



Lorian's personal branding strategy as a travel influencer through the Tiktok account @lorianbackpacker

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ABSTRACT

Keywords

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Personal branding is generally used to increase someone's attractiveness or to sell point through social media. It is built by the individual themselves through their work or profession. One of the personal branding actors on social media is an influencer. Indah Suci Lorian (@lorianbackpacker) is a travel influencer who is currently building personal branding on Tiktok. The purpose of this study is to determine the personal branding strategy carried out by Lorian as a travel influencer on her Tiktok social media account. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. Data collection techniques include interviews, observation, and documentation. The results of the study found 7 out of the 11 effective criterias carried out by Lorian in forming personal branding, namely 1) Authenticity, 2) Consistency, 3) Specialization, 4) Distinctiveness, 5) Relevant, 6) Visibility, and 7) Persistence. This research shows that lorianbackpacker conveys messages to its followers based on facts from its experience. The reflection of lorianbackpacker's personality who always appears as it is and likes freedom are implemented in her contents so that people are interested and continue to follow her. As a travel influencer, lorianbackpacker continues to work by consistently creating interesting, varied, informative, and entertaining contents.

1. Introduction

The development of technology has brought the era of new media in people's lives. New media has turned everything into digital (Suswanto & Setiawati, 2020). The emergence of new media has a great influence on human life. The presence of new media makes the communication process feel so fast and efficient in everyday life. Currently, new media is more widely used by people in an effort to find, get, and use information, news, and entertainment than old media (Watie, 2016). The emergence of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, Tiktok and so on is of great interest to people from various circles (Annisa, 2021).

We Are Social dateportal.com noted that the number of internet users in Indonesia reached 212.9 million in January 2023 out of a total population in Indonesia of 276.4 million. In percentage terms, 77% of Indonesia's population has used the internet. As for social media users, there are 167 million users with a percentage of 60.4% of the population. One of the social media that is in great demand by the public today is Tiktok (Kemp, 2023). As in figure 1, shows the percentage of Tiktok social media users who occupy the top four positions.

Content on Tiktok social media is very diverse, ranging from educational content, tips and tricks, travel, food, fashion, etc.. One of the content that attracts a lot of Tiktok audience interest is travelling content or tourist attractions that are not yet widely known to the public. One of the influencers who is active and consistent in producing this content is Lorian through his TikTok account, @lorianbackpacker. Lorian's Tiktok account, which already has 177.7 thousand followers, focuses on

producing travelling content with the concept of backpacking or commonly called backpackers both inside and outside the country.

One of Tiktok's current functions besides being a medium for entertainment and promotion is as a means of forming personal branding. Personal branding is an image or thought that is present in a person's mind of what she sees and hears (Butar Butar & Fithrah Ali, 2018). One of the personal branding actors on social media is influencers. Influencers are known as people who actively use various social media networks, where they share their thoughts and experiences and influence the audience by spreading their thoughts (Uzunoğlu & Misci Kip, 2014).

With the skyrocketing number of Tiktok users, it means that more and more new influencers are also emerging. This causes quite heavy and fierce competition among Tiktok influencers. Therefore, every influencer needs personal branding so that the audience can recognise and become loyal followers. As a travel influencer, Lorian certainly has her own branding strategy to build her image in front of the audience (Hastuti et al., 2022). Like her nickname "backpacker" which is someone who travels on a budget with minimal equipment. The name seems to bring an interesting personal branding that can be easily recognised by her followers. In this study, researchers used Rampersad's Authentic Personal Branding theory which contains eleven criteria, namely, Authenticity, Integrity, Consistency, Specialisation, Authority, Distinctiveness, Relevant, Visibility, Persistence, Goodwill and Performance (Rampersad, 2008).

