

The Role of Affiliate in Marketing Strategy to Grow Brand Image (Case Study of Sunsilk at Unilever Indonesia Company)

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Publication Date: 2026/07/17

Abstract: This study examines the marketing strategy utilized by Unilever Indonesia company for Sunsilk, particularly focusing on the partnerships developed with beauty content creators in the digital age. As marketing strategies move towards digital collaborations, this research looks into the influence affiliate marketing has on positioning Sunsilk with beauty content creators. Through a case study and digital content analysis, the research utilizes a qualitative methodology. It highlights the impact affiliate marketing has on brand visibility and positioning Sunsilk in the audience's mind as a relevant brand in the hair care industry. Sponsored beauty content creators are powerful influencers as they convincingly deliver the brand message through their tutorials, reviews, and storytelling. The brand's strong market positioning can be attributed to the strategy created for interaction, trust building, and sales conversion through engagement on TikTok, Instagram, YouTube Shorts, and e-commerce affiliates. According to McKinsey & Company states that engagement strategies on short-form social media platforms (TikTok, Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts) can boost sales conversion by up to 70%, while also strengthening brand positioning by building relationships and trust more quickly. Research on marketing strategies relies on KPIs such as reach and engagement to measure their impact, CTR, conversion rate, GMV, and ROAS. According to Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) explain that digital marketing effectiveness can be evaluated using key performance indicators (KPIs) such as reach, engagement, CTR, and conversion rate. In addition, e-commerce and affiliate marketing performance are often assessed using financial metrics including GMV and ROAS, which are widely applied in industry reports by NielsenIQ and Statista1. The growing trend of target audience marketing to Gen Z and millennials is the strong trust and purchase propensity attributed to branded content created by micro and nano influencers. Storytelling, social proof, and optimally placed CTAs are some of the more effective marketing strategies. Counterbrand's challenges are message interruption, content disalignment, and content imbalance.

Keywords: Affiliate Marketing, Content Creator, Digital Era, Brand Image, Sunsilk.

How to Cite: Ruhul Yasinna; Dr. Purwanto (2026) The Role of Affiliate in Marketing Strategy to Grow Brand Image (Case Study of Sunsilk at Unilever Indonesia Company). *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 11(6), 3607-3630. <https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26jun1732>

I. INTRODUCTION

Unilever Indonesia company was founded in 1929 through the merger of Margarine Unie (Netherlands) and Lever Brothers (England). During the latter half of the 20th century, Unilever Indonesia company expanded its business beyond fats and oils. It entered the food, personal care, and chemical industries by acquiring various brands. Since its founding, Unilever Indonesia company has consistently expanded its global operations, making it one of the world's largest multinational fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies engaged in the production and distribution of consumer goods in the food, personal care, home care and beverage categories with more than 400 brands marketed in more than 190 countries. In Indonesia, Unilever Indonesia company history began in 1933 with the establishment of a

soap factory called Lever's Zeepfabrieken N.V. in Angke, Jakarta. In the 1950s, the Sunsilk shampoo brand was first launched in the United Kingdom in 1954. One of the leading brands in the Beauty & Personal Care category is Sunsilk, which was first launched in the UK in 1954 and entered the Indonesian market the following decade. Sunsilk was recognized for its value and pioneering ideas in the world of hair care by the late 1950s and early 1960s. The company launched its first shampoo in 1960 and followed with the first exclusively Pakistani-made conditioner in 1963. This was the first in the company's collaborations with aforementioned brands and was the first of its kind in the entire region. This was followed by the introduction of Hatha and Hatha's Virgin Olive Oil conditioner, Hatha was the first of its kind in the region and served as the entry point of the Southwest Asian region for conditioners.

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By the late 1950s, the fundamentals of hair care were revolutionized by the innovations of Sunsilk. The 60s began with the launch of the company's very first shampoo and 1963 saw the release of the very first conditioner exclusively made in Pakistan. This marked the beginning of the company's work with the above-mentioned brands, the first of its kind in the entire region. This was followed by the introduction of Hatha and Hatha's Virgin Olive Oil conditioner, Hatha was the first of its kind in the region and served as the entry point of the region for conditioners. In 1982, the company then developed into Unilever Indonesia company Tbk, which officially listed its shares on the Indonesia Stock Exchange (IDX). In 1985, Styling Mousse was introduced, produced by Unilever Indonesia company Group which at that time was for the largest FMCG companies in Indonesia with wide ranging distribution. Sunsilk has an array of hair care products with different shampoos and conditioners alongside Hidh Recharge and Black Shine as well as Soft & Smooth. Over the years, Sunsilk has worked with skin specialists, hair care professionals, and beauty influencers to strengthen their brand image.

In the digital era, Sunsilk's brand communication strategy has transformed from a dominance of traditional media to one based on digital marketing, collaboration with influencers, and affiliate marketing, particularly through beauty content creators. Through iconic campaigns and collaborations with celebrities and inspiring young figures, Sunsilk has successfully established itself as a leader in the hair care market in Indonesia.

A. Business Case Exploration

➤ Brand Image

Brand image is A set of beliefs, ideas, and impressions held by a person about an object. Brand image, on the other hand, is the perceptions and beliefs held by consumers, as reflected in associations embedded in the consumer's memory with regard to the brand of a product that is seen, thought out and imagined. people will still choose their brands by what

they feel is represented about the brand through its image alone. Consumers that have not had prior experiences with a brand will also have a tendency to "trust" a familiar or favourite brand. Positive brand image equates to customer loyalty, consumer confidence in positive brand value, and inclination to spend time seeking brand. Positive brand identity can increase consumers' level of interest in competitive marketing initiatives.

