



Press release

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Relevant without viral content: When influencers become their own brands

Influencer marketing is within a rapid change: Whereas content creators previously used their reach primarily to promoting brand products, they are now increasingly using it to promote their own brands. A recent study shows that the target group is open-minded about this.

Munich, June 8, 2022. For German consumers, influencers are relevant sources of inspiration for product recommendations, but also for socially relevant topics. This is not new for marketers. What is new, however - especially in Germany - is that the advertisers are now becoming creators themselves. Already, 12 percent of Germans trust the products of their favorite influencers more than those of conventional brands. This is now shown by the latest consumer survey "Age of Relevance" conducted by the Munich-based startup XPAY among more than 2,000 Germans. "Influencers already possess something that companies have to work hard to earn and maintain: Trust and a relationship at eye level with their fans. They are increasingly using this capital to implement their own product lines," says Denis Raskopoljac, CEO and founder of FinTech startup XPAY.

30 percent of Gen Y and Z already buy from influencers

Around a quarter of Germans (24 percent) regularly follow at least five influencers. Almost one out of five (17 percent) has at least once bought an influencer's own products. In the cohort of 18- to 35-year-olds it is significantly higher. Here, more than 40 percent regularly follow a handful of influencers and almost a third (30 percent) have already purchased their own products. The market potential for the future is huge: across all age groups, there is a great willingness to buy from influencers in the future (21 percent). For more and more influencers, having their own product line is a way to use the reach they've built beyond content, Denis Raskopoljac knows: "Whereas influencers previously had to 'sell' themselves with new content every day to stay relevant with their fans, they can now use the reach they've built for their own products."

Influencers score with proximity and trust

When it comes to launching their own fashion label or even their own fast food chain - like the U.S. influencer MrBeast did recently - Internet stars have the closeness to their fans in comparison to conventional companies. 15 percent of the consumers surveyed trust the product recommendations of influencers more than normal advertising. Among 18 to 35-year-olds, this figure is as high as one in four (23 percent). Almost as many (12 percent and 18 percent of 18 to 35-year-olds, respectively) also trust influencers' products more than those of conventional brands. "Considering that in Germany the phenomenon of the creator economy – where influencers who become product manufacturers themselves - is still quite new, this result is astonishing. The potential for the market with influencer products is therefore huge and the industry has recognized this," says Raskopoljac.



The XPAY Concept: Relevance as Brand Booster

XPAY's White Label Offering gives influencers and brands the opportunity to be even closer to their fans with their own branded debit cards. What has been reserved for global players such as Lufthansa, Amazon or Ikea due to complex processes and compliance requirements, XPAY now makes accessible to small businesses or personal brands: branded payment methods that include the entire brand cosmos and offer their users individual benefits. In this way, influencers can enter the life of their followers and become tangible and thus relevant in everyday situations. The FinTech sees itself as a brand booster because it strengthens existing fan relationships and extends them into new areas of life. "XPAY takes the trusting relationship between brand and fan to a new level," says Raskopoljac.

About the study

The Age of Relevance is a nationwide, representative study on the topics of customer-brand relationship (CBR) and brand loyalty. The quantitative survey was published by XPAY Group GmbH, a provider of innovative payment solutions that offers branded Mastercard® card programs with integrated loyalty components for companies and influencers. The survey was conducted by the Hamburg-based market research institute Consumerfieldwork between January 15 and 31, 2022. A total of 2,118 citizens aged 18 to 55 participated in the survey.

About XPAY

XPAY is one of the fastest-growing providers of innovative embedded finance solutions, developing branded Mastercard® card programs with integrated loyalty components for its branded customers. In combination with exclusive and individualized benefits, XPAY thus makes brand experiences available to consumers in completely new areas of their lives. The FinTech startup with headquarters in Munich and locations in Amsterdam, Bucharest and Vienna was founded in May 2016 and currently employs over 85 people. For more information: <https://www.xpay.de/>

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From content creator to creator economy



24 % regularly follow influencers



One fifth already bought in-house products from influencers

„For more and more influencers, an own product line is a way to use the reach they have built beyond content creation.“

Denis Raskopoljac, XPAY CEO

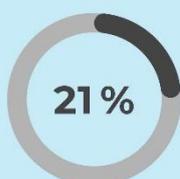
Influencers score with proximity and trust

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Millennials & Gen Z transform the economy



30 percent of the younger generations buy influencer products. The market potential for the future is enormous: across all age groups, there is a huge willingness to buy from influencers in the future (21 percent).