Social Butterflies: The Power of Social Media Influencers

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Abstract

Social Media Influencer marketing has increased thanks to social media platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, Twitter etc. This marketing is the process of identifying, engaging and supporting individuals who create conversation based advertisements for the company's customers on new products to their followers or subscribers, creating an open opportunity for companies to market and sell through Social Media Influencers. To conduct this research, I used pentadic analysis and qualitative content analysis of one social media influencer I selected to understand if SMI while promoting or reviewing these products and the impact they have on their followers or subscribers. The SMI forums chosen are specific to YouTube and Instagram. With the help of this method, it was concluded that SMI posts visual pleasing images and videos to appeal to their viewers, as the viewers sees the influencer as a credible source hence willing to try out the product they endorse. The influencer also engages with their viewers by commenting back, liking their comments, or making a video replying back the positivity or criticism they get on the sponsored post.

Keywords: Social Media Influencers, Instagram, YouTube, Pentadic analysis, Qualitative analysis, Jackie Aina.
Public Relations has evolved drastically over the course of the years with the continued growth of online influencers called Social Media Influencers (SMI). This type of marketing has emerged as one of the fastest growing marketing practices as it allows brands to connect with their consumers in a more meaningful and authentic way. Many users of social media often follow popular media accounts, which belongs to Social Media Influencers. Due to the popularity of SMI’s, they’re approached by many brands/companies whether big or small to endorse and promote their products on a visually appealing social media platforms such as Instagram and YouTube, where SMI followers can view these endorsements. Before the excess amount of SMI, influencer marketing was traditionally done by celebrities or ads on TV, newspapers, billboard, QVC, or commercials. Companies continue to use SMI as a new way to attract people to be more inclined to try the product and or services the companies sell. On Instagram, SMI’s endorse these products by wearing it and then tagging the picture with the name of the brand or use Instagram’s new TV called IGTV as a new way to sell products. With YouTube, SMI’s have the freedom and more advantage with time to explain the products, try it on, and give the final review of the products. Both forms are a new way for companies to sponsor SMI’s with different range of payments to SMI. We find SMI’s representing these companies through these platforms, informing viewers to purchase these products and some SMI’s even creating their own products by collaborating with the brand/company. These active bloggers and influencers help create a trusted two-way relationship between the consumers and the brand through a two-way conversation established through social media platforms (Booth and Matic, 2011). According to Forbes, influencer marketing can be defined as a form of marketing in which focus is placed on specific key individuals rather than the target market as a
The continued rise of social media has opened up a new way for companies and people to work together and connect on a more organic level rather than it being forced, misinterpretation or loss of connection between the company and consumers. The work of the influencers is to endorse or review products of several brands. Influencers are there on almost all social media platforms, and different types of types such as fitness, fashion, beauty, books, Do It Yourself (DIYs) and many more (Belagatti, 2017). This study examines the different strategies of how influencer endorsement and marketing has become super successful as the new public relations tool and how the using social media platforms has allowed companies and their consumers to connect on a more personal level. The purpose is to examine a prominent social media influencer from their YouTube videos vs Instagram page to creating content and engaging their audience/followers. By observing social media influencer activity and engagement with their followers, it will show how they are keeping the relationship between the consumers and the brands.

**Review of Literature**

SMI endorsements and advertising using different social media platforms is the new wave of the public relations industry. Since this industry is an ever-evolving one, SMI has been discussed by the media, and even “regular” people like me but not necessarily researched enough to fully grasp the idea behind it. A 2010 research focusing mainly on algorithm divided SMI into three levels. Level 1: SMI with the biggest amount of followers and are more current new focused, level 2: SMI that have a reasonable amount of followers and have a whole team that helps them create their content to post, and level 3: SMI’s with the least amount of followers but are very influential in the products they endorse (Booth & Matic, 2010) The researchers review
of literature that covered who SMI’s are, their role, impact and importance to the companies they work with and the strategic planning that is used when selling this product to their viewers. The study also examined the theories and concepts regarding social media, their impact, and branding and user engagements. This type of research and its evidence is needed in order to properly evaluate the value of SMI.