According Oscar & Keni (2019) state that a brand image can be described as "the overall impression that different and various memories of a brand create" in the minds of consumers. The repeated pattern of consumers using a brand will influence how consistent the brand can be used to create a positive brand image. In the scope of this research, the brand image has a great significance for Sunsilk because it operates in a competitive digital market where consumers (mainly Gen Z & Millennials) are influenced by social media, beauty content creators, and online reviews. By using affiliate marketing and influencer collaborations, Sunsilk creates a way not only to promote products but also to generate emotional connections and positively magnify the image of the brand in the minds of consumers. The brand image that Sunsilk projects will distinguish it from its competitors, enhance consumer engagement, and encourage consumers to trust the brand and purchase Sunsilk products via digital platforms (e.g., TikTok, Instagram, ecommerce). Brand image serves as a key element in measuring the effectiveness of affiliate marketing strategies and the digital transformation of marketing activities at Unilever Indonesia company.

Affiliate marketing building customer trust and strengthening Sunsilk's brand image in the digital era. In the era of technological advancements and shifts in consumer behavior, the business world is experiencing a significant shift from traditional marketing methods to digital marketing focused on online platforms. Kwan (2023) stated that affiliate marketing is a very effective digital marketing model because it can establish a more personal and interactive relationship between brands and consumers.(Kwan, (2023)).

This strategy is often used on platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, Shopee, and Tokopedia. The growth of social media, digital algorithms, and changes in consumer habits have encouraged companies to use influencers and beauty content creators as part of their marketing strategies. Through affiliate marketing, Sunsilk can establish more genuine communication with the public, especially Gen Z and millennials, who tend to trust influencer advice more than traditional advertising. Content in the form of tutorials, product reviews, storytelling, and live shopping is considered effective in increasing engagement, brand awareness, and building emotional connections with audiences. Unilever Indonesia's company hair care brands, Sunsilk faces increasingly fierce competition from global and local brands in the FMCG and beauty care industries. Therefore, the company needs to develop an adaptive, digital-based marketing strategy to maintain its brand image and consumer loyalty.

Through collaboration with beauty content creators and affiliate marketers, Sunsilk can not only increase brand visibility but also strengthen positive consumer perceptions of the brand.

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method at Sunsilk in Unilever Indonesia company.

B. Conceptual Framework

➤ Internal Analysis

The researcher employs SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis for Unilever Indonesia company, specifically focusing on the case study of Sunsilk and the affiliate marketing strategy of beauty content creators. Unilever's case for Sunsilk shows strong brand equity, broad distribution, and Unilever's digital marketing competence, which makes them well-positioned for affiliate marketing campaigns. However, the company has some internal shortcomings including, traditional advertising reliance, sluggish and complicated decision making, and the presence of diverse influencers which makes the consistent messaging a challenge.

Brand image building become the important for sunsilk to growing, the internal factors are paired with external factors such as growing e-commerce and the increasing prevalence of beauty creators as major influencers of consumers in the Gen Z and Millennial cohorts (which positions Sunsilk to) become a strong player in the digital space.

- **Strength, Performance-based structure:** Unilever makes a commission-only payment to the influencer when a sale or conversion occurs, which makes it "pay for performance" advertising. From Unilever's viewpoint, this structure allows for a controlled advertising budget. Varied, quality, content: Affiliate creators make a lot of content, like tutorials, and reviews (Nguyen, 2024). This also adds a lot of user-generated content (UGC) to Unilever's advertising, which increases their advertising engagement and authenticity. Increased brand social media presence: Now that Sunsilk has intertwined itself with a network of beauty creators, it also has social media brand presence on all the beauty network marketers like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and the others. Focused marketing: Since each creator has a niche audience, Sunsilk can focus its Marketing spend on a segmented audience and can personalize targeted promotions for a specific demographic (e.g., to a certain hair type).
- **Weaknesses, Limited Insight Into Business Strategy:** A brand retention framework can provide unverified oversight into potential brand retention activities at an account level. Uneven Competition: All other retention-focused partners present very uneven competition. The three most significant competitors—Starcom, Omnicom, and Zenith treat retention as an incapacity, and offer retention as an incidental roadside activity. Attitudes: The things that strike the most in Indigo's proposed approach are (1) the level of deference (e.g. partner leads, account leads), (2) lack of challenge to the obvious: e.g. partners are offering a digital service, merely inverting the

anteriority of the self-service, and (3) service of the self rather than the service of the other, where the self is irrational and the other is reasonable.

- **Opportunities, Collaboration with micro influencers:** have smaller audiences, but their audiences are usually very engaged and loyal. This may translate to more authentic and cost-effective marketing. Micro influencers tend to have higher engagement compared to macro influencers. Incorporate recent digital trends: Emerging market trends such as short-form video marketing on TikTok and Instagram Reels, live shopping, and AR (augmented reality) try-on features present an opportunity for Sunsilk to create content that is fun and shareable. Highlight eco-friendly initiatives: While there is more demand for sustainable and ethical beauty products, Sunsilk can partner with creators that positively reflect on the brand based on eco-conscious customers and help formulate the brand. Sunsilk Affiliates Programs Strengths Subscription-based model: A subscription-based affiliate program could lead to recurring revenue, as well as foster long-term engagements with creators and customers, especially those who benefit from using products subscription-based models. Data-driven optimization: Affiliate campaigns produce data, even including things like CTR and conversions. Though generated from affiliates, this data reflects shifts in consumer behavior, and provides Sunsilk with a basis for optimizing its product offerings paired with marketing efforts.
- **Threat, Digital saturation:** The beauty market is highly competitive and saturated with many brands and creators. It is challenging for any one brand, including Sunsilk, to stand out and catch the consumer's attention. Algorithm changes: The reach and efficiency of affiliate content stumble as social media platforms go through changes on their algorithms. A change on a key platform such as TikTok can tremendously reduce the visibility of a creator and in turn the success of the Sunsilk campaign. Customer attribution conflicts: It can be challenging to attribute a sale to a specific marketing channel, especially when a customer engages with multiple channels like social ads and an affiliate link. This can result in conflicts and double-pays which leads to frustration for the affiliate and incorrect data for the brand. Loss of control over the customer relationship: Sunsilk cannot develop a relationship with the customer and cannot nurture the customer for follow-on purchase after the first transaction because the customer is primarily the affiliate's follower, not Sunsilk's. This shrinks customer lifetime value. Negative impact from counterfeit goods: The risk of counterfeit Sunsilk products is present, and fraudulent products and resellers are a problem. If a customer buys a counterfeit Sunsilk product without knowing, it can create a negative experience that can harm the brand.
- ✓ **External Analysis, The Researchers applied Porter's Five Forces framework** to analyze the external environment affecting Unilever Indonesia company, particularly in implementing an affiliate marketing strategy to strengthen Sunsilk's brand image through beauty content creators. Porter's model states that industry competitiveness is shaped by competitors, new entrants, substitute products,

