



## Trendjacking Strategies by Influencers : Their Impact on Engagement and Costumer Purchase Decisions in the Digital Era

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### ABSTRACT

This research aims to understand the impact of trendjacking strategies employed by influencers on audience engagement and consumer purchase decisions in the digital era. We used a quantitative research approach to collect data from respondents and analyze the relationship between engagement, influencer influence, and purchase decisions. The study shows that high engagement positively correlates with purchase decisions, with 70% of actively engaged respondents more likely to buy products promoted by influencers. Furthermore, influencers not only directly influence purchase decisions but also enhance audience engagement with the content they present. This study highlights the importance of authenticity and content relevance in marketing strategies and the use of trendjacking as a method to increase brand awareness and effectively influence consumer behavior. These findings provide valuable insights for marketers in designing more effective campaigns on social media platforms.

## INTRODUCTION

Social media has become a crucial platform in digital marketing due to its broad accessibility, ability to interact directly with consumers, and cost-effectiveness. Social media allows brands to reach and engage with audiences worldwide using various content formats and analytical tools. Digital marketing is a key factor to consider in ensuring customer satisfaction (Hendrayati et al., 2024). Influencers affect consumer behavior through authenticity, emotional connection, and trust, playing a significant role in effectively delivering product recommendations to a segmented audience to influence purchase decisions.

Trendjacking is a strategy where brands and influencers leverage viral trends to capture attention and increase engagement. By quickly creating content related to current trends, you can enhance awareness and engagement with your audience. Successful examples of trendjacking show a significant increase in viral potential and awareness. Viral marketing campaigns that utilize trendjacking and its influence on consumer behavior, when executed with the right strategy, can affect consumer attitudes toward a brand and increase the likelihood of purchase (Patel, A. & Kumar, R., 2018).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Definition and Concept of Trendjacking*

Trendjacking is a marketing strategy that leverages current trends and topics to increase awareness and engagement with your audience. This concept focuses on adapting branded content to popular trends, allowing it to capture the attention of a larger audience and foster engagement.

Previous research shows that audience engagement increases when content tailored to current trends is published quickly and creatively (Lee, K. & Choi, S., 2019). Trendjacking is used in social media marketing to enhance brand engagement and awareness. Earlier studies also found that brands that successfully leverage trends in a relevant and authentic manner experience a significant increase in audience engagement and brand visibility (Smith, J. & Johnson, R., 2020).

Prior research has highlighted the importance of trendjacking in boosting brand engagement and awareness. They indicate that trendjacking can be an effective strategy if executed quickly, accurately, and creatively. This study also shows that the use of trendjacking by influencers can increase audience interaction and engagement, thereby amplifying the impact of marketing campaigns. Influencers who leverage trends in a relevant and authentic way can

enhance their engagement with their audience and strengthen the effectiveness of their marketing campaigns (Brown, L. & Davis, M., 2021).

### **Key Concepts:**

- **Identifying Trends:** Identify relevant trends that might capture the attention of your target audience.
- **Content Creativity:** Create creative and relevant content aligned with current trends to attract audience attention and increase engagement.
- **Act Quickly:** Adapt and publish content swiftly to capitalize on trends before they fade.

### **Influencers**

**Definition of Influencers** An influencer is someone who has significant influence over their audience on social media or other digital platforms. They are known for their credibility, knowledge, or authority in a particular field and have the ability to influence the opinions and purchasing decisions of their followers. An influencer is someone who can sway the actions or opinions of others through authority, knowledge, or personal connections, particularly on social media. Influencers typically have a large and engaged following and can impact purchasing decisions through the content they share.

### **Types of Influencers:**

- **Celebrity Influencers:** A well-known celebrity with a large fan base who can influence an audience with their authority.
- **Macro-Influencers:** Individuals with a large audience (10,000 to 1 million followers). They are often experts or prominent figures in a specific field.
- **Micro-Influencers:** Individuals with a smaller audience (1,000–10,000 followers) but with higher engagement rates and often strong personal connections with their audience.
- **Nano-Influencers:** Individuals with a very small audience (fewer than 1,000 followers) but with very close and trusted relationships with their followers.

### **The Role and Impact of Influencers in Marketing**

Influencers play a crucial role in digital marketing by helping brands reach their audiences in a more personal and connected way. According to Hendrayati et al. (2024), collaborating with popular influencers and virtual characters in the metaverse can leverage the fame and appeal of these virtual personas to expand brand reach and deepen audience engagement.

