that match the title?	√	
QA 3 Does the journal paper write a method that used to solve the issue/problem?	√	

Previous Research

Author & Year	Research Title	Research Methods	Research Results
(Jin et al., 2023) (Chen et al., 2020)	<u>Uncertain KOL selection with advertising videos circulation and KOL selection diversification in advertising promotion</u>	The limited-opportunity programming model is often referred to as Constrained Opportunity Programming (COP). This method is used to optimize a goal under a number of constraints or constraints. In the context of KOL (Key Opinion Leader) marketing for B2C (Business-to-Consumer) in social commerce, this method can be used to identify and implement the most effective marketing strategies by considering various factors and existing constraints.	By breaking the model, the study obtained an optimal solution for the selection of KOLs in advertising promotion, effectively overcoming the uncertainty in social media marketing. The effectiveness of the model is verified through numerical examples, providing decision support for decision-makers. In conclusion, the results of the study show the efficacy of the programming model of limited uncertain opportunities in optimizing the selection of KOLs and improving advertising promotion strategies in the field of social media marketing.
(Cantika & Kurnia, 2023)	<u>Suitability of Key Opinion Leader (KOL) Characteristics to NCT Dream's Effectiveness as Somethinc KOL</u>	The research methodology used in this study involves a quantitative approach to understand the influence of NCT Dream's characteristics on its effectiveness as a Key Opinion Leader (KOL) for Somethinc.	The findings of the study show that the alignment of characteristics Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs), specifically Familiarity, Trust, and Expertise, are strongly correlated with NCT Dream's effectiveness as a KOL for Somethinc. The positive influence of KOL characteristics on KOL effectiveness is statistically supported, suggesting a strong relationship between these factors. Overall, the study underscores the important role of KOLs' characteristics, such as familiarity, trust, and expertise, in driving NCT Dream's effectiveness as a KOL for Somethinc, providing valuable insights for influencer marketing campaigns.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of research on Impactful KOL Marketing for B2C in Social Commerce which includes the creation of strong, viral, and sustainable campaigns across various mediums and industries and efforts to measure their impact comprehensively may not be found in many specifics. However, some separate studies and findings can provide useful insights related to this topic. Here are some findings that could serve as a basis for further research:

A. Preparation of Effective KOL Marketing Targets and Strategies

The preparation of effective KOL Marketing targets and strategies requires a deep understanding of the target, market segmentation, user persona, and unique selling point of the product. Brand owners must do good research regarding the use of this marketing KOL, analyze the product. How much does KOL marketing need to be used on the product? Will it be beneficial? Identify the right KOLs according to the products and KOLs selected. A brief campaign that must be thought out carefully so that the message can be conveyed properly according to the target and leads. Then use a redesigned matrix to measure the

success of the campaign. According to (Lane Keller, 2013), Effective Brand Ambassadors are those who have a good fit with the brand and can be trusted by the target audience. The right selection of KOLs is crucial. Identify KOLs who have an audience that matches the product's target market and has values that align with the brand. The right KOLs are those who have a strong influence and can give credibility to the product.

B. Scale it Up

Long-term contracts allow KOLs to convey a consistent message about the product. This consistency is important for building brand trust and credibility in the eyes of the audience. According to Aaker (1996), consistency in brand communication is the key to building a strong and trusted brand identity. According to Fournier (1998), the long-term relationship between consumers and brands creates a strong emotional bond, called brand relationship quality (BRQ), which is essential for brand loyalty. Long-term cooperation with KOLs that provide consistent and authentic insights into products can strengthen brand loyalty among consumers. This loyalty not only impacts increased sales but also creates loyal brand advocates. According to (Kotler & Keller, 2009), strong brand loyalty is the result of a consistent positive consumer experience with the brand, which is often reinforced through effective and authentic communication.

C. Measurement

There are three things that can be measured according to the objectives at the beginning, namely:

1. Awareness: Measuring by Analyzing Organic Reach

Awareness can be measured by analyzing the organic reach of the content published by KOLs. Organic reach reflects the number of people who view content naturally without paid ads. According to (Kotler & Keller, 2009), brand awareness is the level of consumer recognition of a brand in various situations. Organic reach is an important indicator because it shows the extent to which KOL's content reaches the target audience naturally.

2. Relationships: Measuring Chat Volume and Brand Perception

Relationships can be measured by measuring the volume of conversations (brand mentions) and brand perception. Chat volume reflects how often a brand is mentioned in online discussions, while brand perception is measured through sentiment analysis and surveys of the audience. According to Fournier (1998), the long-term relationship between consumers and brands creates a strong emotional bond. Chat volume and brand perception give an idea of the quality and intensity of these relationships.

3. Revenue/Sales: Measuring Link Clicks, Lead Volume, and Lead Quality

Revenue/sales can be measured by looking at link clicks, lead volume, and lead quality. Link clicks indicate initial interest, lead volume indicates conversion potential, and lead quality is measured through conversion rate and ROI. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), metrics such as link clicks and lead volume are important to understand the direct impact of campaigns on sales. Conversion rate and ROI give an idea of how effective a campaign is in converting leads into paying customers.

D. Detailed Research

To produce a powerful campaign, a long research process is needed for the creative idea process and campaign briefing. Based on a study from Harvard Business Review, 87% of

B2C clients prefer authentic content/organic content. Today's audience no longer believes the message from the brand.

E. Choosing the Right KOL

KOLs can be taken from internal or external companies. Internal KOLs such as the company's C-Level or employees. Meanwhile, from external sources such as journalists, business partners, government, etc. The selection of KOLs can be used as research development, because based on Forbes, 61% of B2C have difficulty finding potential KOLs. Based on research, 84% of B2Cs that successfully close are because they use referrals, such as WOM (Word of Mouth).