suppliers, and buyers. These forces can determine the level of opportunities and threats for Sunsilk in the Indonesian beauty and personal hair care market.

- ✓ **Competitive Rivalry**, The beauty and personal care market in Indonesia is highly competitive, with both multinational players (e.g., P&G, L'Oréal, Garnier) and local brands (e.g., Wardah, Scarlett) actively targeting Gen Z and millennial consumers. Digital marketing is intensifying competition as brands increasingly collaborate with influencers and affiliates. For Sunsilk, building a strong affiliate marketing ecosystem with beauty creators is crucial to strengthening consumer loyalty and staying ahead of the curve.
- ✓ **Threat of New Entrants**, The biggest barriers to market entry are moderate. While building a brand and distribution requires significant investment, digital platforms allow emerging beauty brands to quickly gain traction through influencer collaborations and targeted advertising. This puts increased pressure on Sunsilk to optimize its affiliate strategy, ensuring that beauty creators consistently convey Sunsilk's relevance and credibility to consumers.
- ✓ **Threat of Substitutes**, If the brand influences many products, substitute products include other hair care products that offer herbal, organic, or environmentally

friendly benefits. However, Generation Z's preference for natural products increases the risk of brand switching. Sunsilk should position itself through content creators who can highlight Sunsilk's unique product attributes, scientific formulations, and alignment with sustainability trends to minimize the risk of substitution.

- ✓ **Bargaining Power of Suppliers**, Unilever Indonesia company generally has strong bargaining power given the expanding scale of its global supply chain. If suppliers offer sustainable, cruelty-free, and environmentally friendly ingredients, they may gain influence as consumers demand more ethical products. Therefore, Sunsilk's affiliate marketing should also communicate its commitment to sustainability, strengthening supplier partnerships as part of the product's brand image.
- ✓ **Bargaining Power of Buyers**, Digitally savvy Indonesian consumers have strong bargaining power over affiliates. With a wide selection of hair care products and a keen interest in social media reviews and trends, they can easily switch brands. Sunsilk can capitalize on the opportunity for beauty content creators to engage directly with their followers, building trust with these consumers, and consumers trust that authentic product storytelling can influence purchasing decisions.