Here are some of the key roles influencers play in marketing:

- **Enhancing Credibility and Trustworthiness:** Influencers are often perceived as more authentic and trustworthy than traditional advertising. Endorsements and reviews from influencers help brands build trust with their audience and enhance the credibility of their products and services.
- **Increasing Engagement:** Content created by influencers typically achieves higher engagement levels, including likes, shares, and comments, compared to traditional promotional content. Influencers can create deeper and more personal interactions with their audience.
- **Targeting Segmented Audiences:** Influencers enable brands to reach segmented audiences based on interests, demographics, and location. By selecting influencers relevant to their target market, brands can ensure their message reaches the right consumers.
- **Creating Creative and Engaging Content:** Influencers are often known for their ability to produce creative and engaging content. The content created by influencers is more appealing and relevant to their audience, increasing the likelihood of engagement and positive responses.
- **Boosting Brand Awareness and Sales:** Through endorsements and product promotions, influencers can increase brand awareness and drive sales. Influencer recommendations often influence consumer purchase decisions, leading to higher conversions and ROI for brands.
- **Providing Feedback and Insights:** Influencers can offer direct feedback to brands about their products and services. This provides valuable insights into consumer perceptions and helps brands make necessary improvements and adjustments.

#### **Case Studies on the Impact of Influencers in Marketing:**

- **Product Launch Campaigns:** Cosmetic brands often collaborate with beauty influencers to launch new products. Influencers create content showcasing the products, providing reviews, and offering discounts. This can lead to increased sales and heightened brand awareness.
- **Health and Fitness Campaigns:** Fitness influencers can persuade their audience to purchase health products or subscribe to fitness programs by sharing personal experiences and positive results.

Influencers play a vital role in digital marketing by enhancing brand credibility, engagement, and reach. They help brands interact with their audiences in a more personal and effective way, ultimately influencing purchase decisions.

## Engagement

Defining Engagement in the Context of Social Media Engagement in the context of social media refers to the interaction between the audience and the content posted by individuals or brands. This includes various forms of interaction, such as likes, shares, comments, retweets, and clicks. Engagement measures how interesting and relevant your content is to the audience and how effectively it stimulates responses and user interaction.

- **Definition:** Engagement is the measure of how much your audience interacts with content posted on social media. These interactions reflect the audience's level of engagement with your content and can include likes, shares, comments, and other forms of interaction. Engagement gauges how well your content is received by the audience and how effectively it captures attention and stimulates discussion.

Factors Affecting Engagement Various factors can influence the level of engagement on social media. Here are some key factors that affect engagement:

- **Content Quality:** Engaging, informative, and relevant content tends to achieve higher engagement levels. Visual content, such as images and videos, is often more appealing than plain text.
- **Relevance:** Content that addresses the interests and needs of the target audience is more likely to spark interest. Understanding your audience and creating content relevant to current trends and topics can boost engagement.
- **Timing of Posting:** The timing of content publication can influence engagement levels. Identifying when your audience is active on social media and scheduling your posts during those times can increase engagement.
- **Posting Frequency:** Consistent posting frequency helps keep your audience engaged. However, posting too frequently can lead to information overload and reduce engagement.
- **Call to Action (CTA):** Using clear CTAs in your content can encourage audience engagement. For example, you can increase engagement by asking your audience to comment, share, or click on a link.
- **Audience Interaction:** Boost engagement by responding to audience comments, questions, and feedback. Audiences feel more connected and valued when they receive input from brands and content creators.
- **Use of Hashtags and Tagging:** Expand the reach of your content and attract more users who might be interested in your content by tagging other accounts and using relevant hashtags.
- **Participating in Trends:** Participating in trends and viral memes can increase visibility and engagement. Content related to current trends is more likely to capture your audience's attention.

- **Influencer Engagement:** Collaborating with influencers allows you to enhance engagement with a broader audience. Working with influencers can increase engagement with a larger and more involved audience. Influencers help spread your content and encourage engagement.

Johnson, R., & Smith, L. (2021) stated that high levels of social media engagement are positively related to consumer purchase decisions. Engagements such as likes, shares, and comments can help increase interest in products and purchase intentions.

#### **Examples of Measuring Engagement:**

- **Likes:** The number of users who like a post.
- **Shares:** The number of users who share the post with their network.
- **Comments:** The number of comments received on a post.
- **Link Clicks:** The number of clicks on links or CTAs within a post.

Engagement is a key metric in social media that reflects how well content resonates with your audience and how effectively it captures attention and drives interaction. Understanding the factors that influence engagement can help brands and individuals develop more effective content strategies and enhance audience interaction.

