ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF METHODS TO EXPAND THE AUDIENCE OF THE BRAND IN ITS OWN MEDIA

Bohdan Kolesnyk[1]

Abstract. Companies are turning to digital marketing to promote their brand and increase sales through various methods. Nowadays, thanks to social media, companies are able to attract the attention of consumers on the internet, attracting a certain part of the brand's target audience. Overall, it can be said that social media has had a huge impact on how companies find and communicate with their audiences. Thus, there is a need to explore strategies to attract more engaged brand audiences to companies' social media pages. *The purpose* of this article, as part of the scientific research, is to identify the essence of marketing management strategies in social media, which will include cost-effective expansion of the brand audience, as well as comparing their effectiveness. Dialectical method of scientific knowledge, method of analysis and synthesis, comparative method, as well as the method of data generalization are used in the work. *The results* obtained represent the comparative effectiveness of brand audience expansion methods that can be applied in the areas of digital marketing and brand management. The need for a clear strategy for promoting a company on social platforms is dictated by their effectiveness, as well as the size of potentially spent budgets on ineffective digital campaigns. The results of the study allow developing a set of strategies for effective expansion of companies' own media, which can be applied both in Ukraine and all over the world. In addition, the results of the study help to determine the possible values of performance indicators and suggest audit methods.

Key words: digital marketing media, social network, influencer, blogger, brand management, targeted advertising, advertising platform.

JEL Classification: M37

Problem statement. Over the past two decades, social media has become the most important channel for marketing communications, including digital marketing. It is known that almost 50% of the world's population uses social media, which is more than 3 billion users worldwide (Kemp S., 2021). Each user spends an average of 2 hours and 25 minutes on social media and messaging (Mander J., 2019). Millennials participate in social media for an average of 2 hours and 38 minutes a day, while Generation Z uses this type of media for 2 hours and 55 minutes (World Economic Forum, 2020).

The main reason people follow company pages is to get more information about business products (25.6% of users). 26.3% of respondents hope to get useful information and news on the brand page; for 21.3% the reason is funny or interesting content; another 15.3% want to be the first to know about special offers. This is the conclusion reached by the research company Boston Digital (Boston Digital, 2020). Thus, businesses of all sizes need a social media presence. Of course, in order to attract more people and have a deeper impact on the market, the maximum

number of followers converted into a target audience is necessary. Using digital advertising tools will accomplish this goal. The question is, which tools are more effective? This is a question that needs research.

Analysis of modern studies. The problem of measuring the effectiveness of internet advertising and promotion on social networks is being studied by scientists in Ukraine and all over the world in various aspects: banner and search advertisement (Morrissey Brian; McCambley Joe; Jansen B. J.; Mullen T. and others), social media marketing (Felix R., Rauschnabel P. A.; Hinsch C.; Bowden J.; Deis Michael H.; Hensel Kyle and others), internet media efficiency analysis Rzemieniak Magdalena; Brodie R. J., Ilic A., Juric B., Randall Lewis, Justin M. Rao, David H. Reiley and others). At the same time, given the lack of systematic study of methods to increase an audience on social networks and of all the internet marketing instruments' comparative effectiveness, the peculiarities of social networks marketing management need further research.

Presentation of the main material. Types of digital marketing media. Own media is any communication

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Corresponding author:
[1] Kyiv National University of Technologies and Design, Ukraine
E-mail: bogkolesnik@gmail.com

channel or platform owned by the brand itself; companies create and control them independently. The audience for owned media is all of the brand's existing, new and potential customers. The convertibility into customers of those visitors who were attracted by paid tools and platforms depends on the quality and relevance of the brand's own media content. Key features: indispensable in building long-term relationships with the target audience; cost-effective, versatile and can be sustained indefinitely.

At the same time, paid media is an effective channel for large-scale campaigns aimed at increasing brand awareness and attracting conversions. Earned media complete the classification, whose audience consists of those users who are currently targeted (segmented) by the advertising campaigns, as well as brand fans and those people who were previously involved through paid and organic Internet marketing channels.