What Is Social Media?

Social media is a mega platform that is used by everyone all over the world who has access to the internet. According to the Pew Research Center, around seven-in-ten Americans use social media to connect with one another, engage with news content, share information and entertain themselves (Pew Research Center, 2018) The new wave of social media has required companies to adapt to the new generation especially when it comes to millennials. According to Perrin, 90% of the U.S population being 18-29 years old are active users on social media, compared to 12% in 2005, which shows a 78-percentage point increase. At the same time, there has been a 69-point bump among those ages 30-49, from 8% in 2005 to 77% today (Perrin, 2015). This shows there is an increase of use on social media from various age.

Because of social media, the marketing strategy has shifted pushing brands to either adapt or go out of business. For example, social media has heavily influenced online shopping compared to physical stores like Forever 21, Rue 21, H&M etc. who are forced to close some of their shops due to not expanding and adapting to the new generation. The Global Web Index reports social media users are spending 1.72 hours per day on social platforms, which makes up for approximately 28% of all online activity (Bennett, 2015).
For this research, Instagram and YouTube will be examined, by analyzing the content of SMI’s Instagram post, which allows us to understand how influencers interact with their followers and YouTube, a video platform granting influencers access to properly explain the product they’re endorsing as well as express their opinions regarding the product.

**Who Are Social Media Influencers?**

Social media is a mega platform that is used by everyone all over the world who has access to the internet. According to the Pew Research Center, around seven-in-ten Americans use social media to connect with one another, engage with news content, share information and entertain themselves (Pew Research Center, 2018). The new wave of social media has required companies to adapt to the new generation especially when it comes to millennials. According to Perrin, 90% of the U.S population being 18-29 years old are active users on social media, compared to 12% in 2005, which shows a 78-percentage point increase. At the same time, there has been a 69-point bump among those ages 30-49, from 8% in 2005 to 77% today (Perrin, 2015). This shows there is an increase of use on social media from various age.

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**Social Media Influencer Network & Impact**

Companies have always focused on targeting their audience’s needs and wants and are reaping the benefit. One indication that advertisers are seeing returns on investment in social media is the fact that they are spending more on paid social every year. In 2014, $17.74 billion was spent on social media advertising, and it is projected to increase by 33.5% to $23.68 billion in 2015 ("Social Network Ad Spending to Hit $23.68 Billion Worldwide in 2015", 2015). The type of image and recognition a company gains from its SMI’s helps build a lasting loyalty with its main consumers encouraging a more solid relationship with their buyers. Although, the companies do not have control over what the consumers say, they tend to guide SMI on specific details to include in the post and or video they upload on YouTube.

A study done in 2014, came to the conclusion that agencies facilitate the relationship between the influencer and the brand by communication and incentivizing influencers with money and free products (Cantor, Cobb, & Donnelly, 2014). Meaning this influencer takes this money or free products as payment to promote the products or services that is being offered to their followers encouraging them to purchase these products. Social media platforms are becoming more valuable and the amount of people who continue to use these platforms continues to grow due to how easy it is and one does not necessarily need a degree to become a SMI to capitalize off this. Though creating content can be considered easy, the need to create high quality content puts the pressure on SMI. Marketing companies have continued to capitalize off social media influencers because of their impact, communicating their message through them.
due to the trusting relationship created, unlike most marketing strategies, influencer marketing requires a high level of trust between a brand and a third party. A brand must be sure the influencer’s content aligns with their overall image (Matthews, 2018)

**Brand Identity**

The brand’s image is used to put things into perspective depending on the kind of company they are and the products they carry. The strategy a brand uses is the main component of how successful they will be with most companies using marketing segmentation to drive sales. For example, the Old Spice brand is as a masculine brand while Dove is feminine. The brands symbol is also important as it separates them from others another example is McDonald’s mascot as Ronald McDonald and its bright yellow M symbol compared to other fast food chains like Wendy's with the farm girl. If a brand already maintains a market reputation and influence seeks to connect with a genuine influencer, the effect of their respective influence skyrockets, and the impact on their target audience magnifies exponentially (Parekh, 2018).