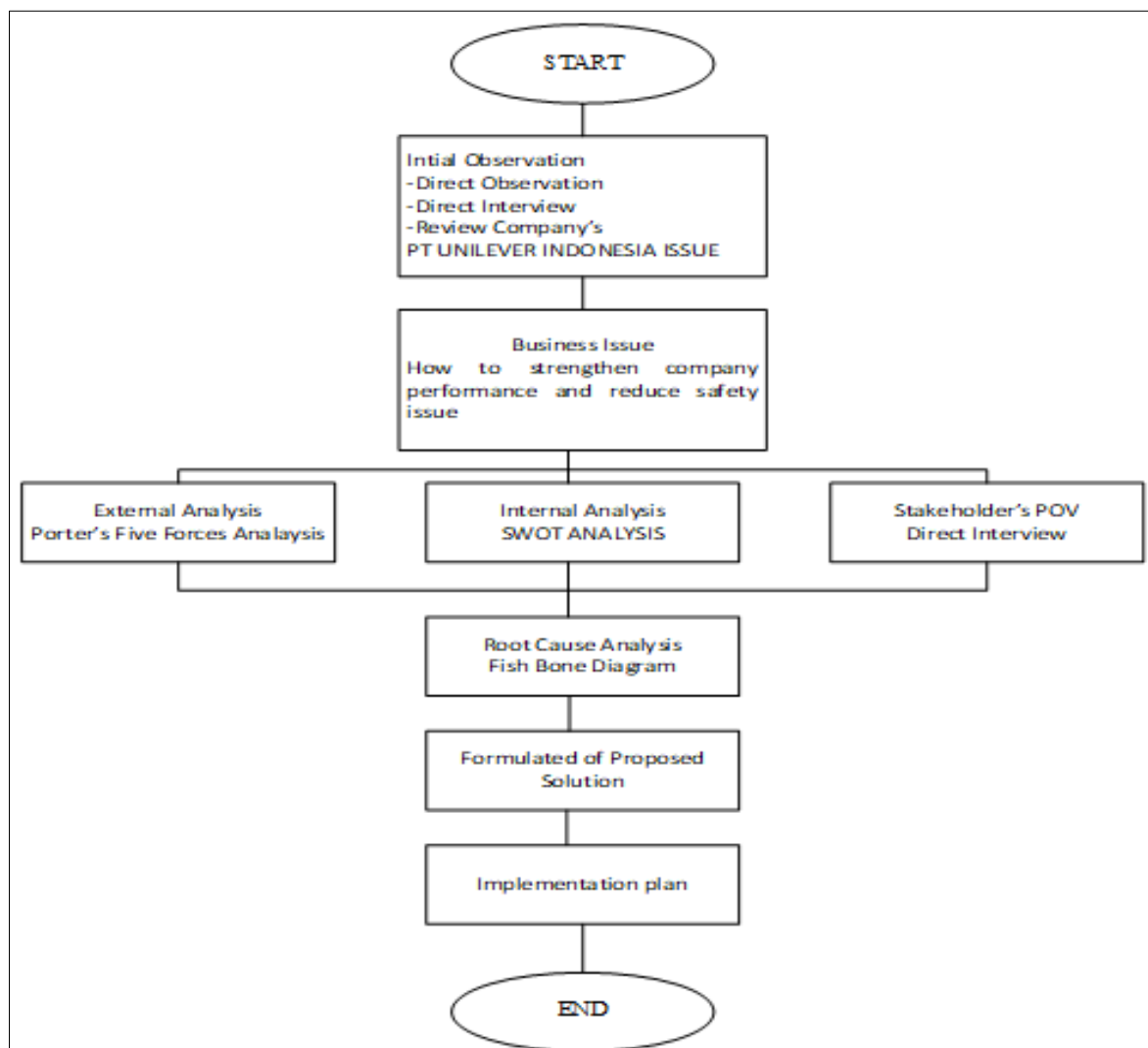


Fig 1 Conceptual Framework

➤ Analysis of Business Situation

The business situation analysis has identified that critical challenges exist in two key areas, namely internal manufacturing operations and the external digital marketing ecosystem for the Sunsilk brand.

- **Internal/Manufacturing Challenges,** Over two-thirds of Unilever's processes are still performed manually. This highlights the urgent requirement for the optimization of production systems for efficiency enhancement. The primary internal challenges focus on the automation obstacles to be addressed: Deficient Collaboration: Automation, production, engineering, R&D, and the quality teams lack collaboration on the fundamental issues. Proliferating Problems: Process and quality instability, and safety repeat as the most pressing problems. Most issues are caused by manual activities and operators skipping steps in method sheets. Process Glass Ceilings: The focus-diverting six major issues in relation to the variation of people, products, flow, technology, project management, and morality, all impact the automation of processes in a time-effective manner.
- **Sunsilk Affiliate Marketing Strategy,** The evaluation of Sunsilk's digital strategy highlights the effectiveness and challenges of using beauty content creators for affiliate marketing: Effectiveness: Affiliate marketing has allowed Sunsilk to customize and communicate, using the authentic voice of the micro-influencer, to engage Gen Z. In particular, partner marketing activities with micro-influencers evoke higher engagement levels, as audiences consider them more trustworthy than macro-influencers. Challenges: With the aforementioned benefits, some of the

most prominent challenges still include undetermined commission payouts for affiliates, divergent and inconsistent messages from various content producers, and the prima facie credibility gap of influencer endorsements (an absence of trust). Focus: Compared with manufacturing issues that emphasize process and product, the affiliate marketing constraints more heavily emphasize people (content creators) and technology (digital platforms).

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➤ Research Design

This study employs a qualitative method of analysis and data collection. Data collection is a crucial stage when applying qualitative techniques, as it can influence the overall course of the research. The researcher used qualitative methods to concentrate on direct engagement with the practitioners to obtain responses that are better aligned to the study's objectives. The researcher has chosen qualitative methods for purposes of obtaining a more thorough and systematic account of the affiliate marketing strategies of beauty content creators targeting Sunsilk's brand image in the digital era in the case study of Unilever indonesia company. The results of the case study suggest that qualitative methods focus on the marketing strategies of 'beauty content creators' on Sunsilk's brand image. Semi-structured interviews provide the balance between structured questions and flexibility to explore emerging themes. This study is concerned with brand image building in affiliate marketing in the case of Unilever indonesia company with Sunsilk and how the brand collaborates with beauty content creators.

Table 1 List of Informants for a Preliminary Interview

No	Informant Code	Education	Age	Roles	Department
1	DIR1	University	40	Senior Manager	Marketing Strategy unilever indonesia company
2	MAN1	University	38	Manager	Digital Marketing
3	MAN2	University	32	Manager	Brand communication (sunsilk)
4	MAN3	University	35	Manager	Ecommerce & affiliate partnership
5	CRE1	University	28	Beauty content creator	Youtube/Instagram/tik tok
6	CRE2	University	34	Costumer	Pelanggan
7	AFF1	University	28	Affiliate partner	Digital platform vendor
8	ANA1	University	49	Marketing analyst	Consumer insights
9	ANA2	University	70	Ibu rumah tangga	Pelanggan
10	ANA3	University	60	Ibu rumah tangga	Pelanggan
11	AFF2	University	25	Content creator	Affiliate creator
12	AFF3	University	22	Content creator	Affiliate creator

Triangulation integrates interviews, secondary data, and qualitative analysis, offering a fuller perspective on affiliate marketing via beauty content creators and its impact on Sunsilk's brand image in the digital age.

➤ Research Instrument

Regarding qualitative research, the most common method of data collection is the interview, which may be semi-structured or in-depth. These types of interviews allow the researcher to gather a lot of information about the subject's point of view. Other sources of data may be observations, pictures, papers, and artifacts, which may add to the

information gathered from the interview. In this research, the researcher conducted an interview to gather more information from the informant. The interview is the most widely used method of data collection in qualitative research. They may also be semi-structured, consisting of a series of open-ended questions, or in- depth interviews, where the focus of the questions may be on one or two themes. The interviews may last between one to two hours and may generate a lot of data, but the time it takes to conduct and analyze the results may be quite lengthy. The style of the interview and the location may influence the quality of the data collected, with face-to-face interviews often providing the best results, as it may be easier

to read between the lines. The unstructured interview allows the interviewer to make changes to the questions depending on the answers received, which makes it easier to obtain significant insights into the participants' thoughts and opinions. The list of interview questions based on the analysis using the triangulation method. The triangulation method was used to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings of the

study. This means that different sources of data, such as journals, interviews with personnel at different levels, observations of the organization's internal environment and manufacturing process, and analysis of production records, were used. Triangulation of different sources of data provided a clear view of the challenges and opportunities in the manufacturing process of Unilever Indonesia company.