#### **Purchase Decision**

Consumer Purchase Decision Theories and Models Consumer Purchase Decision Theories and Models describe the processes consumers go through when deciding to purchase a product or service. Here are some commonly used theories and models:

- **Consumer Decision-Making Process Model:**
  1. **Problem Recognition:** The consumer realizes a need or problem that requires solving.
  2. **Information Search:** The consumer seeks information about possible solutions to fulfill their needs and solve their problems.
  3. **Evaluation of Alternatives:** The consumer evaluates various available options and compares products and services based on relevant characteristics.
  4. **Purchase Decision:** The consumer decides to purchase a product or service based on their evaluation of alternatives.
  5. **Post-Purchase Behavior:** After the purchase, the consumer evaluates the product or service, experiences satisfaction or dissatisfaction, and this influences future purchase decisions.
- **AIDA Model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action):**
  - **Attention:** Capturing the consumer's attention through standout content and advertising.

- **Interest:** Stimulating the consumer's interest with relevant and engaging information.
- **Desire:** Inspiring a purchase by demonstrating the benefits and value of a product.
- **Action:** Prompting the consumer to take action, such as making a purchase.
- **Health Belief Model (HBM):** Used in the context of marketing healthcare services to understand how perceptions of risk and benefits influence the purchase of healthcare products.
- **Theory of Planned Behavior Model:** States that purchase decisions are influenced by attitudes toward behavior, subjective norms (opinions of others), and perceived behavioral control (ability to purchase).

### How Engagement Influences Purchase Decisions

Engagement can influence consumer purchase decisions in several ways:

- **Increasing Awareness and Information:**
  - Engaging content with high levels of interaction can increase consumer awareness of a product or service.
  - Engagements such as likes, shares, and comments help spread information and attract the attention of new audiences.
- **Decisions Based on Reviews:**
  - Positive comments and reviews from other users, especially on social media, can influence purchase decisions.
  - Consumers often seek input from others before making a purchase decision.
- **Strengthening Brand and Trust:**
  - High levels of engagement can strengthen brand image and enhance consumer trust.
- **Shared and Liked Content:** Content that is frequently shared and liked often indicates market popularity and trust, which can influence purchase decisions.
- **Enhancing Credibility and Authority:** Content that generates high engagement is often perceived as more credible and authoritative. This can affect consumers' perceptions of product quality and increase the likelihood of a purchase.
- **Incentives to Act:** Engagement often includes calls to action (CTAs) that can prompt consumers to make a purchase. Effective CTAs within highly engaging content can boost conversions and drive purchase decisions.

- **Social Proof and Norms:** High engagement can serve as social proof that a product or service is popular and widely accepted. This encourages consumers to follow the norms and trends revealed through engagement.
- **Role of Social Media Engagement:** Social media engagement plays a crucial role in the purchase decision process by enhancing brand awareness, information, trust, and authority. By understanding how engagement influences purchase decisions, brands and marketers can develop more effective content strategies and achieve higher conversions.

Additionally, high engagement on social media platforms can influence purchase decisions by increasing awareness, building trust, and shaping consumer perceptions of products (Lee, A. & Kim, J., 2020).

## RESEARCH METHOD

1. **Type of Research:** Quantitative, measuring the relationship between variables statistically.
2. **Main Research Approach:** Surveys to collect data from respondents regarding trendjacking, engagement, and their influence on purchase decisions.
3. **Additional Research Approach (Optional):**
  - **Experiments:** Testing causal relationships and obtaining more detailed data on the impact of trendjacking.
4. **Case Studies:** For detailed analysis of specific cases and real-world situations.

The design of this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how influencer trendjacking strategies affect consumer engagement and purchase decisions, as well as to identify the variables involved.

## RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. **Data Description** The data description provides an overview of the information collected from respondents, including demographic characteristics and descriptions of the research variables.

Key elements in the data description include:

a. **Respondent Profile:** The respondent profile contains basic information about the characteristics of the individuals involved in the research. This helps to understand the context of the data and ensures that the sample used is representative of the target population.

a) **Age:** **Table 4.1** Percentage of Respondents' Characteristics Based on Age

No	Usia (th)	Jumlah Responden	Persentase
1	18 tahun - 24 tahun	65	40%
2	23 tahun - 34 tahun	56	35%
3	≥35 tahun	41	25%
<b>Total</b>		<b>162</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Based on Table 4.1**, the data shows that the number of respondents aged between 18 and 24 years old is 65, accounting for 40% of the total respondents. Those aged between 25 and 34 years old comprise 56 respondents or 35%, and respondents aged 35 and above account for 41 individuals or 25%.