The limitations and opportunities of social media. Social platforms make it possible to organize brand management in such a way as to become the "Top-of-mind" customer at the moment of purchase, i.e. the first brand mentioned by the target audience. What exactly do CEOs think of this concept? In a survey of nearly 200 top marketing executives, 50% responded that they think the "Top-of-mind" indicator is very important (Farris P. W., Neil T. B., Phillip E. P., David J. R., 2010).

Here and below we will analyze methods of expanding the brand's audience on Facebook and Instagram. Bloggers ("influencers") should be singled out as one of the components of earned media. Presentation of certain content is more typical for the relevant categories of bloggers; classification of bloggers by type in Ukraine is presented in Figure 1 (trendHERO, 2020).

Either way, the most interesting for business is the engagement rate of paid media, and therefore the engagement rate of bloggers, which is calculated as follows:

$$ER = \left(\frac{\frac{reactions\ to\ content}{number\ of\ content\ units}}{number\ of\ followers} \right) * 100$$

Average engagement rates of accounts in Ukrainian segment of Instagram are given in table 1. For other countries, market researchers point out that, for instance, in the United States, ER figures for million+ "influencers" are lower. This may be due to the fact that in developed countries the so-called "giveaways" are not so common, while there are significantly more bloggers (especially celebrities).

Table 1
An average engagement rate (ER) by account size and country

Account's audience	ER (%), Ukraine	ER (%), Russia	ER (%), USA
1-2 ths.	8,9	5,7	7
2-5 ths.	3,4	2,6	4,5
5-10 ths.	1,6	1,5	2,7
10-100 ths.	1,2	1	2
100-1 mln	1,8	1	1,8
1 mln or bigger	3,4	2,1	1,9

Source: compiled by the author (Source: trendHERO, 2020)

The table shows that Ukrainian million+ "influencers" have higher ER rates than in other countries. It should also be borne in mind that these two social networks have different average level of audience engagement. In 2020, for Facebook this figure was 0,27% per post, while for Instagram it standed at 1,16% (Jipa A, 2021). Moreover, advertising formats are significantly different.

For "engagement" campaigns on Facebook, there are types such as: "post engagement" (getting reactions to a post), "page likes" (getting subscribers to a "fan page", i.e., a company page), and "event responses" (getting subscribers to an event page). At the same time,
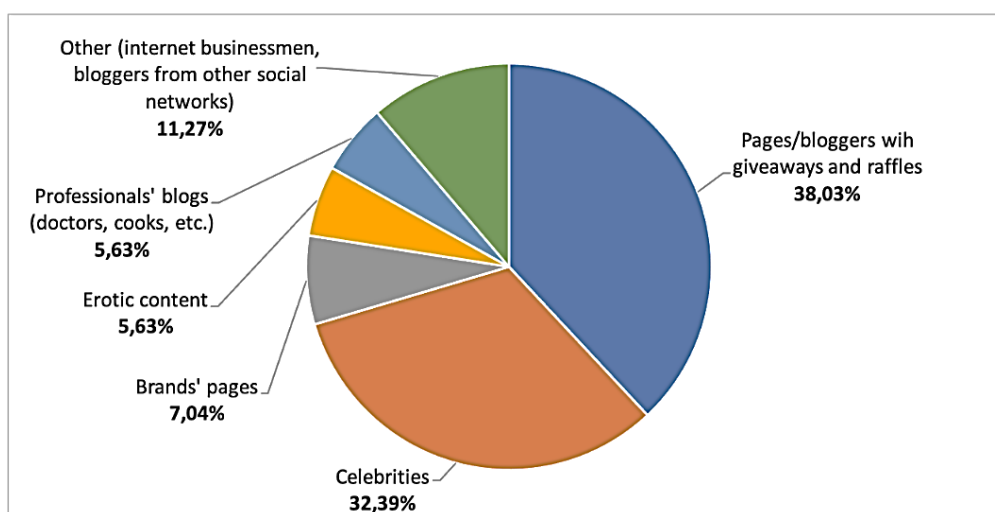

Figure 1. Categories of Instagram bloggers in Ukraine

"page likes" engagement campaigns are not available on Instagram. This means that there is no official advertising tool for expanding the audience of your Instagram account. Of course, other types of campaigns are used for this business purpose, but because their advertising models do not include payment for the required result (follower), planning and performance analysis are difficult, and the cost per follower increases. It is also worth noting that there are artificial technical limitations created by the Instagram platform. For example, promoting "stories" with a link to the account takes the user from the Instagram app to the browser; the account from the ad opens in the app only if that ad was created on Instagram itself (which lacks most of the ad platform features necessary to run an effective campaign).