Table 2 List Of Research Questions and Interview Questions

No	Research Question	Interview Question
1	What is the role of affiliate marketing in building sunsilk brand image through beauty content creators?	How do you perceive the effectiveness of affiliate marketing collaborations in shaping sunsilk's brand identity?
2	What are the main challenges in executing affiliate marketing campaigns with beauty content creator?	What obstacles have you faced in implementing affiliate marketing strategies with sunsilk?
3	How do consumers perceive sunsilk's brand image through influencer and affiliate marketing content?	In your view, how do audiences respond to sunsilk's campaign led by beauty content creator?
4	What strategies can enhance the success of sunsilk's affiliate marketing in the digital era?	What measures or improvements do you suggest to optimize sunsilk's affiliate marketing collaborations?
5	How does affiliate marketing contribute to Sun'silk's overall marketing performance And consumer loyalty?	How have affiliate marketing initiatives impacted sunsilk's sale, engagement, and long-term brand image?

➤ Data Analysis Method

The data gathered was analyzed using thematic analysis to gain more insight into the interview results. Thematic analysis is a descriptive analysis technique that identifies, analyzes, and reports on patterns in the data, known as themes. It is a systematic process of analysis that helps the researcher to interpret the various elements of the research topic. Thematic analysis is a versatile analysis technique that may be applied to various situations in qualitative research, and it is viewed as a basic analysis technique that teaches the researcher the basics of undertaking various forms of analysis. Thematic analysis is also a recursive and not a linear process, and it involves multiple evaluations and revisions as ideas are generated and developed. The researcher interviewed various key informants, which include the marketing team of Sun'silk, affiliates, and beauty content creators who are involved in the promotional activities of the firm. The data collected through

these interviews was then interpreted to identify patterns and themes regarding the efficiency of affiliate marketing and its impact on Sun'silk's brand image.

➤ Summary of Interview

The summary of the interview sessions conducted with the marketing team of Sun'silk, affiliate marketers, beauty content creators, and consumers. Interpretation and reduction of data are the essence of unlocking the research problem, as thematic analysis helps in extracting important themes and patterns. The summary of the interview sessions conducted with the marketing team of Sun'silk, affiliate marketers, beauty content creators, and consumers. Interpretation and reduction of data are the essence of unlocking the research problem, as thematic analysis helps in extracting important themes and patterns.

Table 3 The Interpretation of the Interview

No	ID	Condensation of Data and Interpretation	Category	Similar Facts
1	MKT1	Affiliate marketing with beauty content creators helps sunsilk reach gen Z audiences more effectively through relatable and authentic content	Affiliate Marketing effectiveness	(+)
2	MKT2	Collaboration with micro-influencers generates higher engagement Rates compared to macro-influencers, as audiences perceive them As more trustworthy	Influencer credibility	(+)
3	CRE1	Beauty creators emphasize storytelling and personal experience when promoting sunsilk, which strengthens emotional connection with consumers	Content strategy	(+)
4	CRE2	Concerns exist among influencers about transparency in affiliate commission structures, which may affect their long-term Commitment	Affiliate Challenges	(-)
5	AFF1	Affiliate links embedded in tutorials and reviews drive direct traffic to sunsilk's e-commerce platforms, increasing purchase intention	Purchase intention	(+)
6	AFF2	A lack of clear campaign guidelines sometimes causes inconsistent messaging across different influencers	Lack of strategy and guideline	(+)
7	CUS1	Consumers perceive sunsilk as more modern and relevant when promoted by influencers who align with their beauty ideals	Brand image perception	(+)
8	CUS2	Come consumers express skepticism about the influencer	Trust issue	(-)

		endorsements are genuine or solely driven by commission		
9	MKT3	Using affiliate marketing reduces campaign costs while expanding digital reach compared to traditional advertising	Cost efficiency	(+)
10	CRE3	Regular collaboration and training between sunsilk's marketing team and influencers improve campaign consistency and brand positioning	Collaborations and training	(+)

The summary, drawn from informants, underscored the importance of enhancing authentic influencer collaborations, clear communication of reviews, and a consistent content strategy in efforts to improve Sunsilk's affiliate marketing. Beauty content creators play a crucial role in shaping consumer trust and perception, strengthening Sunsilk's brand image by driving purchase intent. However, content creators face challenges such as unclear commission structures, inconsistent messaging, and consumer skepticism about authenticity, which remain key barriers. These findings suggest that affiliate marketing can effectively impact Sunsilk's brand image when supported by influencer credibility, transparent guidelines, and strategic collaborations.

➤ Business Analysis

This indicates the need to optimize the existing production system. The problems faced by the organization can be divided into internal and external factors. From an internal perspective, the main challenge the organization will face is the lack of cooperation and coordination between end users, including engineers, brand production, algorithm automation, R&D, and video quality. This cooperation and coordination are crucial in the design, control, and implementation of new technologies. It has involved extensive integration of processes, human resources, and technology to improve productivity, safety, and product quality, and enhance the brand image. On the external side, the plants operate in a competitive environment, and the top management assesses the performance of the plants every year on parameters such as safety, quality, and delivery. The plant is competing with five other Unilever plants located in China, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Mexico. Every plant is expected to provide simplicity, competitive advantages, and added values. Hence, every plant must achieve KPI targets. This is a multi-faceted question that involves several departments such as engineering, production, automation, quality, Environment, Health, and Safety (EHS), and Research & Development (R&D). Although engineers are responsible for designing machines, the use of automation technology involves collaboration between the R&D team.