F. The Right Campaign Brief

Endorsement of KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders) is a tricky marketing strategy. Too much freedom on KOLs can make the campaign message ineffective, while too many rules can make the campaign unsuitable for the audience and take away the unique characteristics of the KOLs. Therefore, compiling the right campaign brief is the key to maximizing the effectiveness of using KOLs. According to Keller (2009), the balance between brand control and creative freedom can increase the authenticity and credibility of a campaign. A good campaign brief should provide clear guidance regarding the main message, but still be flexible for adjustments by KOLs. According to (Fill, 2009), a clear and comprehensive brief is essential to ensure all parties involved understand the goals and expectations of the campaign (He, 2021). The guidelines provided should allow KOLs to remain authentic while still directing the message according to the brand's objectives. By drafting the right brief campaign, companies can ensure that the use of KOLs is not wasted. A good brief should provide clear guidance while giving KOLs space to express themselves. This ensures that the campaign message is conveyed effectively and in accordance with the characteristics of the KOLs' audience.

G. Sales Through KOLs on Social Commerce Can Increase Sales & Conversions

One of the methods to increase sales can be through live shopping on social commerce such as the Tiktok platform, because with live shopping on social commerce, customers can be interested in buying by way of questions and answers/direct conversations with sellers. According to a study by Sundar and Limperos (2013), interactivity is a key element in digital media that can increase user engagement and influence purchase decisions. Live shopping leverages interactivity to answer consumer questions in real-time, provide product demos, and offer special promotions that encourage direct purchases.

H. Add Ads Feature

Some studies state that the audience prefers organic or authentic content, but there are several studies that state that in order to maximize the implementation of KOLs, it is necessary to be assisted by additional Ads features during live shopping. This is based on the emergence of followers who are not followers of the account, which is good for increasing brand awareness.

I. Challenge

The use of KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders) in marketing strategies can present several challenges that need to be considered, especially related to proper budget management and potential losses if the campaign is not successful. The use of KOLs often requires a significant budget allocation. According to the economic theory of marketing, spending on

KOLs should be considered as an investment to achieve marketing goals, such as increasing awareness, engagement, or sales (Kotler & Keller, 2016). If a marketing campaign with KOLs is not successful, the company risks losing not only financially but also reputationally. According to a study by Fornell (1992), failure in marketing can reduce consumer satisfaction and increase churn rates, which in turn can affect the long-term profitability of companies.

CONCLUSION

In the use of Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) for B2C marketing strategies in social commerce, it is evident that this approach has great potential to increase brand exposure, consumer engagement, and ultimately, sales. Careful research in choosing KOLs that are in accordance with the brand's values and vision as well as the target audience is the key to success. Long-term cooperation with KOLs not only strengthens the brand's credibility but also makes it possible to build deeper and more personal relationships with consumers. Brand management theory shows that consistency in brand communication and positive consumer experiences are important elements in building long-term loyalty. However, challenges that need to be overcome include significant budget expenditures to collaborate with KOLs and the risk that the campaign does not achieve the expected goals. However, with the right measurement of campaign performance, such as through awareness, engagement, and conversion analysis, companies can maximize the return on investment (ROI) of their KOL strategy. Thus, the use of KOLs is not only an effective marketing tool but also an integral part of efforts to build and strengthen brands in the digital era that is full of intense competition

REFERENCES

- Baharsyam, S., & Wahyuti, T. (2022). Strategy for using Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) on social media to increase brand awareness of Sania Royale Soya Oil products. *Convergence: Scientific Journal of Communication Sciences*, 3(1).
- Cantika, A. R., & Kurnia, K. (2023). The Suitability of Key Opinion Leader (KOL) Characteristics to the Effectiveness of NCT Dream as Somethinc KOL. *Prologia*, 7(1), 213–221.
- Chen, X., Ji, L., Jiang, L., Miao, S., & Shi, C. (2020). More bang for your buck: Effective kol marketing campaign in emerging short-video markets. *Available at SSRN 3655819*.
- Fill, C. (2009). *Marketing communications: interactivity, communities and content*. Pearson Education.
- He, N. (2021). The Study of KOL Marketing on the Purchase Intention of Guizhou Consumers's Beauty Brands in the Era of Self-Media. *Learning & Education*, 10(8), 119–120.
- Jin, M., Ning, Y., Liu, F., Wang, Y., & Gao, C. (2023). Uncertain KOL selection with advertising videos circulation and KOL selection diversification in advertising promotion. *Journal of Industrial & Management Optimization*, 19(2).
- Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2009). *Marketing management*. edition.
- Lailiyah, N. I. (2023). Literature Review: KOL Marketing as a Digital Marketing Strategy in the Social Era 5.0. *Journal of Business Economics Informatics*, 1055–1058.
- Lane Keller, K. (2013). *Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity*. UK: Pearson Education Limited.
- McCusker, K., & Gunaydin, S. (2015). Research using qualitative, quantitative or mixed

methods and choice based on the research. *Perfusion*, 30(7), 537–542.

Meng, H. (2023). How to Use The KOL Marketing Model in The New Era to Stimulate the Consumption of Beauty Products: Take Little Red Book as an Example. *Frontiers in Business, Economics and Management*, 7(1), 239–241.

Zhao, W., Wang, A., & Chen, Y. (2019). How to maintain the sustainable development of a business platform: a case study of Pinduoduo social commerce platform in China. *Sustainability*, 11(22), 6337.