

The Implementation of Influencer Marketing Strategies by Bakso Pikat to Increase Brand Awareness through TikTok

Rizqi Hadratun Nisa, Sovia Sitta Sari

Department of Communication Science, Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, 55183, Indonesia

*Corresponding author's email: rizqihadratun.nisa57@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Keywords

Influencer Marketing; Brand Awareness;
Click-Through Rate; AISAS Model;
Digital Marketing Communication

Influencer marketing strategies are increasingly developing as a digital marketing communication approach, especially for new culinary brands that utilize algorithm-based platforms such as TikTok. However, its implementation is still dominated by measurements of reach, impressions, and engagement, without integrating exploratory behavior indicators such as click-through rate (CTR) into the process of building brand awareness. This study aims to analyze the implementation of influencer marketing strategies by Bakso Pikat to increase brand awareness on the TikTok platform. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method with a case study approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with the owner, marketing manager, digital marketer, and two consumers of Bakso Pikat, which were reinforced with documentation of promotional content and TikTok account insights. The findings show that an influencer marketing strategy implemented systematically through collaborations with macro, micro, and nano-influencer along with the integration of click-through rate (CTR) elements via call-to-action can encourage a shift in audience behavior from the interest phase to the search phase in the AISAS model. Click-through rate (CTR) serves as an indicator of active audience engagement that facilitates information exploration regarding business profiles and locations. This strategy successfully contributes to brand awareness at the levels of brand recognition and brand recall within a specific product category. The study demonstrates that behavioral indicators such as click-through rate (CTR), can be used as strategic tools to building brand awareness for a new culinary brand on the TikTok platform.

1. Introduction

The development of short-form video-based social media has created a new dynamic in marketing communications, particularly in the culinary sector, which strongly relies on visuals and consumer experience. According to the Global Statshot Report published by We Are Social (2025), TikTok recorded a global user preference rate of 9,1% as of October 2025. As an algorithm-based platform, TikTok enables promotional content to be distributed rapidly through its For You Page (FYP) feature, allowing messages to reach audiences based on relevance and audience preferences (Vera & Ghosh, 2025). With features that combine short videos, editing tools, and algorithmic curation, TikTok creates a participatory communication space that enables new brands to gain public attention without relying solely on follower counts (Kulaga, 2024). Consequently, short-form video platforms have emerged from entertainment media into a strategic marketing communication ecosystem for businesses across industries.

Brand awareness plays a key role in marketing communications because it allows audiences to recognize brands and associate them with product categories in relevant situations (Bergkvist & Taylor, 2022). On TikTok, brand awareness is built through content exposure and interactive audience engagement (Arsyala & Supriadi, 2025). Therefore, brand awareness is influenced not only by the promotional message delivered but also by how audiences interpret and respond to the content within a competitive digital environment.

Influencer marketing strategies have emerged as an innovative online promotional approach that leverages influencers to share experiences and recommendations with their followers (Joshi et al., 2025). The intense interaction between influencers and audiences enables more personalized communication on social media (Benevento et al., 2025). On the other hand, influencers' credibility also shapes the audience's trust in the message conveyed (AlFraihat et al., 2025). As such, this strategy has the potential to be effective in distributing promotional messages on the TikTok platform, especially for new brands that do not yet have a strong organic follower base.

Several studies have highlighted that influencer marketing can effectively increase brand awareness through factors such as brand identity alignment, influencer credibility, and authentic visual storytelling on TikTok (Fifian et al., 2025). In addition, micro-influencers have been found to generate higher engagement and stronger brand awareness than macro-influencers in social media promotions on Instagram and TikTok (Darisa et al., 2025). While micro-influencers in TikTok advertisements have been proven to strengthen brand recall through the consistency of visual and verbal elements (Mardiyah & Pudrianisa, 2022).

Although previous studies confirm the contribution of influencer marketing to brand awareness through indicators such as reach, impressions, and engagement rate, its implementation for new brands with limited followers and promotional resources remains relatively underexplored. Moreover, audience exploratory behavior indicators such as click-through rate (CTR), which represent consumers' active interest in exploring a brand further, have not been widely analyzed in relation to brand awareness formation. This gap highlights the need for further research examining click-through rate (CTR) as a strategic indicator in evaluating influencer marketing effectiveness for emerging brands.

Bakso Pikat was selected as the object of research because it is a culinary brand that entered the market in September 2024 and is still in the early phase of building brand awareness. As a new brand, Bakso Pikat faces challenges related to limited organic followers and promotional reach amid intense competition in the culinary industry, particularly in the Yogyakarta region. To overcome this limitation, the brand uses TikTok as its primary promotional platform, due to its algorithm that enables content to reach broader audiences beyond existing followers. The strategy includes creating visually appealing menu content and collaborating with influencers across nano, micro, and macro categories to accelerate brand awareness.

The TikTok account Bakso Pikat, with the username @bakso.pikat, has accumulated 9.069 followers and an engagement rate of 3,51%, surpassing its main competitor which had 4.841 followers and an engagement rate of 1,44% as of February 2026. However, pre-survey field findings and in-depth interviews with Bakso Pikat management revealed that the audience frequently asked about location, price, and menu options in the comment section. At the same time, attention to captions and viewing duration remained relatively low. As a result, call-to-action (CTA) messages delivered by influencers were not optimally absorbed by audiences, indicating that digital exposure has not fully translated into comprehensive brand awareness.

Based on this background, this study aims to examine the implementation of influencer marketing strategies by Bakso Pikat on TikTok to build awareness. The research analyzed the strategy across planning, implementation, and evaluation phases, integrating click-through rate (CTR) as an indicator of audience exploratory behavior in the brand awareness formation process. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for businesses in designing more adaptive and targeted promotional communication strategies.

2. Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method with a case study approach to examine the implementation of influencer marketing strategies to build brand awareness on the TikTok platform. A qualitative case study approach enables researchers to explore social processes and meanings that cannot be fully represented through numerical data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This approach is considered relevant for analyzing the implementation of influencer marketing strategies within a real communication context (Lim, 2025). The descriptive design aims to systematically describe the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases of influencer marketing strategies in the process of building brand awareness (Suharsiwi et al., 2022). Bakso Pikat was selected as the research object because it represents a newly established culinary brand that utilizes the click-through rate (CTR) element in its TikTok-based influencer marketing strategy.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews and documentation. Interviews were used to explore informants' perspectives regarding influencer marketing implementation and audience responses to promotional content (Anto et al., 2024). Then, documentation in the form of TikTok content screenshots and performance data obtained from the platform's insights feature was used to reinforce and substantiate the findings of the interviews (Mulyadi et al., 2025).

The informants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure their relevant knowledge of the research phenomenon (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2025). This study involved five informants, who were considered sufficient to provide in-depth insight into the implementation of the strategy, which divided into two groups. The internal group consisted of the owner, marketing manager, and digital marketer of Bakso Pikat, who had direct knowledge of the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes for influencer marketing strategies. Then, the external group consisted of two consumers who actively followed the Bakso Pikat TikTok account and had been exposed to Bakso Pikat's influencer marketing, which represented the audience's perspective in the process of building brand awareness.

Data analysis followed the interactive model by Miles, Hubner, and Saldana (2014), which consists of three phases, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The data reduction phase involved grouping data on influencer marketing strategies, consumer behavior analysis based on the AISAS model, and the level of brand awareness achieved. The data presentation phase was structured as a descriptive narrative to show the relationship between findings. Conclusions were drawn by interpreting the findings' meaning and verifying them through comparisons among informants and through consistency with the theoretical framework used. Furthermore, data validity was ensured through source triangulation, which involved comparing information from multiple informants to enhance research credibility (Donkoh & Mensah, 2023).

3. Result and Discussion

This section presents findings and conceptual analysis of the role of the click-through rate (CTR) in implementing influencer marketing strategies to build brand awareness on the TikTok platform. The research results outline influencer marketing strategies during the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases. Additionally, it also explains the click-through rate (CTR) indicator and its role in building brand awareness. Thus, this section establishes a connection between the research findings, influencer marketing theory, AISAS model, and brand awareness hierarchy to explain the theoretical significance of the findings.

3.1 Result

This section presents empirical findings obtained from data interviews and documentation regarding the implementation of Bakso Pikat's influencer marketing strategy on the TikTok platform. The findings focus on three main aspects, namely the influencer marketing strategy of Bakso Pikat, consumer behavior responses based on the AISAS model, and the resulting level of brand awareness. These findings provide a factual overview of how the strategy reached the audience, encouraged engagement, and prompted exploration of brand-related information.

3.1.1 The Influencer Marketing Strategy of Bakso Pikat

This section describes the implementation of Bakso Pikat's influencer marketing strategy in three phases, such as planning, implementation, and evaluation. These phases reflect the process of message development, influencer selection, and campaign performance measurement in building brand awareness.

3.1.1.1 The Planning Phase of Influencer Marketing Strategy

The planning phase began with defining the campaign's concept, theme, message, and communication objectives. The main message emphasized the uniqueness of Bakso Pikat's menu compared to similar products. The promotional focus was placed on three signature menus, such as melted cheese meatballs, grilled cheese meatballs, and grilled ribs, which were considered visually appealing and distinctive when presented in video content.

Bakso Pikat also identified several key points influencers should include in their content, such as descriptions of the featured menu items, the influencer's experience tasting the food, and menu recommendations for audiences. Influencers were encouraged to consistently use keywords related to the restaurant's signature menu, including "melting cheese meatballs", "grilled cheese meatball", "grilled ribs", and "Bakso Pikat", either through narration or captions.

The communication focused on increasing brand awareness through content exposure and information dissemination on TikTok. TikTok was selected as the primary promotional platform due to its large user base and its algorithm that enables content to reach audiences beyond existing followers. In this strategy, click-through rate (CTR) was used as an indicator of audience exploratory behavior toward the brand.

The planning phase also involved identifying and selecting influencers. Bakso Pikat searched for TikTok accounts that frequently shared culinary reviews and dining recommendations in the Yogyakarta area. Influencers were selected based on content relevance, communication style, audience characteristics, follower numbers, and exposure levels measured through reach, impressions, likes, comments, and shares.

Influencers were then categorized into macro-influencers, micro-influencers, and nano-influencers based on their follower counts. Macro and micro-influencers with 10.000 to over 100.000 followers were utilized to expand audience reach, increase brand visibility, build rapport with the audience, and encourage more personal interaction. Meanwhile, nano-influencers with fewer than 10.000 followers were selected to represent ordinary consumers whose reviews were perceived as more authentic. Several influencer profiles involved in the campaign are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Profiles of Influencers Collaborating with Bakso Pikat