From the data above, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents are aged between 18 and 24 years old, with 65 respondents representing 40% of the total sample.

**b) Gender: Table 4.2** Percentage of Respondents' Characteristics Based on Gender

No	Gender	Number Respondents	Persentase
1	Laki-laki	65	40%
2	Perempuan	97	60%
<b>Total</b>		<b>162</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Based on Table 4.2**, the total number of respondents is 162. Of these, 65 are male (40%) and 97 are female (60%). From the data above, it can be concluded that, by gender, there are 97 female respondents or 60%.

**c) Education: Table 4.3**

Characteristics of Respondents Based on Highest Level of Education

No	Pendidikan	Jumlah Responden	Persentase
1	SMA/SMK	43	27%
2	D3	28	17%
3	S1	67	41%
4	S2	24	15%
<b>Total</b>		<b>162</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Based on Table 4.3**, the number of respondents with the highest level of education being high school or vocational equivalent is 43, or 27%. Those with an Associate's degree (D3) number 28, or 17%. There are 67 respondents with a Bachelor's degree, accounting for 41%, and 24 respondents, or 15%, hold a

Master's degree. From the data, it can be concluded that among the 162 respondents, the largest group is those with a Bachelor's degree, totaling 67 respondents or 41%.

**c) Social Media Experience: Table 4.4** Percentage of Respondents' Characteristics Based on Social Media Experience

No	Jenis Responden	Jumlah Responden	Persentase
1	Aktif di medsos	106	65%
	Mengikuti influencer secara regular	56	35%
<b>Total</b>		<b>162</b>	<b>100%</b>

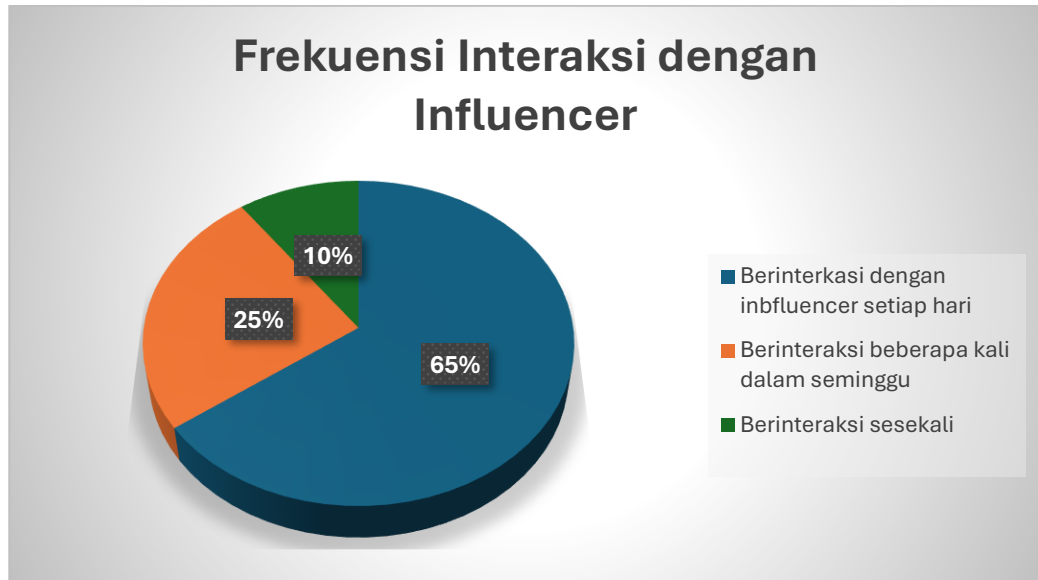
Based on Table 4.4, the number of respondents with various levels of social media experience is as follows: 106 respondents, or 65%, are active on social media, and 56 respondents, or 35%, regularly follow influencers. From this data, it can be concluded that, among the 162 respondents, the majority, 106 respondents or 65%, are active on social media.

**c) Frequency of Interaction with Influencers: Table 4.5** Percentage of Respondents' Characteristics Based on Frequency of Interaction with Influencers.