This leads the researcher into SMI and their brands on how they also have to brand themselves from their post, pictures, and videos, how they speak, and who they interact with as friends on social media. It is extremely important for marketers to know how SMI brand themselves towards targeted audiences and reasons behind their posts and contents.

**Theories behind Social Media Influencer Communication**

Bandura, the author of Social Learning Theory stated that “In the social learning system, new patterns of behavior can be acquired through direct experience or by observing the behaviors of others (Bandura, 1977) On the basis of informative feedback, consumers develop thoughts or hypotheses about the types of behavior most likely to succeed. Allowing a reader or
consumer to understand why SMI are considered influential because everyone learns from the media because that is where we get all of our information from and are being persuaded everyday on what to think, eat, and buy. Companies are now taking this new media platform with hopes that those that view these SMI can adopt their behaviors. Word-of-Mouth (WOM) advertising is one of the most credible forms of advertising because a person puts their reputation on the line every time they make a recommendation and that person has nothing to gain but the appreciation of those who are listening. (Rampton & Aytekin Tank, 2019). WOM is another way SMIs use to communicate to their audiences and encourages the audiences to buy the products because it is coming from a trusted source.

The most used type of research includes a qualitative analysis to determine how SMI become very successful and why this type of marketing is the fastest growing type of public relations to date. The current project addresses these two main questions:

*RQ1: What contents do SMI post on social media platforms?*

*RQ2: Do SMI effectively engage with their followers on sponsored post*

**Methodology**

To fully answer these questions and prove my hypothesis, I will be gathering information from one popular influencer and conducting the research on their Instagram and YouTube page. There will be two different methods of content analysis conducted:

*Study 1* I use a pentadic analysis to look at Instagram to investigate the approach SMI uses when they post content. This analysis will gather the act, scene, agency, and purpose of their post each explaining why the post was made. This method allows me to fully understand SMI minds when they’re creating their Instagram post or IGTV. This type of method can also
report the motives behind their post, and how they market these products compared to YouTube videos. Their interaction and interactivity like the hashtags, comment response, if the contents are sponsored, and number of posts per day. To best determine the time frame when SMI post and the best time for their content to be viewed, a study conducted by Huffington Post, states the team found that 2 a.m. and 5 p.m. EST are the best times to post if you want your followers to pay attention to you; the worst times are 9am and 6pm (Beres, 2015) so focusing my research on each posts and videos posted between these times will help me determine

Study 2 is a qualitative content analysis of YouTube videos to examine the different way SMI interact with their viewers as well as the techniques used to advertise the product. I will be using three main characteristics of 1. SMI’s confidence on camera, 2. SMI’s credibility and relatable with their audience and 3. SMI’s interaction with the viewers in terms of opinions and feedback from their viewers.

Furthermore, all platforms of social media are used by SMI to post their review and demonstration of the product to reach different diverse group of people but YouTube and Instagram as of right now are the two major and current social media platforms used. So understanding how one SMI think and works can allow us to understand the rest of the SMI industry as well. To conduct my research, a case study will be focused on a big influencer in the industry Jackie Aina, who has a huge following on social media and is a very successful influencer. Her page will be used to determine the interactivity, the type of content whether sponsored or personal, level of interaction based on her follower’s comments, response back. Using her as a case study will combine both methods to come to a conclusion about my two RQ.
**Jackie Aina**

Jackie Aina is a social media influencer on YouTube and Instagram. Aina who is of Nigerian-American nationality has a following of more than 2.9 million on YouTube and 1.1 million followers on Instagram with more than 229 million total views on YouTube. Jackie Aina is a very well-known and popular SMI and has become a self-proclaimed Nigerian sister and aunty to all of her followers who relate to her because of her openness and ability to relate to her. Jackie Aina was particularly picked for this research because she is the number 1 African American SMI on all social media platforms changing the standards of beauty with each video or post she makes.