Whereas advertising platform on Facebook allows to expand an audience using traditional tools of internet marketing, on Instagram, social network with a higher average ER, greater coverage of Ukrainians under 31, as well as greater number and voice of "influencers" (PlusOne, 2021), advertising platform's tools are not enough. At the same time, the total audience of Instagram in Ukraine is only 1 million less (and this gap is narrowing) – 15 million against 16 million Facebook users (PlusOne, 2021). These reasons lead to the study of other tools to expand an audience.

Methods of promotion of the account.

To begin with, target advertising. Launching a campaign to attract followers on Facebook is fairly easy, and internet advertising experts consider $0.40 per follower to be the baseline price. Of course, the amount may vary depending on a company's budget, targeting settings (especially those made possible by analyzing existing audiences), and the industry in which the business operates. At the same time, the

effectiveness of engagement campaigns like "page likes" on Facebook decreases over time (see Figure 2): after a few days or weeks, such campaigns bring worse results, so it is necessary to select new advertising materials, test the settings, and restart the campaign.

These processes can be explained by the fact that the minimum required auction price increases over time, targeted advertising becomes less effective because of the new privacy policies of some technology companies (see ID for Apple advertisers), or simply ineffective advertising layouts.

Launching similar targeting ads on Instagram is more complicated. There are two options: launching a "traffic" campaign through a single advertising platform or launching a similar campaign using the Instagram app. Here and below the advertising campaigns in the building and construction sector will be considered, using the example of a large manufacturer in the plumbing equipment industry (company "A"). The results of the "first option" campaign are presented in Table 2.

The total number of followers is 371, but the average daily natural increase on the Instagram account of company "A" is at least 5 followers, i.e., the actual result is no more than 301. Since the actual total cost was $327.8, the price per follower was $1.09 (at the same time, Company A had worse campaigns with the same settings). Thus, this is a much higher price for the company in question than on Facebook: the price of a subscriber on the second of these two social networks corresponds to the industry average (which is $0.40). There was also an "option 2" advertising campaign (using the same advertising layouts), less controlled, but with links opening on Instagram itself. The results are shown in Table 3.

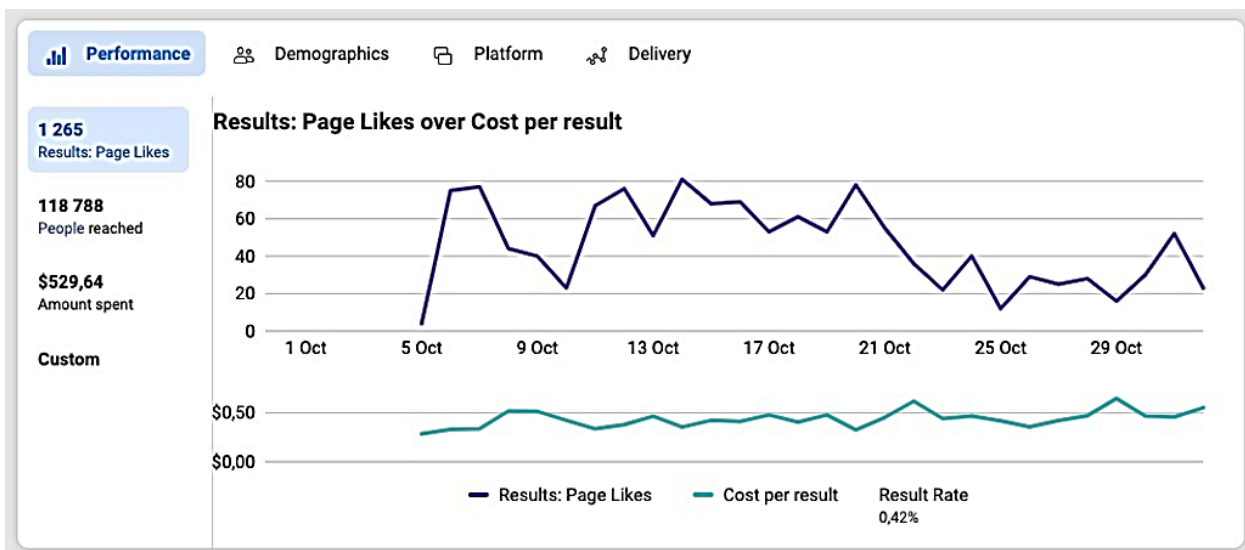The actual total cost was $210, and the price per follower was $0.78. In the absence of appropriate