No	Type of Interaction	Number of Respondents	Persentase
1	Interacts with Influencers Everyday	105	65%
2	Interacts Several Times a Week	41	25%
3	Interacts Occasionally	16	10%
<b>Total</b>		<b>162</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on Table 4.5, the frequency of interaction with influencers among respondents is as follows: 105 respondents, or 65%, interact with influencers every day; 41 respondents, or 25%, interact several times a week; and 16 respondents, or 10%, interact occasionally. From the data, it can be concluded that, among the 162 respondents, the majority, 105 respondents or 65%, interact with influencers on a daily basis.

**Figure** **4.5**  
Characteristics of Respondents Based on Frequency of Interaction with Influencers



### . Research Variables Description

The **Research Variables Description** provides a detailed overview of each variable being studied, including their measurement and distribution.

- **Trendjacking:**
  - **Definition:** A strategy where influencers or brands use current trends to promote products or services.
  - **Measurement:** Measured based on questions about the frequency and types of trends used by influencers in their promotions.
  - **Description:** 65% of respondents believe that influencers frequently use current trends when promoting products.
- **Influencer:**
  - **Definition:** An individual who has a significant influence on social media and affects the opinions and actions of users.
  - **Measurement:** Measured based on the number of followers, type of content, and posting frequency.
  - **Description:** Influencers involved in this study have between 10,000 and 100,000 followers, with an average posting frequency of approximately five times a week.
- **Engagement:**
  - **Definition:** The level of user interaction (likes, comments, shares, etc.) with the content posted by influencers.

- **Measurement:** Measured using a Likert scale in terms of interaction frequency and intensity of engagement.
- **Description:** For example, "The average reported engagement is 4 (on a scale from 1 to 5), indicating high engagement with influencer content."
- **Purchase Decision:**
  - **Definition:** A consumer decides to purchase a product or service after being exposed to an influencer's promotion.
  - **Measurement:** Measured with questions about the frequency of purchases made after viewing influencer promotions.
  - **Description:** 40% of respondents reported that they have purchased a product after it was promoted by an influencer.

## DISCUSSION

The discussion section connects the research findings with the theories or hypotheses proposed. It includes data interpretation and analysis of the relationships between research variables.

- **Trendjacking Analysis:**
  - **Discussion:** How leveraging current trends impacts engagement and purchase decisions. 65% of respondents reported that their content currently receives more attention compared to regular content.
- **Influencer Impact on Engagement:**
  - **Discussion:** Analyzing how influencer characteristics affect user engagement levels. Influencers with more followers tend to achieve higher engagement, indicating that audience reach plays a key role in advertising effectiveness.
- **Relationship Between Engagement and Purchase Decisions:**
  - **Discussion:** Assessing how engagement levels contribute to consumer purchase decisions. Results show that high engagement is positively correlated with purchase decisions, with 70% of actively engaged respondents stating they are more likely to buy advertised products.
- **Role of Influencers in Purchases:**
  - **Discussion:** Investigating how influencers affect purchase decisions through engagement. The analysis shows that influencers not only directly impact purchase decisions but also enhance engagement, which in turn influences purchasing behavior.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that trendjacking strategies employed by influencers have a significant impact on audience engagement and consumer purchase decisions. By quickly and creatively leveraging current trends, influencers can attract audience attention and boost engagement with their content.

The research indicates that high engagement is positively related to purchase decisions, with most engaged respondents being more likely to purchase products promoted by influencers. Therefore, brands and marketers are encouraged to adopt trendjacking strategies in their marketing campaigns to increase brand awareness and effectively influence consumer behavior. The study also highlights the importance of authenticity and relevance in the content presented by influencers to achieve optimal results.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Choose the Right Influencer:** Brands should select influencers who are relevant to their target audience. Influencers with strong connections to their audience can convey messages more effectively and influence purchase decisions.
2. **Content Creativity:** Brands should encourage influencers to create creative and engaging content that resonates with their audience. Innovative content aligned with current trends can enhance engagement and attract audience attention.
3. **Respond to Trends:** Brands need to identify trending topics and act quickly to capitalize on them. Timely trendjacking can boost brand awareness and engagement with the audience.
4. **Analysis and Measurement:** Brands should conduct detailed analysis and measurement of influencer marketing campaigns. Collecting data on engagement and purchase decisions provides valuable insights for improving future strategies.
5. **Build Long-Term Relationships:** Brands are encouraged to build long-term relationships with influencers rather than one-off campaigns. Long-term relationships enhance trust in the eyes of the audience.
6. **Focus on Authenticity:** Brands need to ensure that content promoted by influencers remains authentic and aligned with their brand values. Promotion credibility can increase consumer trust and effectiveness.

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