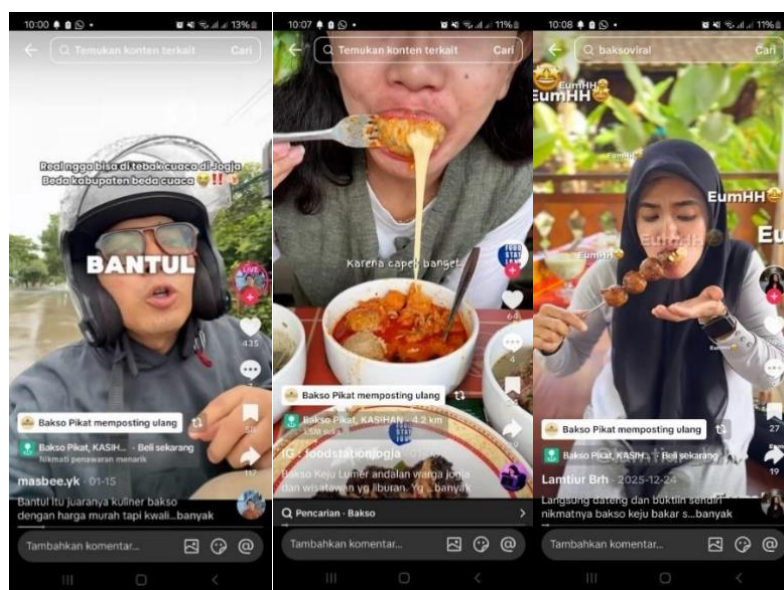
Category	TikTok Account	Number of Followers	Content Niche
Macro-Influencer	@adhityaputratama	437.400	Culinary
Macro-Influencer	@infodaharjogja	420.600	Culinary
Micro-Influencer	@brayenmanuel_	30.200	Culinary
Micro-Influencer	@rekomendasi.richa	23.900	Culinary, Daily, Travel (Yogyakarta Area)
Nano-Influencer	@sukadolan_	7.835	Culinary, Travel, Events (Yogyakarta and Solo Areas)
Nano-Influencer	@deenamyc	2.006	Culinary (Yogyakarta and Surrounding Areas)

The planning phase also included preparing content briefs with call-to-action elements that encouraged audiences to engage with click-through rate (CTR) features. Influencers were required to mention the official TikTok account @bakso.pikat and include the Bakso Pikat location tag in captions or video narration, so audiences could access the brand's profile and location information directly.

3.1.1.2 The Implementation Phase of Influencer Marketing Strategy

The implementation phase involved collaboration with selected influencers to produce promotional content on TikTok. Influencers created video content that presented their experiences consuming Bakso Pikat products using narrative and visually oriented approaches. Before producing content, influencers received content briefs containing promotional messages, product information, and instructions to include click-through rate (CTR) elements. These elements were implemented through mentions of the official TikTok account @bakso.pikat and location tags embedded in captions or videos. Each influencer video also began with a short hook that briefly summarized the content to capture the audience's attention.

Influencers were given creative freedom to present their content authenticity. This freedom included storytelling style, filming techniques, background music, and the way they described their dining experience. As a result, the content produced by each influencer varied in styles. The TikTok account @masbee.yk presented content in a vlog format documenting the visit experience chronologically from the message appearing on a messaging app, the journey to the location, directions to the Bakso Pikat restaurant, the ordering process, the moment of tasting the menus, the review and recommendation of each menu item. This content also included explanations of menu names, prices, portion sizes, and the dining atmosphere. Meanwhile, the account @foodstationjogja focused on product visuals, featuring close-up shots of dishes served or tasted, along with information on the business location, menu prices, and operating hours. Unlike these two accounts, @lamtiurbhr shared personal dining experiences in a storytelling style combined with animated typography and atmospheric visuals. The differences in content styles are illustrated in Figure 1 below.



(a) (b) (c)

Figure 1. Differences in Content Styles for Bakso Pikat Influencer Marketing: (a) @masbee.yk, (b) @foodstationjogja, (c) @lamtiurbhr

The Content generally emphasized product visuals as the main attraction. Menu items such as melted cheese meatball, grilled cheese meatball, and grilled ribs were displayed using close-up and extreme close-up shots. Some influencers also captured the moment when the meatballs were cut or eaten, showing melted cheese coming out of the product.

In addition to product visuals, influencers also conveyed information about menu prices, business location, dining facilities, and the surrounding atmosphere through narration and text overlays. All influencer content included click-through rate (CTR) elements through mentions of the official account and location tags that audiences could access directly on TikTok's interactive features. An example of influencer content containing click-through rate (CTR) elements is shown in Figure 2 below.

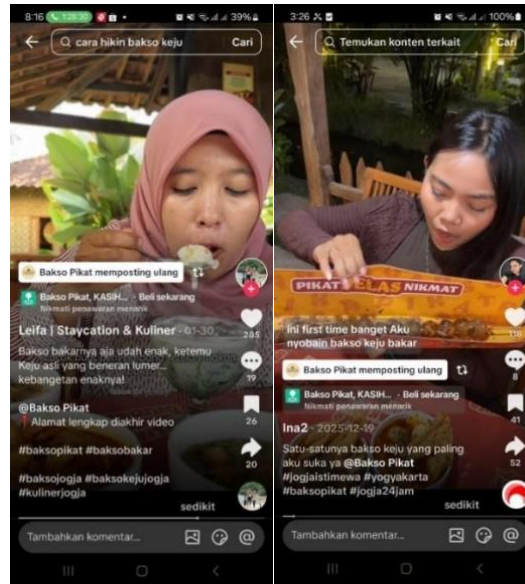


Figure 2. Bakso Pikat's Influencer Marketing Content with Click-Through Rate (CTR) Elements

3.1.1.3 The Evaluation Phase of Influencer Marketing Strategy

The evaluation phase was conducted using insights data available on the TikTok platform. This data was used to assess the performance of content published by the official Bakso Pikat account and content produced by collaborating influencers. The performance indicators analyzed included reach, engagement rate, profile visits to the Bakso Pikat TikTok account, and the number of clicks on location tags linked to the business's Google Maps page. Additionally, Google Maps data such as visitor reviews, ratings, and uploaded photos were also examined.