Figure 2. Example of "page likes" type of engagement campaign with declining results and prices per result rising

Table 2

Instagram "traffic" campaign with expanded control

Days	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Clicks (opening account)	111	112	83	89	142	112	91	55	162	171	158	140	142	69
New followers	36	27	17	29	35	26	20	17	43	26	28	24	16	27
Established budget/day, USD	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Actual expenses, USD	19,98	20,16	19,09	19,58	25,56	24,64	23,66	11,57	29,64	30,30	30,24	29,89	29,55	11,81

Table 3

Campaign "traffic" in Instagram with automatic settings

Days	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Clicks (opening account)	214	273	298	271	206	262	246	37
New followers	40	43	52	43	42	57	31	3
Established budget/day, USD	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Actual expenses, USD	25,85	29,91	31,04	30	28,31	31,21	29,50	4,18

settings, with automatic targeting to a similar audience (users similar to the current audience of Instagram-account of company "A"), the effectiveness of the advertising tool remains quite low.

If the effectiveness of advertising is unsatisfactory, you should first try to use the methods of popular accounts (mostly bloggers), namely contests and giveaways. It is clear that in order to attract an external audience, the draw (giveaway) should be promoted with a standard advertising campaign. At the same time, in order to minimize the impact of giveaways on the reputation of a "serious account," the prizes should always be of value, related to the nature of the company's activity and aimed at attracting attention to a particular product. The raffles themselves on the official account representing the company in social networks should be conducted sparingly and cautiously, screening out with special conditions "prize hunters," not radically changing the type of content and not raising expectations of prizes among the target audience.

Let's consider an example of a raffle conducted on the Instagram account of company "A". The object is a large international company in the sphere of plumbing equipment (15 000+ Instagram subscribers in Ukraine). Product X with an invoice price of 114$ was raffled off by randomly selecting one winner; to participate, it was necessary to leave a comment mentioning two people who may benefit from product X (anticipating viral distribution). The budget of advertising campaign support stood at 130$. The results are presented in table 4.

Similar raffles on Facebook are possible but require a huge own audience and coverage of the external ones. For instance, a raffle on the company's "A" owned Facebook account (70 000+ followers in Ukraine) of the more expensive and prestigious product Y with an invoice worth 239,26$ brought only 566 followers. Although this figure may be overstated too, as Facebook statistics on followers is more difficult to calculate accurately. Given the campaign budget of 92,84$, the cost of a follower reached 0,58$, which is bigger than the optimal 0,35-0,40$.

If one needs a wider reach, partners can always be involved. For the reviewed company, this includes importers of plumbing equipment and retail chains. However, it should be noted that such a partnership may need to be paid for: for instance, Epicenter retail chain (monopolist in Ukraine among sellers of building materials under DIY retail system, 350 000+ followers on Facebook) requests 200-1000$ and more for publishing something about a brand on their social networks. At the same time, Rozetka, which is the largest marketplace in Ukraine (750 000+ Facebook followers), create posts with raffles for brands free of charge, according to an agreed schedule. The company "A" initiated several such cooperative raffles on the Rozetka page, the results are set out in table 5.