In forming personal branding, Rampersad in his book (Rampersad, 2008) suggests that there are 11 effective criteria, including: Authenticity, In building personal branding, it must be original from the personality that exists within by reflecting character, values, attitudes, and vision. Integrity, Integrity is the result of actions and behaviors that reflect the prevailing values (McNally & Speak, 2009). Integrity is related to honesty and trust so it is important in building personal branding. The goal is to ensure that we are in line with the prevailing values so as to foster public trust and loyalty. Consistency, When building personal branding, the behavior shown must be consistent. This is because repeated actions in the environment will provide a context for approaching other people every day and then forming perceptions about ourselves. Specialization, Personal branding must have a focus on what specialization of expertise is owned.

From this specialization, the public will decide whether to consider us unique or even ordinary. Authority, Authority is important to form personal branding, the goal is that others can see us as someone who is an expert in their field, talented, has experience, and deserves to be considered a leader. Distinctiveness (distinctiveness), Distinctiveness or uniqueness is what makes us different from other competitors. This distinctiveness needs to be supported by values, which can be started by identifying what qualities and characteristics make us different from other competitors. (Peters, 2007). Relevant, Creating personal branding must have a relationship or connection with the target audience. Relevance starts the third target audience believes that we understand what is important to them.

According to McNally and Speak, relevance must have reverse world skills, meaning that if you want to be considered valuable and important to others, you must enter their world and get out of our world. Visibility, Visibility is necessary because in personal branding, it is known as "you need to get noticed" (Gander, 2014). In order to be seen, personal branding needs to be broadcast continuously, consistently, and repeatedly until the message conveyed is truly in the minds of the audience. Persistence, The need for time to grow, making personal branding must be accompanied by persistence and dedication in building it. Many great people have successfully built their personal branding in front of the public with dedication, sacrifice, planning, and patience in doing so. Goodwill, In forming personal branding, the positive side of the individual is needed so that the resulting branding lasts a long time. To maintain goodwill, individuals need to maintain a good name and relate well with others in order to receive positive recognition from the public. Performance, Performance is an important aspect after personal branding is known by the public. This performance must be maintained and possibly even improved so that the personal branding that has been built does not become useless.

This personal branding strategy is an interesting object of discussion to research. From several previous studies that discussed similar research, it was found that personal branding is very influential on the audience's assessment of self-image in front of the public (Ardianto & Zulfiningrum, 2022). In

addition, well-formed personal branding will affect one's performance and career success (Fitria Avicenna & Theresia Zabrina Budisuwita, 2022).

2. Method

This research uses qualitative research, which is a descriptive study and emphasises more on analysis. This type of descriptive qualitative research does not explain the relationship between variables, does not test hypotheses or make predictions but the data collected are in the form of pictures, words, and not numbers (Moloeng, 2018). The reason researchers use this method is because researchers want to explain how Lorian's personal branding strategy through the Tiktok @lorianbackpacker account, therefore this research needs to be done in depth to get complete and relevant data so that researchers can explain clearly.

The data collection process techniques that researchers use include interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews in this study used two forms of questions. The first is a structured interview, which is a question formulated in advance by the researcher as a guide (interview guide). The second is an unstructured interview, which is an interview conducted informally without any guidance from the researcher.

The observation used in this research is non-participant observation, where the researcher is only limited to observing Lorian's behaviour and attitude related to his personal branding. The data collected in this research is based on documents relevant to Lorian's personal branding research on the @lorianbackpacker TikTok account, which will be a reference for researchers in conducting research. Based on the background and problem formulation that has been described, the purpose of this research is to find out how Lorian's personal branding strategy as a travel influencer through the TikTok account @lorianbackpacker.

3. Result and Discussion

This research analyses Lorian's personal branding strategy as a travel influencer through her Tiktok account @lorianbackpacker. The research was conducted by conducting direct interviews with Lorian and observations made by researchers.

4.1. Presenting the Results

This The personal branding built on the @lorianbackpacker account focuses on content about travelling. Based on the results of interviews conducted directly with Lorian, it was found that personal branding needs to be built with authenticity or originality that reflects the original character so that it has harmony with the original person. Lorian is also consistent in sharing content and conveying messages continuously while adhering to her own identity. Lorian is a travel influencer who has a cheerful, confident, humorous, brave, and freedom-loving character with the characteristic of appearing as she is. Supported by Lorian's storytelling talent and the influence of her experience, she is expected to be a differentiator from other travel influencers.