Click-through rate (CTR) data was identified through the number of profile visits and interactions with location tags within the content. These interactions indicated that users accessed brand-related information through the available interactive features. However, many audiences repeatedly asked about menu prices, menu variations, and available facilities in the comment section. The insights including reach, engagement rate, and click-through rate (CTR) for the Bakso Pikat TikTok account are presented in Figure 3 below.

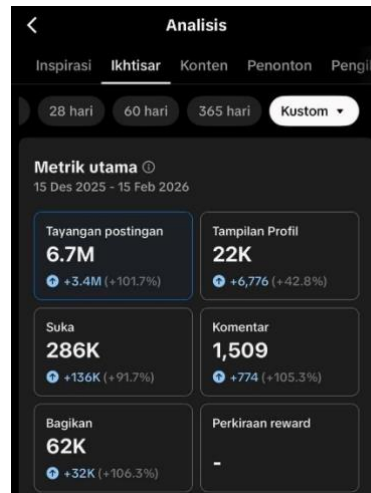


Figure 3. Insights on Reach, Engagement Rate, and Click-Through Rate of the Bakso Pikat TikTok Account

3.1.2 The Analysis of Consumer Behavior Based on The AISAS Model

The analysis of consumer behavior describes audience responses to influencer content about Bakso Pikat on TikTok using the AISAS model (Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Share) developed by Dentsu.

The attention phase occurred when influencer content appeared on the audience's For You Page (FYP), capturing their attention through distinctive product visuals, particularly melted cheese meatballs presented appealingly. This visual presentation encouraged audiences to stop scrolling and watch the content.

Following the attention phase, the audience's response moved to the interest phase, where they began to pay attention to the information influencers delivered, including menu variations, prices, dining atmosphere, and their experience while tasting the products. The narrative style influencers used made the information easier for audiences to understand.

The next phase is the search phase, in which audiences seek additional information after watching the influencer's content. This activity was facilitated through click-through rate (CTR) elements such as mentions of the official TikTok account and location tags embedded in the video. Through these features, audiences were able to directly access the Bakso Pikat TikTok profile and the business location page on Google Maps to obtain further information. These access activities are documented via screenshots as shown in Figure 4 below.

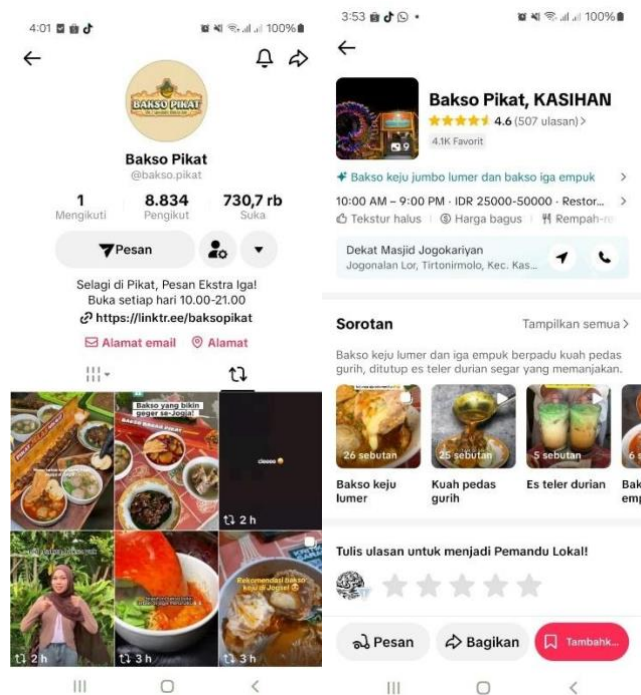


Figure 4. Evidence of Profile and Location Access for Bakso Pikat by Audience Accounts After Clicking the Click-Through Rate (CTR) Element

The action phase reflected when audiences decided to visit the Bakso Pikat restaurant after obtaining the necessary information. The audience stated that they decided to visit after seeing influencer content and reviewing additional information about the restaurant.

The final phase is share, where audiences who had visited and tried Bakso Pikat shared their experiences through social media posts, uploading photos and videos, or through personal communication with others, which could further expand the spread of information about the brand.

3.1.3 The Levels of Brand Awareness Achieved

The findings indicate that influencer marketing contributed to build brand awareness for Bakso Pikat. At the brand recognition level, audiences recognized the Bakso Pikat name when they saw visual elements that frequently appeared in influencer content, such as melted cheese meatballs, grilled cheese meatballs, the rice-field dining atmosphere, and joglo-style buildings. This ability to recognize the brand emerged after audiences viewed influencer content multiple times that displayed the account name and Bakso pikat location tags, which were accessible via click-through rate (CTR) elements within the content.

The research findings also indicate the emergence of brand recall, when audiences were able to state that, upon thinking of the cheese meatball category, Bakso Pikat was the first brand that came to mind. This brand mention was linked to visuals of melted cheese meatballs frequently appearing in influencer content, as well as consumers' experience in viewing and accessing information about Bakso Pikat through the click-through rate (CTR) elements available within the content.

However, Bakso Pikat has not yet reached the top-of-mind level of brand awareness in the general meatball category. Audiences still mentioned several other meatball brands when asked about meatball places they would like to visit, including a meatball restaurant near their residence.

3.2 Discussion

This section discusses the conceptual implications of the research findings by linking them with existing theories and prior research. The discussion focuses on three main aspects, such as influencer marketing strategies, consumer behavioral responses based on the AISAS model, and the level of brand awareness achieved by Bakso Pikat through the TikTok platform. The discussion aims to

explain how the implemented strategies influence consumer behavior, leading to action and brand memory formation rather than merely generating exposure.