- Product Variation (Design and Method), Unilever Indonesia company has a very high level of variety in their products. The Research and Development (R&D) division of the company. The high level of variety in their products makes the process more complex, making it difficult to automate. This makes the system more flexible, adaptive, and costly to develop.
- People, The adoption of automation technology using fewer resources has always been viewed negatively. Organizations may underutilize the potential of their automation technology, thereby delaying the benefits of having such technology. Proper planning and resource utilization may help to mitigate this problem. The lack of balance between the increase in machinery and manpower

was clearly stated by a representative of the mechanic (MEC1) working in the pack-out area. The same case may apply to the affiliate marketing strategy of Sunsilk. The increase in digital media may need to be matched with proper training of the teams to work effectively on campaign monitoring. In the case of affiliate marketing by Sunsilk, collaboration between marketing teams, compliance teams, and branding teams is required to ensure that content creators abide by ethical standards and values.

- Process, Organizations can lay a strong foundation to achieve success by focusing on small, achievable targets and continually improving the way things are done. This not only helps to create a culture of continuous improvement but also minimizes the risks of overwhelming changes and failures. In the context of Sunsilk's marketing strategy, the same concept can be applied. The brand quality team has a similar point of view. The production process, the success of Sunsilk's affiliate marketing strategy is based on simplicity.
- Technology, Technology is one of the key solutions for Unilever Indonesia company in improving its production system, especially in reducing safety issues caused by manual processes. affiliate marketing through beauty content creators has become a strategic "technology" in marketing, allowing Sunsilk to strengthen its brand image in the digital era. Just as automation eliminates repetitive and high-risk tasks in manufacturing, affiliate marketing reduces inefficiencies in brand communication by directly connecting with the target audience through trusted content creators. Informants also highlighted that the declining price of technology over time makes automation more accessible. the decreasing cost and increasing accessibility of digital platforms and influencer collaborations have made affiliate marketing a more cost-efficient tool for Sunsilk compared to traditional advertising. Collaboration with external automation partners parallels Sunsilk's collaboration with content creators both serve as strategic partners to speed up innovation and strengthen competitive advantage in a highly dynamic market. affiliate marketing provides Sunsilk with a safer and more authentic channel to communicate brand values to consumers. In terms of marketing, increasing collaboration with engaging beauty content creators helped Sunsilk overcome algorithm challenges to reach Gen Z audiences and build brand trust in the beauty market. Manufacturing technology and affiliate marketing help optimize processes, reduce risks, create sustainable trust value for Unilever.
- Ethics, The use of clear decision-making processes and different digital platforms that work together could potentially accelerate the implementation of campaigns and lower costs. Communicating and working together is important for success and building brand image for Sunsilk and their affiliate partner being content creator. In

highlighting how collaboration with content creators, commission transparency, and governance play the same important role in marketing as in manufacturing, helping to overcome interdepartmental barriers, simplify processes, and strengthen Sunsilk's brand image, introducing the digital era through affiliate marketing strategies and partnerships with content creators.

- Project Management, marketing campaign that aims to complete projects on time, within budget, safely, and to very high video quality standards. affiliate marketing strategies, determining scheduling is crucial for accurate and efficient management to synchronize new product campaign launches, influencer content creation, and performance evaluation based on engagement. Scheduling that saves time and costs. Ensuring that all have reached the maximum and consistency of content creators with brand messages.

➤ Conclusion of the Business Analysis

In this case study, I illustrate the fishbone diagram used to identify the root causes that influenced the effectiveness of Sunsilk's affiliate marketing strategy and its performance. the fishbone diagram, an illustration known as an Ishikawa diagram emerged. This is a structured method for visually identifying the various causes of a problem, radiating from a central effect, resembling a fishbone to facilitate problem-solving. First, there is the "Head" of the fish, representing the problem or central effect, in this case, the challenge of building Sunsilk's brand image through beauty content creators in the digital era. Second, there is the "Spine," which is the main arrow pointing to the head, representing the main path to the problem. Third, the "bones" section is the line extending from the spine that shows the main categories of potential causes, such as problems commonly encountered in community, people, processes, technology, content, partnerships, and management.