The former Army veteran in an interview with Women's Wear Daily (WWD) said the moment she realized she was a SMI “I would walk down the street and have women I didn’t even know say thank you to me, I never thought having dark skin was beautiful or they would say things like thank you for telling me that color can look good on my complexion.” (WWD Interview) When Jackie Aina first started her YouTube channel back in 2009, she was one of the first African-American women to post tutorials about makeup on dark skin women, and did it for many years before influencer marketing became a huge phenomenon.

Jackie Aina has stated multiple times that the reason she started her channel was to have an outlet from her military career and show women of color that makeup regardless of color can look great on any skin tone as stated in her interview with Glamour Magazine “Originally, I think part of me wanted to get on camera to show that not every person who serves their country is rough and rugged. You can be feminine and fight for freedom. So I filmed a few tutorials in my uniform, and the response was crazy. People loved that I wasn’t this out-of-reach
makeup artist—just a regular girl” (Schallon, 2019) Aina also shares her opinions about makeup companies like Itcometics, Tarte, Beauty Blender, Huda Beauty etc. about their lack of diversity and inclusion in their companies saying on her YouTube video “I have a hard time distinguishing when someone really truly does celebrate diversity and when they are pandering” making her one of the few SMI who uses their voice to advocate for a difference and better relationship between companies and consumers.

Jackie Aina’s personal brand has seen a tremendous change and growth since she started since 2009 and has caused many companies to partner with her to promote and be the face of their products through all her social media platforms, most recent collaboration with Nars Cosmetics Company. While Aina’s marketing skills can be seen on her Instagram post, she utilizes making YouTube videos which has been the key to her success and the Jackie Aina brand.

**Content, Engagement, and Response**

Aina’s content were analyzed based on personal or sponsored post, the number of her post per day, types of brands she tagged or used hashtags related to the brands. For example, I measured her personal posts by the contents that did not have any hashtags or mention a brand and sponsored post that did have tags and name of the brand. The engagement is measured by her total number of followers, likes, comments, and hashtag penetration that is under each posts, though it is not all the way possible to measure the amount of followers who are actively engaged on her page. The response will be measured by Jackie’s response to her followers after each of her posts and if she was at all engaged with her followers.
Results

Pentadic Analysis Research on Instagram

Many influencers like Jackie Aina use Instagram because it is the fastest and quickest way to post content and stream it directly online by tagging these companies in their posts, which shows using the pentadic analysis social media influencers are successful. However, in order to fully understand Jackie Aina’s posts on Instagram, I performed a pentadic research analysis which covers the act, agent, agency and purpose by Jackie.

Like many other social media influencer posts, agent and agency are typically the same. The act is the advertisement/ product that is being sold, the agent is the SMI and in this case Jackie Aina, and the purpose of this is to promote the product, gain their viewers interest and trust and buy the product the influencer is selling. Though, what is different is the way every other influencer makes their own post on Instagram exclusive from the other with the different kind of brands the influencer chooses to promote. Jackie Aina, who is a beauty and lifestyle influencer, there is a huge number of brand that she promotes on her Instagram page such as Pixie, NARS cosmetics, Dermalogica Skincare, Clinique, Olay, Target Beauty, and so much more.
The pictures displayed on the right shows Jackie Aina Instagram post for Olay Skincare. In these post, Jackie uses specific tags like #Olay, #ad, and #olay28day while also tagging the company @Olay in the post. Using the company’s name gives the viewers the opportunity to not only connect with the company, but also tap on the tag to go directly to the company’s page and website with just a simple click from Jackie Aina’s page.