3.2.1 The Influencer Marketing Strategy of Bakso Pikat

This discussion of Bakso Pikat's influencer marketing strategy focuses on how the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases function as an integrated communication process to build brand awareness on the TikTok platform. Each phase represents a strategic effort that not only organizes promotional activities but also directs audience interaction toward measurable behavioral responses. In this study, the strategy emphasizes the role of click-through rate (CTR) as an indicator of audience engagement, reflecting the transition from exposure to information exploration.

3.2.1.1 The Planning Phase of Influencer Marketing Strategy

The planning phase of Bakso Pikat's influencer marketing strategy was carried out systematically by defining the communication concept, key messages, and campaign objectives to increase brand awareness and encourage audience interaction through click-through rate (CTR). The use of specific keywords such as "melting cheese meatballs", "grilled cheese meatballs", "grilled ribs", and "Bakso Pikat" was intended to attract audience curiosity and encourage exploratory actions reflected in click-through rate (CTR). Within influencer marketing strategy, campaign planning plays an important role in structuring message cues that stimulate audience curiosity and encourage measurable interaction, including click-based responses reflected in click-through rate (CTR). This strategy also aligns with previous research showing that consistent exposure to branded keywords in digital content can enhance brand recognition and recall in consumers' memories (Lo & Hsieh, 2024).

Furthermore, selecting influencers based on niche relevance, audience characteristics, and engagement levels indicates that the strategy prioritizes the potential to generate interactive responses such as clicks rather than solely on reach. Grouping influencers into macro-influencers, micro-influencers, and nano-influencers reflects a communication segmentation strategy that allows messages to reach a broad audience while simultaneously building a more personal connection, thereby increasing the probability of clicks on click-through rate (CTR) elements. Influencer marketing theory explains that the effectiveness of influencer selection is not only determined by audience size but also by influencers' potential to generate interactive audience responses such as clicks and profile visits. These findings also align with research stating that a combination of various influencer types has proven effective in optimizing digital marketing strategies by leveraging each type's strengths, where macro-influencers play a role in expanding audience reach, while micro and nano-influencers are more effective in building credibility and rapport with a more specific audience (Fang et al., 2025).

The strategic plan also highlights the integration of call-to-action elements from the early phase through the development of content briefs that guide influencers to include account mention and location tags. The incorporation of these elements indicates that click-through rate (CTR) has been positioned as an explicitly designed communication objective, rather than merely an evaluation metric. In an influencer marketing campaign, call-to-action elements serve as strategic prompts that encourage audiences to take follow-up actions, such as clicking links or accessing brand profiles. This approach aligns with research indicating that the integration of interactive elements in digital communication, such as call-to-action elements, has been shown to function not only as information conveyors but also as triggers for active audience participation, thereby increasing the likelihood of follow-up actions after content exposure (Zhou & Zhou, 2022).

3.2.1.2 The Implementation Phase of Influencer Marketing Strategy

The use of short hooks at the beginning of influencer videos reflects a strategic approach to capturing audience attention in the initial moments of content exposure. In the context of influencer marketing, the opening seconds play a critical role in determining whether viewers continue watching the content or move to other videos. Therefore, this aligns with the statement that incorporating attention-grabbing openings functions as a communication strategy that helps maintain audience engagement with influencer-generated content (Fatimah & Nasir, 2025).

Influencer marketing activities were implemented through various content formats that not only enhance visual appeal but also to stimulate audience engagement and encourage more active

interaction with the brand. In influencer marketing practice, how promotional messages are presented across various content formats can influence audience engagement, including the likelihood of click-based interactions. This aligns with research indicating that content format variation in influencer marketing enhances communication effectiveness when elements such as format, duration, and influencer selection are strategically integrated to align with complex audience behavior (Yassen et al., 2026).

The use of powerful visual elements such as close-ups and slow-motion shots showcasing melting cheese serves as the primary stimulus for capturing the audience's attention. In this context, visual elements not only build interest but also create a psychological impulse that sparks curiosity, thereby encouraging the audience to access further information by clicking on the account or business location. Influencer marketing theory suggests that visual product demonstrations can stimulate audience curiosity, which may lead to exploratory actions such as clicking on profiles or brand information sources. This aligns with findings indicating that visual stimulation in digital content plays a crucial role in capturing consumer attention, with specific visual elements such as human faces can significantly enhancing focus and emotional response (Gómez-Mejía & Rodríguez-Martínez, 2025). Additionally, the use of high-quality visuals such as images and videos, can increase consumer engagement and interest in the products displayed (Mokashi & Lepakshi, 2026).

Meanwhile, the strategy's implementation also demonstrates a balance between the brand's control over the message and the influencer's creative freedom. Influencers still follow the brief's guidelines but are given the freedom to convey the message authentically in their own communication style. This approach fosters perceptions of authenticity and audience trust, ultimately impacting click-through rate (CTR). In influencer marketing theory, authenticity is considered a key factor that influences audience trust and increases the likelihood of interactive responses such as clicks and profile visits. This aligns with findings suggesting that reduced brand control can be an effective strategy for enhancing the authenticity of influencer content, which in turn strengthens persuasive power, audience trust, and resulting behavioral responses (Hamdan & Lee, 2022).

3.2.1.3 The Evaluation Phase of Influencer Marketing Strategy

The evaluation of the influencer marketing strategy was conducted using data insights from the TikTok platform as well as additional data from Google Maps. The indicators used include reach, engagement rate, profile visits, and the effectiveness of access to location tags, which is measured by the click-through rate (CTR). In this study, click-through rate (CTR) is measured as the number of clicks on official accounts and business locations, reflecting the audience's interest in exploring further information after exposure to the content. In influencer marketing theory, click-through rate (CTR) is often used as a performance metric to gauge how effectively promotional content prompts audiences to engage further. This approach aligns with research findings that metrics such as clicks can serve as initial indicators of audience engagement in digital environments, particularly when combined with other metrics to provide a more comprehensive picture of engagement (Liu & Kumar, 2025). However, click-through rate (CTR) alone is insufficient to represent engagement fully and therefore needs to be supported by additional indicators (Mohammad et al., 2025).