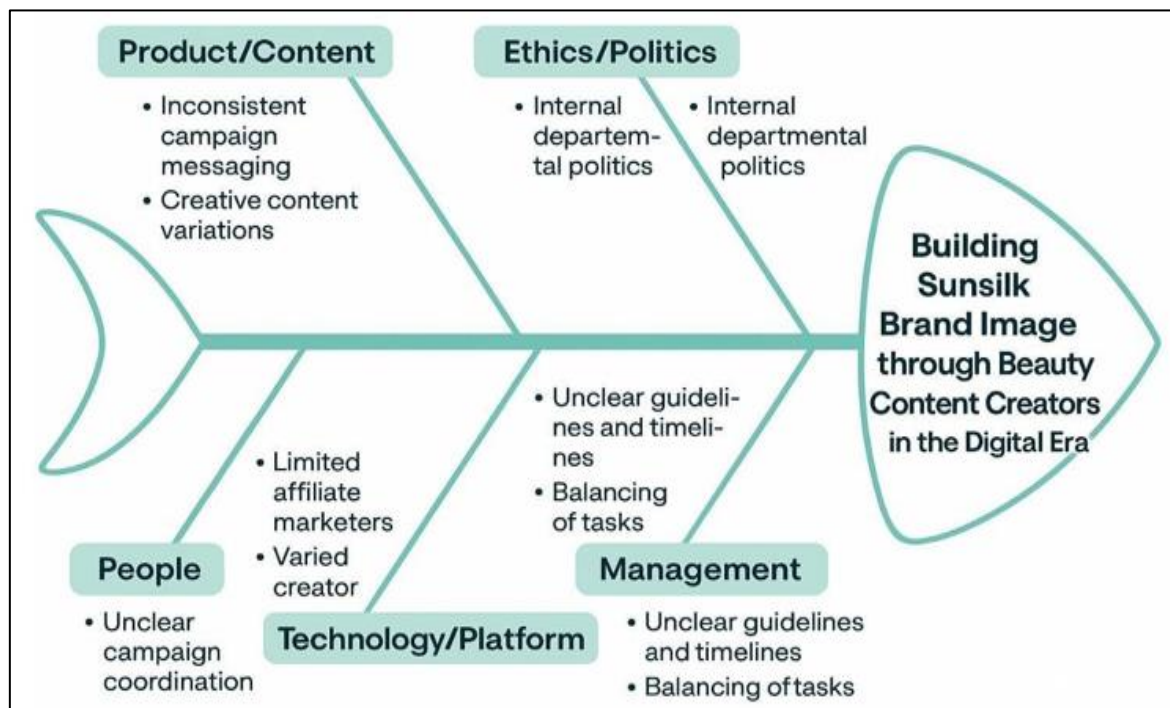


Fig 2 Fishbone Diagram

III. BUSINESS SOLUTION

➤ Industrial Revolution

Unilever company have leveraged digital technology resources like social media and affiliate marketing strategies to promote products like Sunsilk, engaging beauty content creators and influencers who act as digital account holders within this ecosystem, enabling them to conduct personalized, interactive, and measurable marketing campaigns.

Just as Industry 4.0 has systems that increase performance efficiency and performance innovation in manufacturing systems, those who use technology-based marketing strategies enable brands to strengthen their image, engage a wider audience of influencers, and adapt to the ever-evolving digital age.

➤ Industry 4.0 as the Future Manufacturing Vision

Unilever company leverages these principles by engaging affiliate marketing programs and beauty content creators, who play a crucial role in acting as digital intermediaries to engage consumers, personalize original content, and drive measurable brand results.

- Smart Products, Unilever company uses beauty influencers and content creators for managing Sunsilk campaigns that help them analyze and track consumer engagement and preference, so they adjust and optimize marketing strategies accordingly. Similar to how intelligent devices offer insights to enhance their operational life, smart products, content creators communicate audience feedback, allowing brands to modify campaigns and optimize personalization. The incorporation of digital

intelligence into marketing is illustrative of the wider Industry 4.0 paradigm, where automation, data analytics, and connected processes enhance both the manufacturing and marketing of goods.

- Smart Factory, Unilever company uses digital channels, including beauty content creators, to construct a decentralized but integrated system to market products such as Sunsilk. Similar to how a Smart Factory integrates and synchronizes production modules from design to delivery, digital nodes are content creators that connect to consumers, produce engagement metrics, and assist. This marketing method ensures that brands can be consistent, yet flexible in their marketing in the digital era.
- Business Models, Unilever Indonesia company uses affiliate marketing programs and beauty content creators to establish a highly interconnected digital ecosystem. Influencers respond to customer engagement, campaign results, and market trends like decentralised nodes, allowing brands to communicate in a personalised and timely manner. Like Industry 4.0, which allows for real-time self-organization in production networks, digital marketing networks enable Sunsilk to optimize brand presence and consumer accessibility in the digital marketing age.
- Customer, Unilever Indonesia company uses beauty influencers to tap into audiences, communicate product details, and offer personalized suggestions based on consumer preferences. As in Industry 4.0, where customers can change orders or get personalized feedback during production, beauty creators enable interactive, fuels consumer personalization and systematic product understanding. This approach helps in reinforcing brand image, instilling trust, and increasing engagement in the digital age.

➤ Automation

Unilever Indonesia company uses automated systems via affiliate marketing, social media scheduling, and analytics to simplify campaign management and optimize influencer collaboration. Marketing Automation facilitates data-driven decisions, personalized content, and more efficient campaigns. It is similar to robots improving production quality and workflow in manufacturing.

Automated systems for marketing allow Sunsilk's brand campaigns a fully-performed analysis of customer behavior, audience segmentation, and engagement optimization technology. They can also assist with forecasting, assessing the effectiveness of influencers, and making recommendations for business moves.

➤ Organizational Culture

Unilever indonesia company that are implementing affiliate marketing programs through beauty content creators as part of their digital marketing strategies. Organizations can develop cross-functional teams that include marketing, digital analytics, and brand management departments to promote improved cooperation.

Cross- functional teams collaboratively work toward common objectives related to campaign reach, engagement metrics, brand awareness, knowledge sharing, and the development of new affiliate marketing strategies. By developing joint objectives and regular means of communication (e.g., through team meetings, periodic feedback sessions), the alignment of internal departments and external content creators can be achieved.

Communication within a company works better if active listening, regular communication and a structured feedback system are used to track campaign performance and adapt to changes in market conditions. Technology, such as project management software and collaboration tools, helps to simplify the campaign planning process, content scheduling, and tracking of campaign performance.

The implementation of these organizational and communication strategies will provide you with a productive and engaged team, capable of creating successful affiliate marketing campaigns that will enhance Sunsilk's brand image in the digital age.

➤ Leadership and Motivation

Unilever's company leaders inspire, direct, and motivate all members of their team, particularly marketing managers and the people coordinating digital campaigns, to exceed both corporate and brand expectations. marketing employees feel passionate about their work and are completely engaged in their jobs, they tend to create innovative partnerships with influencers (i.e., those who have millions of followers on social media), develop high-quality content, and communicate frequently and consistently with beauty influencers.

As a result, strong leadership, motivation, and employee engagement have to be integrated into the development of successful affiliate marketing programs or achieving creative success from affiliate marketing efforts.

➤ Product Development

Unilever company could use Design Thinking to better understand the needs and wants of Sunsilk consumers and the audiences of those who create beauty- related content. By empathizing with its users, identifying emerging trends through research, and conducting iterative tests on its marketing concepts, the company could create relevant marketing campaigns that communicate with consumers on a deeper level and build a stronger brand.

Collaborative methods are also highly important when utilizing Design Thinking, through collaboration between marketers, content creators, designers, and data analysts to build engaging campaigns together. The 5 principles of Design Thinking Understanding User Needs, Defining the Problem, Ideate Solutions, Prototype, and Test can all be used by Unilever to design more personalized, Creative and Measurable Affiliate Marketing strategies. Involving all stakeholders (i.e. marketing, product and influencer partners) early on ensures a seamless launch of the campaign as well as alignment with the brand's objectives.