The main factor of Lorian's success in conveying the message to the audience can also be seen through the relevance of the theme of the content created and the target audience, which is the age range of 25 years and above or someone who is already working and needs a holiday. Lorian has persevered in building her personal branding in front of the public with dedication, sacrifice, planning, and patience.

In her TikTok account, Lorian divides his content into 2 types, namely daily or daily content and content for clients or brands. Daily content is content that is shown to fill the daily feed on Tiktok @lorianbackpacker. When she is not obligated or working with a brand, Lorian usually fills her Tiktok content by sharing his travel videos. Personal content is shown by Lorian to her followers to maintain consistency of uploads. The first step in creating daily content is going somewhere or what is often called travelling. The destination does not have to be a famous tourist spot or a place that is often visited. Daily content can be created anytime and anywhere. Like diving to drink water, this content can be created while doing daily activities, all it takes is sensitivity to the surroundings. Are there objects that can be immortalised and made into content, or are there interesting events around that can

be shared with followers and other spontaneous things. There are trending topics, what music to make content.

For brand content, the content creation stage is different from daily content. Lorian gets a brief from the brand and then from the brief, a storyline is created. After doing a brainstorming process with the brand regarding the existing storyline. Once approved, Lorian executes the brief with an agreed deadline. Furthermore, after the content is shot and edited, the client will preview it first and revisions can be made or approved immediately. Revisions can be major or minor, depending on how many changes the client wants in the preview process. Once revised, the content is uploaded and after seven days, Lorian reports the insight of her post to the brand.

Meanwhile, in building her personal branding strategy, Lorian also interacts and builds relationships with her followers. The things Lorian does to interact with her followers include replying to comments, direct messages, and meeting her followers in person. Even from these interactions, Lorian often creates friendships with her followers and shares stories of experiences that have happened. Not only with her followers, Lorian also connects with fellow influencers several times in order to gain new insights.

4.2. Create a Discussion

The thing that Lorian highlights in her Tiktok account is a friendly personality and is able to impress her followers with her. The difference that Lorian shows to the audience is in the form of characteristic storytelling content about something that attracts the audience's attention. Such content is precisely what makes Lorian's Tiktok account crowded so that the engagement obtained increases. By paying attention to trends in audience interests and trends that are happening or busy on social media, the @lorianbackpacker account is growing which can be seen from the rapid increase in followers. Lorian has a unity that suits her personality, which is to appear as she is. This is then implemented in the content she creates, so it can be seen that the content created by @lorianbackpacker is in line with her daily personality, which is friendly and likes to appear as she is.

Another important element of forming personal branding that researchers find is storytelling and interaction. Because Tiktok is a social media with a sharing network approach, this is what distinguishes Tiktok from other social media. Through her content, Lorian tells experiences and new things that he finds interesting to share with the audience. Influencers who are always proper in creating content are very much found. Therefore, Lorian's consistency in selling 'stories' is what makes the growth of his Tiktok account increase in terms of engagement and followers. As quoted during the interview, when Lorian experienced being extorted by thugs while on holiday in Cambodia.

4. Conclusion

The presence of social media, especially Tiktok, has become a means of forming personal branding. Tiktok is present and has become a trend in the last five years which has given rise to many new influencers so that to survive in the midst of competition, a personal branding strategy is needed. In building personal branding, a strategy is needed to implement personal branding elements. Lorian's personal branding through the Tiktok account @lorianbackpacker has originality that reflects the original character. Lorian's consistency in selling 'stories' is also what makes the growth of his Tiktok account increase in terms of engagement and followers. Lorian's friendly personality and always appearing as she is is implemented in her content, further strengthening her personal branding and the perception in the community that Lorian's content is always positive and useful. In addition, supported by her storytelling talent and the influence of her experience, Lorian's personal branding strategy and the messages she conveys are successfully accepted by many people.

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6. References

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