![Figure 1-3: Olay advertisement on Instagram posted by @jackieaina](image)

**Marketing**

To sell these products, Jackie Aina’s personality has become her marketing tool. From her videos and posts, she definitely seems like a down-to-earth, funny and very relatable personality leaves an impression on her followers. In her Olay skincare post, Jackie can be seen
with clean face and natural features with the products on her bed and hand (*figure 1 and 2*) with her funny personality poking through in the caption section. While posting a makeup free photo might not be a big deal, it does catch the attention of consumers who want to achieve the same clear and radiant skin like Jackie Aina. In addition to not only showing off the products, this product can be bought in stores by regular consumers who aren’t SMI. This gives an opportunity for her viewers to know about the brand and Olay Company, and their products without even buying the product themselves, but familiarizing themselves with it, to attach it to Olay and Jackie.

Jackie’s caption also allows the viewers to know a little information about the company by tagging them and hash-tagging #Olay multiple times. In addition to this, Jackie writes that she is “Dry skin, never met her she’s been evicted!” subtly hinting to her followers how much she loves this product because it has left her skin feeling “hydrated, smooth, and fresh.” These three post shows SMI like Jackie have the power to persuade her followers to buy these products for a better and smoother skin. Which in this case follows: Jackie’s followers - Jackie and Olay 28-day moisturizer-consumers will buy and begin to use Olay skin care products.

*Increasing Relationships with Followers*

Any social media platform gives the followers the opportunity to ask questions and interact with the influencers and receive a response back from them. For instance, some of Jackie followers left comments on all three of the images shown about saying:

- “I got these just because 1, I love Olay, and 2 cuz its Jackie Aina approved”
- “Yass @jackieaina I love your product recommendations!! Please keep them coming”
- “I bought the mist and I absolutely LOVE it def. a great partnership”
“Skin looks so bomb”

“Yes Jackie!! I started using those Olay facial cleanser wipes a few months ago after you recommended them and my skin looks so good now!!!”

“BRB going to grab this!”

“If aunt Jackie recommends it, I buy it”

The conversations between the influencer and followers gives these 3 advertisements a different kind of discussions that did not exist before the use of SMI or social media. This two-way conversation also allows the SMI’s another opportunity to promote the product through their own personal recommendations, turning a follower of Jackie’s into an Olay consumer. Getting new customers over to Olay’s Instagram and company’s website is the end goal of the partnership between Jackie Aina and Olay.

This pentadic analysis shows how Jackie’s contents on her Instagram is to show how the products benefits her, executing the post in a particular way to not only maximize the brand but grab her follower’s attention individually. Performing a Pentadic research analysis on Jackie’s Instagram helped answer the first research question which was, how are social media influencers successful? Through assessing and examining Jackie’s Instagram page, it is super clear that she has reached the level of fame, status, and success because of her content of well photographed and colorful pictures, directly linking the company to a new level of potential buyers, and interacting in the comment section with her followers about her skin and the products. This not only allows Jackie to possibly make money off these three ads but also shedding a positive light on Olay’s advertisement and not leading them wrong when it comes to the company, the brand, and the product.
These findings show when influencers possess these three main characteristics, they are more than likely to be successful in this influencing industry and at getting different companies to partner with them.

The end results of tracking Jackie Aina’s page and the level of interaction between Jackie and her followers include:

- 11 Sponsored post and 6 different brand post (Olay, Fenty Beauty, Nars Cosmetics, Dermalogica, Pur, Jouer) made by Jackie since January 2019
- From January to April 2019, Jackie gained 1.1 million followers, 1,295,013 likes and 960 comments. Showing the level of comment on her Instagram was quite low compared to other social media influencers but still high enough to engage in constant interaction between her, the brands, and her viewers. Between these months also showed Jackie replying to only 23 comments that was left on her Instagram post.

Social Media Influencers on YouTube

Just like Instagram, social media influencers also use YouTube a big video sharing website to target desired viewers. But, unlike Instagram which mostly consists of photos being shared or short video clips and now IGTV, YouTube allows the influencer the opportunity to create a video and share the video about bigger and even personal topics to a wider and massive audience. Social media influencer can create videos of them just eating, doing their makeup, giving advice, playing video games, and so much more that people watch because they find them entertaining, to learn new makeup skills and in general value their opinions about certain topics.