The integration of TikTok and Google Maps shows that consumer behavior involves moving across platforms to search for information. Audiences often access profiles or business locations to view reviews and learn about visitor experiences. However, repeated questions regarding menu prices, menu variations, and available facilities suggest that some practical brand information may not have been fully captured by all viewers. From the perspective of influencer marketing analytics, click-based interactions such as profile visits and location access indicate that audiences are actively engaging with influencer-generated content. These findings align with the perception that today's digital consumer journey is cross-platform, where interactions with various types of content, each with distinct emotional and cognitive characteristics, help shape the evaluation process through to decision-making (Balu et al., 2026).

Thus, the click-through rate (CTR) in this study serves as an indicator of content performance and representation of the audience's active engagement in the information exploration process. Within influencer marketing evaluation frameworks, click-through rate (CTR) is often taken as evidence that promotional messages have successfully piqued audience curiosity and prompted follow-up interaction. This indicates that the success of influencer marketing strategies is measured by the

number of views and the content's ability to enhance measurable follow-up actions through the click-through rate (CTR).

3.2.2 The Analysis of Consumer Behavior Based on The AISAS Model

Research findings indicate that influencer content can guide the audience through the phases of attention, interest, search, action, and share. The attention phase is triggered by visually appealing product imagery, while the interest phase develops through the delivery of narrative and informative content. Such audience responses correspond with the AISAS model, in which engagement in an influencer marketing strategy begins with attention and subsequently develops into interest in the promoted product. This aligns with findings that influencer content not only captures initial attention but also sustains audience engagement, ultimately fostering brand loyalty and behavioral intent (Soria-Martínez et al., 2024).

In this study, the search phase is a crucial phase that is directly influenced by the click-through rate (CTR). The click-through rate (CTR) element integrated into the content allows the audience to easily access further information with just one click, thereby accelerating the information search process. The observed behavior reflects the search phase in the AISAS model, where audiences actively explore additional information after developing interest in influencer marketing content. This aligns with the assertion that the click-through rate (CTR) serves as a bridge between the interest and search phases in the AISAS model, thereby influencing the consumer decision-making process (Javed et al., 2022).

The findings of this study indicate that the "action" phase reflects consumers' decisions following the acquisition of information and serves as an indicator of the success of the exploration process in the digital journey. Meanwhile, the "share" phase underscores consumers' role as information disseminators through the experiences they share. Within the AISAS model, the action phase represents audiences' behavioral response after obtaining sufficient information. In contrast, the share phase refers to the tendency of audiences to disseminate their experience or opinions to others. This aligns with research showing that positive consumer experiences drive satisfaction, which in turn enhances sharing behavior through word-of-mouth (Doğan-Südaş et al., 2023). Thus, the click-through rate (CTR) can be understood as the primary point of connection that initiates the information exploration process in the consumer's digital journey.

3.2.3 The Levels of Brand Awareness Achieved

These research findings indicate that Bakso Pikat's influencer marketing strategy successfully achieved levels of brand recognition and brand recall. Consumers can recognize the brand through consistent visual elements and recall it when thinking about a specific product category. Within the hierarchy of brand awareness, brand recognition represents the ability of audiences to identify a brand when exposed to its cues. In contrast, brand recall reflects their ability to retrieve the brand from memory when thinking about a particular product category. This aligns with research indicating that brand recognition and brand recall are interdependent, brand recognition often serves as prerequisite for the formation of spontaneous recall, particularly through repeated exposure to content on social media (Babich & Senchilo, 2023).

This pattern suggests that audience click behavior plays a strategic role in advancing brand awareness, as exploratory actions enable audiences to access additional brand information that strengthens memory associations. Click-based interactions that direct audiences to brand profiles or business locations serve as an informational gateway, allowing them to deepen their understanding of the brand, and thereby strengthening brand recognition and recall. In brand awareness theory, deeper engagement with brand information is considered an important factor in reinforcing brand recognition and recall in the audience's memory. This aligns with the finding that active consumer interaction in digital environments has been shown to strengthen brand memory through increased brand recognition and recall, which in turn influences consumer preferences and choices (Saini et al., 2025). Additionally, digital interaction also enhances interest and loyalty toward the brand (Terason et al., 2025).

However, Bakso Pikat's brand awareness has not yet reached top-of-mind status, indicating it needs more consistent exposure to build brand dominance, even though its click-through rate (CTR) can encourage exploration and strengthen brand recall. According to the hierarchy of brand

awareness, top-of-mind awareness represents the highest level, where a brand consistently emerges as the first recalled by the audience within a product category, resulting strong, and repeated brand exposure. In line with this, Kato (2022) explains that memory of a brand's core concept tends to be more closely aligned with loyalty than memory of specific brand elements alone. Thus, recall dominance in the "cheese meatball" subcategory should be understood as the initial foundation for building brand awareness, not as an indicator that the brand has reached its maximum position within the overall product category.

4. Conclusion

This study shows that the implementation of an influencer marketing strategy by Bakso Pikat through the phases of planning, implementation, and evaluation is effective in strengthening the process of building brand awareness for a new culinary brand on the TikTok platform. The integration of click-through rate (CTR) from the promotional message construction phase indicates that exploratory behavior indicators serve not only as performance metrics but also as strategic mechanisms guiding the audience's transition from the interest phase to the search phase within the AISAS model framework.