Based on our observations, it can be said that the effectiveness of raffles on Rozetka's Facebook page is decreasing over time; this may be due to an extraordinary number of raffles and regular posts (10 per day or more). One way or another, the company "A" failed to agree on cooperation with Rozetka on Instagram. To test the hypothesis of whether cooperative raffles always attract more external audiences, the company

Table 4

The results of the "A" company's own Instagram page raffle

	Comments (participants)	Reposts	Reach (people covered)	Impressions (views)	Frequency	New followers
Results	5 267	536	50 390	74 583	1,48	690

The cost of a follower was 0,35$

Table 5

The results of a raffle conducted on the Rozetka page

	Comments (participants)	Reposts	New followers	Invoice price of the prize, USD	Cost of a follower, USD
February	5 300	2 500	3 500	122,92	0,04
April	3 600	1 800	900	122,92	0,14
September-October (2 raffles)	3 700	2 000	1 350	114+31,42	0,11

Table 6

The results of a raffle conducted on the Leo Ceramics page

	Comments (participants)	Reposts	Reach (people covered)	Impressions (views)	Frequency	New followers
Results	3 394	208	7 583	8 365	1,1	up to 300

"A" also approved a raffle on the Instagram page of Leo Ceramics chain stores (27 000+ Instagram followers). Results of the raffle are in the table 6.

Together with the product X invoice price of 114$, the cost of a follower was no less than 0,38$, which is much higher than the price on the Facebook page Rozetka (although at the level of targeted Facebook advertising). It can be concluded that the size of the paid media audience, and not the source of this audience, has a decisive role. However, unlike targeted advertising, the use of partners as paid media is limited: large account holders often charge a payment amount that makes the cooperation itself economically impractical. Moreover, the number of accounts of this size, which are somehow related to a brand thematically or have commercial relations, may be limited in some areas (which is also relevant for manufacturer of plumbing equipment – the company "A").

Consider interacting with bloggers, also known as "Influencers. Company "A" had experience working with Instagram-bloggers in the past, but no specific goals were set. The results of the collaboration, which took the form of a post and a short one-time "story" about the products given to the bloggers, are shown in Table 7.

Accordingly, the cost of attracting 1,000 Instagram users (not necessarily the blogger's subscribers) was

$7.95 and $3.25, respectively. However, are these costs economically justified? It is necessary to analyze the results by comparing the cost per thousand with alternative means of online advertising, namely search ads and Google Display Network. For the imputation of the search network, let's take 9 transactional keywords and 1 brand query, such as "plumbing to buy", "plumbing brand A", "bathroom faucet to buy", etc.; for the display network, let's take "plumbing" and "home repair" as the audience's interests conditionally. An approximate calculation of the media plan made using Google Ads tools is shown in Table 8:

It is estimated that the approximate cost to reach 1,000 people with search advertising is $1.30 and $0.37 on the display network. This is much lower than the cost of outreach achieved through social media "influencers. Note that it is unknown which channel (blogger post or Google ad) will have the highest value on the conversion path (in this case, the purchase of plumbing equipment), that is, will have the greatest impact on the decision. However, usually a search query on Google (especially a transactional one) indicates a certain level of interest in a purchase, unlike casual users on social platforms. As for display network banners, their relevance depends on the relevance of the product to the sites where the banners are posted

Table 7

Company A's collaboration with bloggers without setting a goal
Expanding the brand's own audience

Blogger	Own followers	Category	Invoice price of the prize, USD	Reactions	Comments	Reach (people covered)	Impressions (views)	Frequency
lidiya_kosharska	470 000	lifestyle	591,38	8 078	34	74 386	96 403	1,30
yuliyasholudko	425 000	lifestyle	711,91	22 236	915	219 398	243 901	1,11

Table 8

An approximate media plan with Google Ads tools used

Advertising campaign	Clicks	Cost per click (CPC), USD	Click through rate (CTR), %	Impressions (views)	Duration, days	Impressions per day	Total budget, USD
Search advertising	5 700	0,13	1	570 000	31	36 774	739
Google Display Network	1 000	0,08	0,5	200 000	31	6 452	75

(while the relevance of bloggers' posts depends on the relevance of the main topic of their accounts).

From the author's point of view, unless it is a new product awareness or direct sales campaign (e.g., a review of a new smartphone model, a "challenge" with a candy bar, etc.), it would be a mistake to build relationships with "influencers" just for the sake of coverage and mentions as such. A more appropriate way is to expand the brand's own media audience, being able to influence consumer demand in the long term, which is especially important for products of irregular or deferred demand with a long purchase cycle.