Like other SMI’s, Jackie also puts out a produced content of anything from how-to videos, makeup, relationship advice, military advice, her Nigerian culture, and vlogging.
By using this, and putting out this kind of content, viewers feel a part of Jackie’s life. Being a viewer myself, Jackie’s videos are to encourage and influence you in a better way, even with the products she is selling.

**Content Analysis Research on YouTube**

Since performing a pedantic analysis helped in answering my first research question and helped to evaluate my hypothesis that SMI have been a great addition to these companies and brands and have drastically changed the way companies and brands interact with their consumers. In order to examine the success of SMI’s lifestyles through YouTube videos, I performed a content analysis on Jackie’s YT videos, looking for the three main characteristics SMI’s must poses to create successful content on this social media platform. For this part of the study, I focused on Jackie’s confidence, interaction, and authenticity between her and her viewers especially her video “It’s Here, My Collab with Too Faced! Born This Way” which was sponsored by Too Faced Cosmetics. My research analysis used all three characteristics to determine how successful Jackie was in creating content with the company Too Faced.

*Figure 4: Screenshot from “It’s here! My Collab with Too Faced! Born This Way” @jackieaina*
Social Media Influencer Authenticity

To have longevity in this kind of industry requires these social media influencers to be their most authentic selves. The dictionary described authenticity as true to one’s own personality, spirit and character (Merriam-Webster, 2019) Meaning SMI has to be honest and honorable to their followers. Being authentic allows the influencer to relate to the viewer on a friendly level and helps when companies are trying to build better relationships between their products and the influencer’s followers. So, creating videos on YouTube gives influencers the opportunity to share their different perspectives with their watchers, who then proceed on how to take the information being given to them.

In Jackie Aina’s video “It’s Here, My Collab with Too Faced! Born This Way” she talks about her first ever makeup collaboration with the cosmetics company Too Face, to create a foundation shade that ranges from the whitest to the darkest skin tone. In the video, she talks about the challenge women face when it comes to makeup especially foundation colors for dark skin and super dark skin women that other cosmetics company get wrong by either making it too orange, red, and gray or simply, leaving African American women out of their makeup line. With this video, the company Too Faced attempts to establish itself as a young, vibrant, and open to criticism when it comes to makeup companies doing better when it comes to African American women makeup. Too Faced in this sense, then collaborated with Jackie to create a shade range for every skin color, also picking Jackie as the face and spokesperson for this collaboration. As a result of this, Too Faced was not only successful in this product but choosing Jackie and influencer who is well respected, liked, relatable, and authentic shows the company was strategic in who they wanted to partnership with and how to sell these products.
While this video is a collaboration between Too Faced Cosmetics and Jackie Aina, it is essentially meant to uplift Jackie’s followers especially her African and African-American followers. The comments under this video show how engaged Jackie and her subscribers are together and trusting her opinion enough to buy the product. With 30% of consumers are likely to make a purchase based on a blogger’s recommendation. Bloggers and content creators rarely cater to the masses; they generally talk to a community about topics that interest their followers. (Pelletier, 2018)

- “BEST collab Hands down. THIS is the point of a collab. Influencers should try to use their power to make differences in the industry. Eyeshadow palette collabs are cute but, we need to get the basic right 😂😂

- “This is so amazing. I love that Too Faced worked with you and sought out people affected by lack of inclusivity in make-up to help solve this problem and actually get really good shades. To me that says that they really cared that the shades were helpful, and didn't just view the darker shades as a formality to avoid getting flack or like they're throwaway shades that are less important. LOVE YOU”
- I love this so much. I'm so happy for you. This literally embraces everything you made your platform for. And the fact you included so many other people to talk to them and hear out what they felt is missing just shows how focused you are on your mission. You truly are an inspiration to me and so many others. Thank you Jackie! 💕💕

- His low-key made me so emotional. The fact that you did this much research and put this much effort into expanding the shade range is...oh my God I think I can speak on behalf of all of us black women when I say that we feel SO special. So special. Like FINALLY someone REALLY thought long and hard about us. Thank you Jackie.

