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Social media influencers

Level: 



Let's think!

1. What is an influencer?
2. What kind of content do influencers usually create?



Influencers: Who they are and how they persuade people

1 Influencer marketing—the use of influential people to promote products and services—is a rapidly expanding industry. It is changing the way businesses reach their target customers by utilising individuals who connect well with their audiences. This advertising strategy is proving to be highly effective. Some people claim that influencer marketing produces a sixfold return on investment. Therefore, it is no surprise that over 60 percent of companies intend to increase their influencer budget next year.

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2 Brands often pay influencers hefty fees to promote their products and services through sponsored posts or advertisements in videos. That is why being an influencer has become a viable career choice. How much influencers earn depends on the size of their following. While nano-influencers with fewer than 10,000 followers can make around a couple of thousand dollars per post or advertisement, prominent influencers with over hundreds of thousands of followers can make tens of thousands of dollars.

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3 Many top influencers in Hong Kong are models, yoga instructors and celebrities. They make themselves likeable to their followers by being very charismatic on social media. They often accomplish this by sharing videos of themselves doing everyday activities like playing video games or spending time with their pets. Some influencers also openly discuss their own problems like stress and anxiety, which many of us can relate to. However, it takes years to build up a large following, and influencers have to constantly come up with

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new videos and posts. In spite of these challenges, many of them continue to see a gradual increase in their number of followers.

4 However, influencers may get in trouble sometimes. For example, an influencer may say something in their video that makes a lot of people angry. Then, news of this spreads like wildfire online, negatively impacting their image. Occasionally, the brands they promote also get pulled into the controversy. In such cases, brands are likely to cut ties with the influencer to minimise the damages to their profits. Therefore, if influencers want to maintain their popularity, they need to be careful about what they say and do.

5 In recent years, the use of Key Opinion Consumers (KOCs) has become vital to marketing companies. Unlike Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs), KOCs tend to be ordinary people whose opinions are usually based on their personal experiences. On the other hand, KOLs are often leading experts in fields such as law and banking, giving opinions based on their professional knowledge. While these people usually earn their income through their own professions, they generally have much more followers than KOCs. Yet, followers of KOCs tend to feel a personal bond with them. Followers trust KOCs because they provide honest product reviews and recommendations, which

is why they have become a valuable tool for brands to reach potential customers and persuade existing ones to remain loyal. In particular, beauty and fashion brands have increasingly preferred to use them in their marketing campaigns. This indicates a preference for authenticity and relatability. By harnessing the influence of these people, companies can expand their businesses and reap enormous returns on investment.

~500 words



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Looking into Grammar

We use the third-person singular form of the verb with singular subjects.

✓ However, **it takes** years to build up a large following ...

When the noun is uncountable, we use the third-person singular form.

✓ Then, **news** of this **spreads** like wildfire online, negatively impacting their image.

Some nouns are used as plurals only. We do not use the third-person singular form with them.

✓ Some **people claim** that influencer marketing produces a sixfold return on investment.

? Circle ONE uncountable noun and the third-person singular form of a verb in the same sentence in paragraph 1.

Read the text and answer questions 1–13. For multiple-choice questions, choose the best answer and blacken ONE circle only. (28 marks)

1. According to paragraph 1, which of the following is TRUE about influencer marketing?

- A. There is no evidence that it is useful to companies.
- B. It is not a popular marketing approach.
- C. It uses people who are interesting to audiences.
- D. Companies use it to find out what their customers want.

A B C D

2. Who does 'individuals' (line 5) refer to?

3 Find a preposition that is used to introduce the way influencers do their work.

3. According to paragraph 2, how can an influencer help brands increase sales?

4. What decides the amount of money that a brand pays to an influencer?

5. According to paragraphs 1–3, determine whether the following statements are True (T), False (F) or Not Given (NG).

	T	F	NG
(i) A company can make \$6 for every dollar it spends on an influencer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(ii) Influencers pay money for products they advertise.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(iii) The influencer with the most followers in Hong Kong is a model.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. According to paragraph 3, why do top influencers want to 'make themselves likeable to their followers' (line 19)?

- A. They want to share their lives with their followers.
- B. They want to play video games with their followers.
- C. They want to feel less stressed and anxious.
- D. They want to gain more followers.