Company "A" began cooperating with bloggers in a new format: a barter agreement with the condition of a prize draw. For legal reasons, "A" cannot pay a partner directly, so it is much harder to find bloggers than necessary: "Influencers" are reluctant to consider barter offers from brands, even with expensive products or direct benefits for their subscribers. Company A chose several bloggers with sufficient reach (100,000 subscribers or more), offering them, among other things, barter for several X products (for the bloggers themselves and raffles among subscribers), free installation of products, as well as a special link to the promotional page of the plumbing store with discounts on all products (for subscribers).

As an example, consider working with the Instagram account alina_lalisea, agreeing on the following terms:
– making video reviews, posts and "stories", barter for product Z (invoice price 168,81$);
– providing product X for the raffle (invoice price 114$);
– not mentioned during the negotiations gift of product Y (invoice price 31,42$) engraved with the blogger's nickname – in anticipation of a better relationship and additional free mentions.

Performance of the published content and the raffle are given in table 9.

Thus, the cost per subscriber was $0.86. Obviously, the results depend on the relevance of the content for the audience of the account (the analysis of this factor will be given below), as well as on the implementation of the integration with the blogger. Here's a comparison of the effectiveness of methods for expanding a brand's account audience (Figure 3).

It can be concluded that the most effective method of attracting social media users in terms of the number of subscribers and average cost is cooperation with the accounts of partners, whose audience is approaching a million. At the same time, given the limited nature

of such offers, as well as the gradual saturation of subscribers with standard draws from such pages, for Instagram pages businesses can consider integrating "prizes from bloggers" as well as their own draws. For a company's Facebook page, the most effective is targeted advertising on Facebook, such as a "page likes" campaign, the effectiveness of which is virtually unlimited and easier to predict.

Analysis of contributing factors. For a complete analysis of the effectiveness of attracting an audience, in addition to price and quantity, there is another important factor to consider – the quality of the follower, i.e., its relevance to the brand's target audience. Thus, the worst positions by this parameter are taken by affiliate pages on Facebook, because their audience can be analyzed only superficially (Unbox Social, 2021) and even, for example, the terms of a raffle are often drawn up by the affiliate.

A slightly more complicated, but technically possible way is to analyze the audience of bloggers' accounts (especially on Instagram) with the help of special services. It is necessary to consider this process on the example of the Ukrainian service trendHERO, which is considered one of the most functional solutions on the market. Along with an integrated assessment of the "quality" of a blogger's account, which includes an analysis of the follower base, types of followers (real, suspicious, fake accounts), audience growth or decline patterns, and more, the demographic profile of the audience, its interests, and lists of other accounts followed by that audience are also available. Such a system makes it easier to find potential partners and study the offers coming in.

In addition to checking the quality of incoming audiences, it is also necessary to record their expansion. While substantial statistics are available in Facebook targeting ads, in Instagram only clicks are recorded as results for "traffic" type campaigns. Therefore, in this case the only technically possible solution is to monitor the number of subscribers. Numerous technical limitations of Instagram manifest themselves in the inability to know the sources of followers, inaccurate statistics and lack of links in posts. However, there are several ways to account for the sources of followers on Instagram when interacting with partners or integrating with "influencers:

1. Tracking links. UTM tags, common for web analytics systems, will not work because it is not the site's traffic that is tracked, but the social network

Table 9

Established a partnership between Company A and a blogger to expand the brand's own audience