- We’re so grateful for this and for you. ❤️

- Jackie I love your work, and these shades look gorgeous! I’m Indian, and I’m so thankful that you thought of the Desi/South Asian skin tones! It’s been easier to find good matches lately in brands like Laura Mercier/Fenty etc., but you’re thinking of so many different nuances in these shades you’ve developed. I agree that there’s never enough yellow tones in the medium tan range. Can’t wait to check them out!

Not only does Jackie benefit from this collaboration but Too Faced likewise benefits from Jackie’s video because she has not introduced this company to her followers. This inclusivity encourages Jackie’s 2.9 million followers to consider Too Faced based on Jackie’s realness and authenticity from her experience in the makeup industry and women of color.

**Social Media Influencers Confidence**

A company would not ask an influencer to promote their products if the influencer lacked confidence in themselves. Having confidence in yourself not only shows that you know what you
are selling, but also leaves a good impression on the buyers who are potentially looking to buy from the company. According to the Influencer Orchestration Network, “51 percent of marketers believe they get better customers from influencer marketing. That is because the relationship began with the trust of the influencer” (Burgess, 2017)

Though there is a competition all around the beauty industry from companies like Tart Cosmetics, Elf cosmetics, NYX, L’Oréal, Cover girl, and so much more. Too Faced needed to set itself apart from the rest of the beauty industry to target consumers who essentially do not buy their products due to lack of inclusion, which led them to ultimately partner with Jackie to sell these products to the targeted group.

My research has found that confidence can be shown through influencer’s physical and verbal actions on their videos. For example, in Jackie’s “I Match My Outfits to My Fragrances LOL” Jackie exudes total confidence from the sponsored video by a fragrance company called Scentbird. Throughout her video, Jackie uses the word “constantly looking for beauty products” multiple times, to reassure her viewers that she is always looking for new products to share with her followers. Jackie shows confidence in this video by highlighting Scentbird positivity and the strategic plan behind how to sell the products definitely catches the viewer.
Through her body language and personality, Jackie shows authenticity and passion for any of the products she speaks off and it can be seen throughout all of her videos even the ones from nine years ago when she first started. In Figure 5, Jackie passionately talks and demonstrates her collaboration with Too Faced and the excitement can be seen in the video. Jackie has a catchy theme song named “Jackie” that makes you want to sing along with her, that her viewers identify her with when it comes on. She constantly looks engaged and speaks with certainty. Figure 6, is a screenshot of another one of Jackie’s YouTube videos promoting another product but this time in her living room, by creating content like this, Jackie’s viewers are able to feel like they’re participating in the video also.

**Social Media Influencer Interactivity**

Traditionally, advertisements under public relations tactics utilize newspapers, television and radio commercials, and billboards to reach their audience. These traditional tactics although used to work to increase the company’s social awareness, they lack the company and consumers
relationship that is needed for the company to grow like they do with social media influencers today.

This research defines interactivity as SMI working with their viewers to solicit their opinions and feedbacks on products they share on YouTube or Instagram. Many influencers have stated they would not be in the kind of position they are in, if it wasn’t for those who watch and follow them. In Jackie’s videos, she takes the time to ask her followers to comment on her videos about their opinions on criticisms, likes, and dislikes about her channel, products, and what they would like to see on her channel thus, creating an opportunity for a personal conversation and relationship between Jackie and her followers. Like Figure 7

Figure 7: Follower comment on “It’s here! My Collab with Too Faced! Born This Way” @jackieaina

Like the findings of the pentadic research analysis performed on Jackie’s Instagram post, comments on Jackie’s social media platforms opens the opportunity for her followers to understand the brand Jackie represents. According to Influencer Orchestration Network, “37 percent better retention is reported through word-of-mouth advertising” (Burgess, 2017) Meaning electronic word of mouth is another tactic about the products or companies via the internet. Jackie Aina uses this strategy as do many other influencers, she encourages them to
share their opinions whether biased or unbiased since word of mouth is the most trusted and credible source of online and brand marketing.

