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Stop Killing Brand's Reputation: Framework for Collaborating with Social Influencers Puffery

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Social media has become a major way for consumers to discover, research, and buy new products and services. A new social media marketing technique, influencer marketing, is becoming more popular than ever before (Farivar et al., 2019; Felix et al., 2016). However, many companies are using social influencers puffery to overstate the value of their products for the purpose of enhancing reputation and increasing sales. Puffery in advertising is the act of exaggerating a product's worth based on opinion rather than fact. It presents a humorous way to attract the attention of the consumers, and it can be considered as a legal form of false advertising. Especially under social media context, rules and regulations are not well established, and the influencers are giving out more and more exaggerated claim without proving evidence or consistent study to back them up. Influencers are trustworthy individuals, which make it very difficult for average consumers to make a difference between puffery content and genuine one. If the consumers find the product cannot meet their expectations due to the puffery content, the reputations of the brand and the influencer may be damaged.

In our study, we aim to provide an influencer marketing framework for companies on how to collaborate with influencers for the purpose of enhancing reputation and information credibility. The timeline of advertisement is a major feature to be considered (Kumar et al., 2018). Since people who are more familiar with a product are less likely to be affected by puffery and their knowledge will increase as more ads are available, it may be not a good method to flood social media platforms with repetitive ads (Xu and Wyer, 2010). In addition, variant personalization algorithms and target user groups will vary the spread of puffery on different platforms. Accordingly, a combination of different types of influencers is needed and the level of puffery needs to be well controlled. By comparing the video ads and comments on YouTube for beauty products with standard reviews from official websites, we utilize Natural Language Processing to analyze consumers' sentiment and comment topics to identify the best solution.

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