Collaborations involving macro, micro, and nano-influencers demonstrate that influencer category differentiation is not solely about expanding reach but also about gradually building rapport and message credibility across different audience segments. This implementation of this strategy successfully increased brand awareness for Bakso Pikat, achieving brand recognition and brand recall within the specific cheese meatball category. However, it has not yet reached top-of-mind status in the meatball category as a whole. Conceptually, this study enriches the field of influencer marketing by positioning click-through rate (CTR) as an integral element in the design of communication strategies, rather than merely an evaluative metric. Particularly, these findings have practical implications for businesses in designing influencer marketing strategies that integrate behavioral indicators such as click-through rate (CTR) to better understand audience exploration behavior.

Practically, Bakso Pikat can enhance click-through rate (CTR) by encouraging deeper audience exploration of brand information. A hidden information strategy can be implemented by providing exclusive menu recommendations or promotional details that can only be accessed after audience clicks the profile or location links attached to influencer content. In addition, optimizing information on destination links, such as TikTok profiles or Google Maps, by including menu lists, price ranges, facilities, and location details can help the audience obtain clearer information after clicking. Developing a website as a centralized information hub can also consolidate brand information in one place, reduce repetitive audience questions, and support Bakso Pikat in strengthening brand recall and gradually achieving top-of-mind awareness.

Further research is recommended to quantitatively test the relationship between click-through rate (CTR) and brand awareness formation, providing more measurable empirical validation. Additionally, this study could be expanded to include brands with different industry characteristics and business models, including national and international brands as well as those without a physical location, to assess the consistency of the click-through rate (CTR) as an indicator of behavioral transition and to enhance the generalizability of the research findings.

5. Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank the Department of Communication Studies at Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta and Bakso Pikat for their support during this research process.

6. References

- Ahmad, M., & Wilkins, S. (2025). Purposive Sampling in Qualitative Research: a Framework for The Entire Journey. *Quality & Quantity*, 59(2), 1461–1479. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-024-02022-5>

-
- AlFraihat, S. F., Aboalganam, K. M., Alghizzawi, M., Habes, M., & Almuhausen, O. (2025). Influencer Captions and Credibility on Instagram: Investigating Their Impact on Brand Trust, Brand Awareness and Purchase Intention. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, 7(6), 314–330. <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i6.9469>
- Anto, R. P., Nur, N., Yusriani, Ardah, F. K., Ayu, J. D., Nurmahdi, A., Apriyeni, B. A. R., Purwanti, Adrianingsih, N. Y., & Putra, M. F. (2024). Metode Penelitian Kualitatif: Teori dan Penerapannya. In *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif: Teori dan Penerapannya* (1st ed., Vol. 1). CV Tahta Media Group.
- Arsyala, T. P., & Supriadi, O. (2025). Modeling User Engagement on Social Media Platforms Through Content Marketing and Personal Branding Using PLS-SEM. *Proceeding - 2025 4th International Conference on Creative Communication and Innovative Technology: Empowering Transformative MATURE LEADERSHIP: Harnessing Technological Advancement for Global Sustainability, ICCIT 2025*. <https://doi.org/10.1109/ICCIT65724.2025.11167660>
- Babich, N. S., & Senchilo, B. S. (2023). Relationship between Press Mentions and Brand Awareness. *Galactica Media: Journal of Media Studies*, 5(1), 78–100. <https://doi.org/10.46539/gmd.v5i1.327>
- Balu, J., Sreejith, R., & Sinimole, K. R. (2026). Thinking Fast and Slow in Film Reception: Cognitive Spillover of Consumer Emotions Across Digital Platforms. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 88, 104474. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2025.104474>
- Benevento, E., Aloini, D., Roma, P., & Bellino, D. (2025). The Impact of Influencers on Brand Social Network Growth: Insights from New Product Launch Events on Twitter. *Journal of Business Research*, 189, 115–123. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2024.115123>
- Bergkvist, L., & Taylor, C. (2022). Reviving and Improving Brand Awareness As a Construct in Advertising Research. *Journal of Advertising*, 51, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2022.2039886>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications Inc.
- Darisa, T. M. W. D., Jayalaksana, D., Tutupoho, R. R., & Permana, E. (2025). Analisis Peran Micro Influencer dalam Meningkatkan Brand Awareness Produk Skintific. *Kajian Ekonomi Dan Akuntansi Terapan (KEAT)*, 2(2), 94–108. <https://doi.org/10.61132/keat.v2i2.1052>
- Doğan-Südaş, H., Kara, A., & Karaca, E. (2023). Effects of Gamified Mobile Apps on Purchase Intentions and Word-of-Mouth Engagement: Implications for Sustainability Behavior. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 15(13). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su151310506>
- Donkoh, S., & Mensah, J. (2023). Application of Triangulation in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Applied Biotechnology & Bioengineering*, 10(1), 6–9. <https://doi.org/10.15406/jabb.2023.10.00319>
- Fang, X., Shin, S. K., & Huang, X. (2025). Enhancing Social Media Engagement: Speech Act Strategies Across Influencer Types. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 84, 104258. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2025.104258>
- Fatimah, A. F., & Nasir, M. (2025). Utilization of Short-Form Videos (TikTok, Reels, Shorts) to Increase Brand Engagement and Visibility. *Journal of Digital Marketing and Search Engine Optimization*, 2(1), 16–32. <https://doi.org/10.59261/jseo.v2i1.7>
-