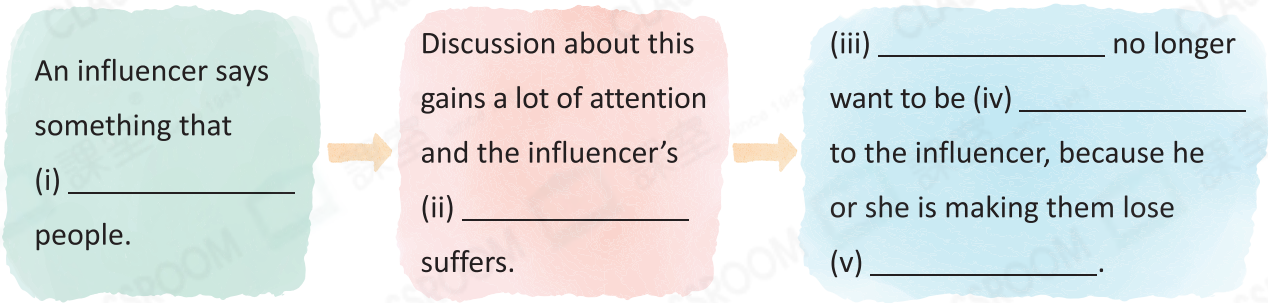
A B C D

7. Based on the information in paragraph 3, complete the summary by writing ONE word to fill in each blank. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

Influencers often spend a long time attracting thousands of (i) _____. To achieve this, they may post (ii) _____ that show them with their pets. They may also share some personal (iii) _____ with the public on social media. Since influencers need to post new content all the time, some of them find it quite (iv) _____ to keep creating content.

8. Find a word in paragraphs 2–3 which has a similar meaning to each word or phrase given below.
- (i) paid _____
 - (ii) able to be successful _____
 - (iii) able to attract other people’s attention _____
9. Find a phrase in paragraph 4 that means ‘goes around very quickly’.
- _____
10. Based on the information in paragraph 4, fill in each blank with ONE word to complete the sequence of events below. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

10 Determine the parts of speech in each blank before looking for answers in the text.



11. What do the following words refer to?

Pronoun	Line	Reference
they	(line 40)	(i) _____
ones	(line 45)	(ii) _____
them	(line 47)	(iii) _____

12. According to paragraph 5, determine whether each of the following descriptions refers to a KOL or KOC.

	KOL	KOC
(i) a well-known dentist who uses his medical knowledge to recommend a brand of toothpaste	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(ii) a woman who recommends a brand of toothpaste she is using	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(iii) a blogger who only has a handful of followers but is very close to them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. What is the main idea of paragraph 5?

- A. KOCs give their honest opinions to their followers.
- B. KOCs are now an important part of promotional campaigns.
- C. People like KOCs more than KOLs because they are authentic.
- D. Influencers help companies earn more money.

- A B C D

Vocabulary

GLOSSARY



A. Complete the speech below with the given words. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

Adjective: charismatic hefty sponsored

Noun: bond controversy investment review

Phrasal verb: come up with

Verb: persuade promote

Dealing with idol fanatics

Good morning, parents! I'm happy to share my thoughts on the (1) _____ surrounding recent trends in fan culture, and what we, as parents, can do if our children are fans themselves.

Let's begin by asking: Have you ever seen any fan activities? You may have come across

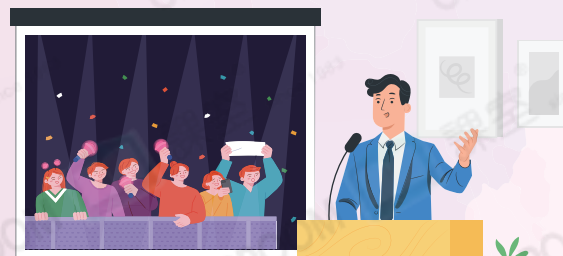
(2) _____ ice-cream vans in the street. These vans were funded by fans who wanted to provide free treats to celebrate their idol's birthday. You may have also received souvenirs that

(3) _____ an idol's new song or film. Fans believe that these activities help to make their idols more popular. Therefore, they (4) _____ ever more innovative ideas to reach this

goal. Unfortunately, there have been reports of fans paying (5) _____ fees to boost the view count of their idol's online music videos and paying people to post positive (6) _____ of their idol's work.

Some fan clubs (7) _____ teens to pay for various events with their own pocket money. These teens willingly hand out their money because they see their spending as worthwhile (8) _____. Not only that, they feel a personal (9) _____ with their idols when they take part in these activities. If your child is one of these passionate fans, how should you respond?

It's important for us to recognise that these (10) _____ idols are not threats to our children. We should allow them to take part in fan activities, while also set a limit on how much money they can spend.



B. Complete the employment advertisement below with the given words or phrases. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

Words related to social media

brainstorm

captivate

comment

fan base

platform

post

potential

trending

Stellar Media Company

We are looking for a passionate individual to assist our most popular influencer.

As an influencer's assistant, you will:

- help to create original and interesting content to (1) _____ our audience, in order to build up the number of followers to expand the (2) _____.
- work with the team to (3) _____ imaginative and clever ideas for new content.
- monitor social media (4) _____ for (5) _____ topics in order to keep our content relevant and fresh.
- upload (6) _____ to social media regularly.
- interact with our followers and fans, responding to their (7) _____.
- explore (8) _____ opportunities for our influencer to promote products for brands.

Don't hesitate. Apply now!



Writing

Do you want to be an influencer in the future? Why?

Write an article to discuss and explain why in about 180 words.