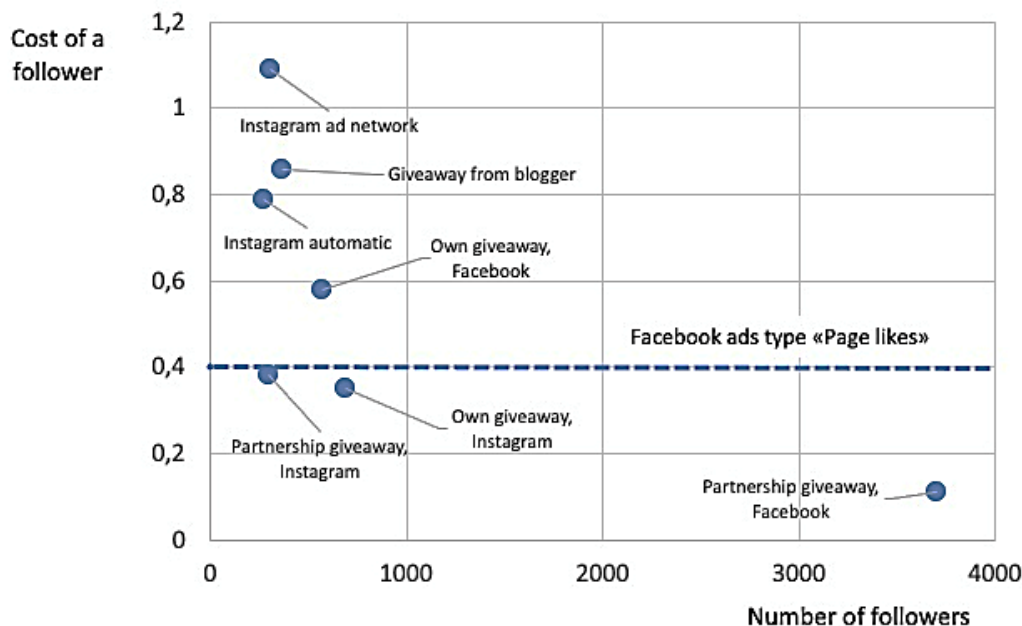| Blogger	Own followers	Category	Invoice price of the prize, USD	Reactions	Comments (participants)	Reach (people covered)	Impressions (views)	Frequency	New followers
alina_lalisea	118 000	family and relations	314,23	1 169	240	25 286	37 329	1,48	up to 365

Figure 3. Comparative effectiveness of brand audience expansion methods

account. Instead, you can provide bloggers or partners with shortened links (e.g., bit.ly) that have traffic tracking built in. Limitations of the method: links can only be provided in "stories" or in the profile description; Instagram may block redirected links.

2. Instagram "Branded Content" tools. They allow the blogger to specify a partner – an account of a company that is marked as a "paid partner" of the publication. Posts created by the blogger using this functionality give the advertiser direct access to statistics, as well as the ability to approve or send the posts for revision directly to Instagram. The advertiser can also run an advertising campaign on the Facebook advertising platform using the blogger's posts or "stories". Limitations of the method: the tag "paid partnership with" may be undesirable for parties, practically not used in Ukraine.

The last important aspect of any audience expansion method presented here is the actual content to be distributed. For successful integration with bloggers or partners, it is essential that the content be as "native" as possible, i.e., that it blend naturally with existing media content. In contrast, targeted ads need to stand out, attracting the attention of "feed eaters"-users who scroll through their newsfeeds very quickly. Brands are more likely to use standard product photos, partners can rent a photo studio for their own photos, and "agents of influence" tell a story in the form of a review, trip or game, not necessarily with studio-quality photos or video.

Texts written for bloggers should also express the "author's" own opinion, emotions and be somewhat illiterate (in most categories, such as lifestyle bloggers, an unmistakable text and concise narration will raise suspicion). Content creators need to be controlled, although sometimes unexpected, suggested formats by bloggers can benefit the brand.

Key findings. A brand needs its own media to build long-term relationships with its target audience; social media representation will help the company stay in touch with customers, keep them informed of important news and be "Top-of-mind" to the customer at the time of purchase. A brand management strategy should include specific goals, one of which is to expand the brand's in-house media audience. Facebook and Instagram are characterized by different audiences, content types, levels of engagement and advertising opportunities, so a company's account promotion strategy differs significantly from one social platform to the other. Internet marketing tools that can be used to achieve the goal of promotion: targeted advertising, interactive formats on the company's own page, interaction with partners, interaction with bloggers. In terms of the number of subscribers and the average cost, the most effective method of promotion is cooperation with partners whose pages have a very large audience, as well as interaction with bloggers in the format of draws, contests, and "challenges". The price per subscriber is inextricably linked to its quality, which must be analyzed for each method separately. Understanding the difference between types of content and controlling its creation will help increase the effectiveness of actions to achieve the goals of the promotion strategy.

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