-
- Fifian, Muftiadi, A., & Rasmini, M. (2025). Analisis Strategi Influencer Marketing Joybasic.id dalam Meningkatkan Brand Awareness di TikTok. *LiQuidity Jurnal Riset Akuntansi Dan Manajemen*, 14(2), 188–196. <https://doi.org/10.32546/lq.v14i2.3149>
- Gómez-Mejía, M., & Rodríguez-Martínez, G. (2025). Analyzing Emotional and Attentional Responses to Promotional Images Using a Remote Eye-Tracker Device and Face-Reading Techniques. *Communications in Computer and Information Science*, 2237 CCIS, 37–52. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-75147-9_3
- Hamdan, L., & Lee, S. H. M. (2022). Brand Balance: The Effect of Influencer Brand Encroachment on Interactivity. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 50(3), 303–316. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-07-2020-0283>
- Javed, S., Rashidin, M. S., & Xiao, Y. (2022). Investigating The Impact of Digital Influencers on Consumer Decision-Making and Content Outreach: Using Dual AISAS Model. *Economic Research-Ekonomika Istraživanja*, 35(1), 1183–1210. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1331677X.2021.1960578>
- Joshi, Y., Lim, W. M., Jagani, K., & Kumar, S. (2025). Social media influencer marketing: foundations, trends, and ways forward. In *Electronic Commerce Research* (Vol. 25, Number 2). Springer US. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10660-023-09719-z>
- Kato, T. (2022). An Empirical Study of Brand Concept Recall as a Predictor of Brand Loyalty for Dyson. *Lecture Notes in Business Information Processing*, 443 LNBIP, 76–86. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-04126-6_7
- Kułaga, W. (2024). Revolutionizing Visual Communication and Digital Creative Engagement: The Game-Changing Impact of TikTok. *Przegląd Socjologii Jakosciowej*, 20(3), 212–235. <https://doi.org/10.18778/1733-8069.20.3.10>
- Lim, W. M. (2025). What Is Qualitative Research? An Overview and Guidelines. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 33(2), 199–229. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14413582241264619>
- Liu, S., & Kumar, S. (2025). Quantifying the Impact of Viewer Interactions on Consumer Engagement Metrics in Live Streaming E-Commerce on Taobao Live. *Asian Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 8(2), 115–123. <https://doi.org/10.54392/ajir2527>
- Lo, S. K., & Hsieh, A. Y. (2024). Don'T Cry for No Click-Ons! Exploring the Mere Exposure Effect and Arousal Theory. *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research*, 25(1), 68–81.
- Mardiyah, I. maisyatul, & Pudrianisa, S. L. G. (2022). Pengemasan Iklan Makro Influencer Scarlett Whitening di TikTok untuk Membangun Brand Awareness. *Jurnal Mahasiswa Komunikasi Cantrik*, 2(2), 119–128. <https://doi.org/10.20885/cantrik.vol2.iss2.art4>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis A Methods Sourcebook* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications Inc.
- Mohammad, A. A. S., Mohammad, S. I. S., Al Oraini, B., Hindieh, A., Vasudevan, A., & Alshurideh, M. T. (2025). Decoding Consumer Behaviour: Leveraging Big Data and Machine Learning for Personalized Digital Marketing. *Data and Metadata*, 4. <https://doi.org/10.56294/dm2025700>
- Mokashi, R., & Lepakshi, V. A. (2026). Assessing the Impact of Images and Videos in Digital Marketing Which Affect the Customer Buying Behavior. *Communications in Computer and Information Science*, 2636 CCIS, 89–110. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-032-18293-7_7
-

-
- Mulyadi, Muttaqin, Z., Sormin, M. A., Eriyanti, R. W., & Hudha, A. M. (2025). Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, dan Mixed Methods: Menyusun Metodologi Penelitian Yang Komprehensif (1st ed.). PT Adab Indonesia.
- Saini, A., Elangovan, R., & Sharma, T. (2025). Influence of Social Media on Consumers' Brand Choice: A Moderated Mediation Model. *International Journal of Business Excellence*, 36(2), 250–271. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJBEX.2025.146595>
- Soria-Martínez, Ó., Sánchez-Fernández, R., Jiménez-Castillo, D., & Gallarza, M. G. (2024). Exploring the Value Drivers of Influencer-Generated Content: Effects on Followers' Engagement and Behavior. *International Scientific-Business Conference LIMEN Leadership, Innovation, Management and Economics: Integrated Politics of Research*, 141–150. <https://doi.org/10.31410/LIMEN.S.P.2024.141>
- Suharsiw, Sumantri, M. S., & Fauzi. (2022). *Sukses Penelitian Kualitatif* (1st ed.). CV Azka Pustaka.
- Terason, S., Pattanayanon, P., & Phawitpiriyakliti, C. (2025). From Interaction to Loyalty: The Role of Digital Engagement in Automobile Consumers. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2025(1). <https://doi.org/10.1155/hbe2/9912657>
- Vera, J. A., & Ghosh, S. (2025). “They’ve Over-Emphasized That One Search”: Controlling Unwanted Content on TikTok’s For You Page. *Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems - Proceedings*, (February). <https://doi.org/10.1145/3706598.3713666>
- We Are Social. (2025). Digital 2026 Global Overview Report. We Are Social. <https://wearesocial.com/id/blog/2025/10/digital-2026-global-overview-report/>
- Yassen, M., Noaman, M. S., Hassan, T. A. M. A., Qasim, N. H., Aljebouri, H., & Averichev, I. (2026). Digital Influence and Strategic Communication in the Global Information Order: Insights from Social Media Marketing Ecosystems BT - Optimization and Data Science in Industrial Engineering (Z. Molamohamadi, E. Babaei Tirkolaee, A. Mirzazadeh, & G.-W. Weber, Eds.; pp. 616–631). Springer Nature Switzerland. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-032-17023-1_37
- Zhou, J., & Zhou, J. (2022). From Interactive Experience to Behavioral Participation—A Probe into the Expression of Public-Interest in the Era of Digital Intelligence BT - Distributed, Ambient and Pervasive Interactions. *Smart Environments, Ecosystems, and Cities* (N. A. Streitz & S. Konomi, Eds.; pp. 435–443). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-05463-1_30
-