**Discussion**

This research shows social media influencers success does not rely on the amount of followers the influencer has but rather on their ability to influence by being a credible source, interactive, and confidence to not only sell, but create a connection between the brand, them, and those watching. The data were collected through Instagram and YouTube, with Instagram focusing on posts from January 2019 to now.

The results of both research show Jackie Aina posts at least 3 pictures a day ranging from sponsored to personal posts and uploading YT videos once a week. Being that Jackie Aina is a popular social media influencer with large following, her Instagram page and YT channel is a lot more aesthetically pleasing to look at compared to other SMI’s with fewer followers or sponsored posts. Although compared to celebrities like Kim Kardashian who is also considered a social media influencer with 134M followers and most if not all of her Instagram posts are captured by a professional photographer which features her on the red carpet, sponsored post from Flat Tummy Tea, makeup, clothes, etc. Both Jackie and Kim capture photos and contents that are extremely desirable to others who want to have the same lifestyle.

Furthermore, the more content Jackie Aina posted on her YT and Instagram, the higher the level of interaction between the brand, Jackie, and the followers. For example, on March 02, Jackie posted 3 personal posts that gained a lot of interaction on her page with more than 120,000 people liking all three posts. Though from my research, I can conclude that with the huge number of followers Jackie has on her YT and Instagram and recently hitting 3M on YT
followers on April 11, 2019 her level of interaction between her and her followers continues to decrease and she is less likely to engage with the followers, the level of Jackie’s status and online popularity puts her on a celebrity like status.

The purpose of this content analysis is to analyze the role social media influencers play when it comes to consumers buying products and the new way brands are selling and reaching out to the buyers. Jackie’s social media consists of positive praise or questions about products instead of negative response. Social media influencers use their platforms to promote a company's brand and their products and they have to do this in an honest and extremely interactive way. While my research was solely based on influencers, this is only the top of the iceberg as SMI can be seen as prototypes of celebrities. The use of SMI not only breaks the barrier between companies and their consumers through their contents, because marketing skills used back then included endorsements, print, or broadcasted advertisements, it allows these consumers to trust SMI opinions versus high paid celebrities. The success companies have to be able to reach the new generation has been off SMI and their positive contribution to public relations.

My findings can contribute to companies who are looking to diversify and include people of color to their brand. The study shows viewers are more prone and motivated to buy products that is recommended by a trusted influencer in the industry who has their viewer’s best interest in mind. Influencers are able to go beyond what a company and advertisements in print and commercial can do and make a difference in the company's profit, increasing their marketing and brand all together. On average, businesses generate $6.50 in revenue for each $1 invested in influencer marketing. 70% make $2 or more, and 13% make $20 or more. Most businesses get
solid results from influencer marketing, with just the bottom 18% failing to generate any revenue (Foster, 2019)

**Limitation & Future Research:**

The results from this research study indicated that social media influencers with mass followings are more likely to post professional based content involving skincare, fashion, and beauty products on their media platforms to attract their followers. Though Jackie does show engagement between her and followers, it seems as she continues to grow and the fame increases, it could become more difficult to keep that organic interaction going. From my findings and engaging on these media platforms myself, influences with large followings are reaching celebrity like status, which could pose a problem in the future. My limitations were focusing only on Jackie and not comparing her to other influencers with the same status as her, resulting in a one-sided research study. For future research, it would be interesting to examine the impact influencers from Instagram and YouTube affect their followers when it comes to their sponsored posts. A qualitative and quantitative research method can be used as well as surveying groups between the ages of 18-30 to see which age group is mostly influenced by social media influencers. Another study could be done in focusing on influencers with smaller followings, comparing them to people like Jackie Aina and the terms in which these smaller influencers are selected, impact, and if they have the same credibility as bigger influencers.