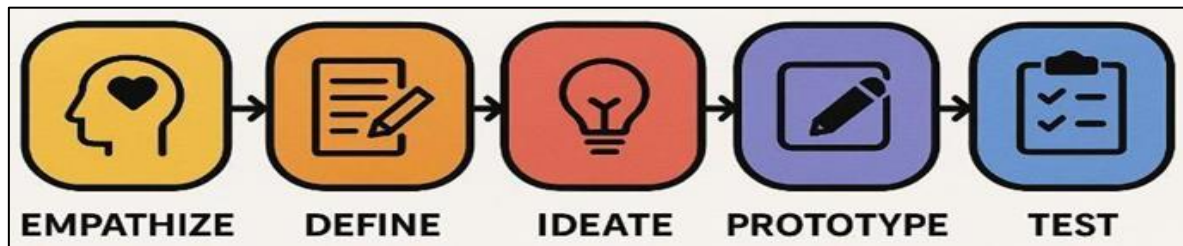


Fig 3 Design Thinking

Unilever's indonesia company process for proper marketing team engagement will help address problems early through marketing teams, product managers, beauty content creators, and others working together from the beginning for identification of potential challenges and to facilitate smooth implementation of the campaign. Unilever indonesia company to collaborate towards effective campaign execution, proper allocation of resources, appropriate selection of influencers, and an effective content design based on alignment to Sunsilk brand values. Unilever's indonesia company team to implement innovative, user-centric and cost-effective campaigns. This process lowers the time of execution and improves the overall campaign success rate to increase digital brand recognition and consumer engagement, ultimately leading to long-term branded growth.

➤ Workforce Development Program

Unilever indonesia company, focusing on the development of their marketing teams, social media managers and affiliate programme coordinators will enable the organisation to make optimum use of beauty content creators in order to build and strengthen the overall image of the Sunsilk brand. In order to fulfil this goal, a varied approach to training is necessary. unilever employees the digital marketing environment, organisations must provide their employees with the requisite upskilling in areas such as social media analysis, content strategy and affiliate marketing platform development as well and develop their ability to make data driven decisions.

Unilever company can create an innovative and data-driven marketing affiliate program for their Sunsilk brand through investing in the education and training of employees so they have the needed skills and flexibility. This will increase awareness of and participation in the Sunsilk brand online.

➤ Computerized Campaign Management System

The CCMS will assist Unilever indonesia company with managing and coordinating their affiliate marketing programs and content creators who are dedicated to the beauty category, thus ensuring that Sunsilk's campaigns are being viewed by the correct audience at the appropriate time.

- Campaign management, Campaign creation, scheduling, tracking and updating as well as assigning roles to content creators will be possible, as will monitoring marketing performance in real-time.
- Tracking Content Creators & Assets, A database of content creators will be maintained and there will be records of all past campaigns and their associated engagement metrics to assist future collaborations with content creators.
- Digital Asset Inventory Management, Digital assets (images, videos, creative) will be tracked and managed with resources necessary for posting being provided to the content creator in a timely manner.
- Reporting & Analytics, Insight into campaign performance, engagement and ROI(i.e. return on investment) will be produced so that marketing strategies can be optimised.

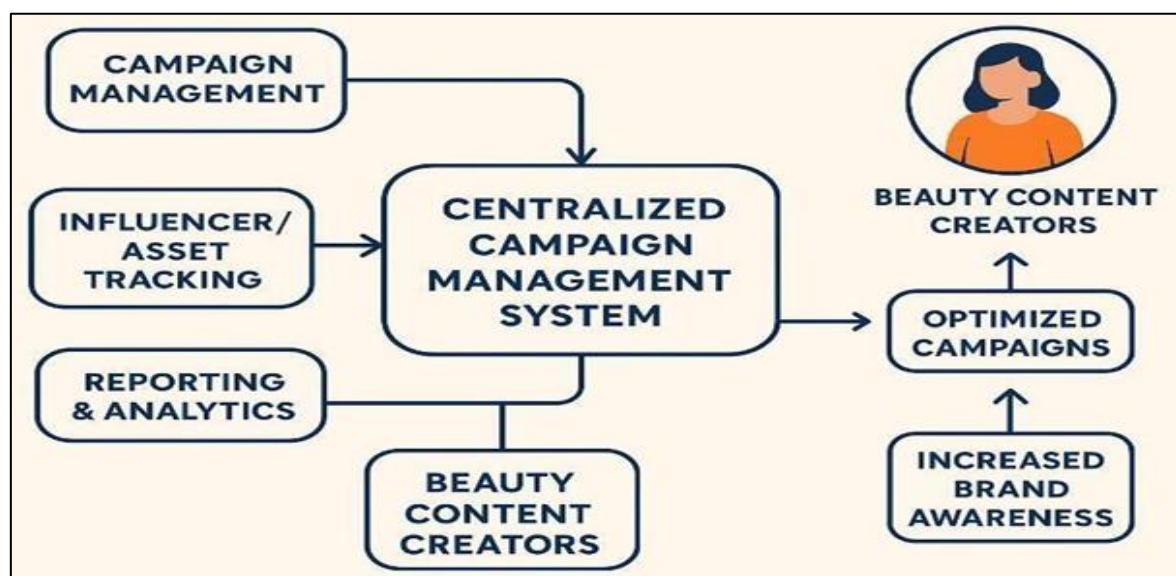


Fig 4 Computerized Campaign Management System (CCMS)

➤ Lean Marketing in Affiliate Strategy

Lean Marketing is a strategic method that seeks to optimise resources and reduce waste when creating digital campaigns. Sunsilk uses lean marketing by closely collaborating with Beauty Content Creators to create targeted

campaigns that resonate with their target audience, rather than running large-scale un-directed campaigns. Shortening the length of each individual marketing campaign and responding quickly to audience feedback allows for increased engagement, brand awareness and ROI.

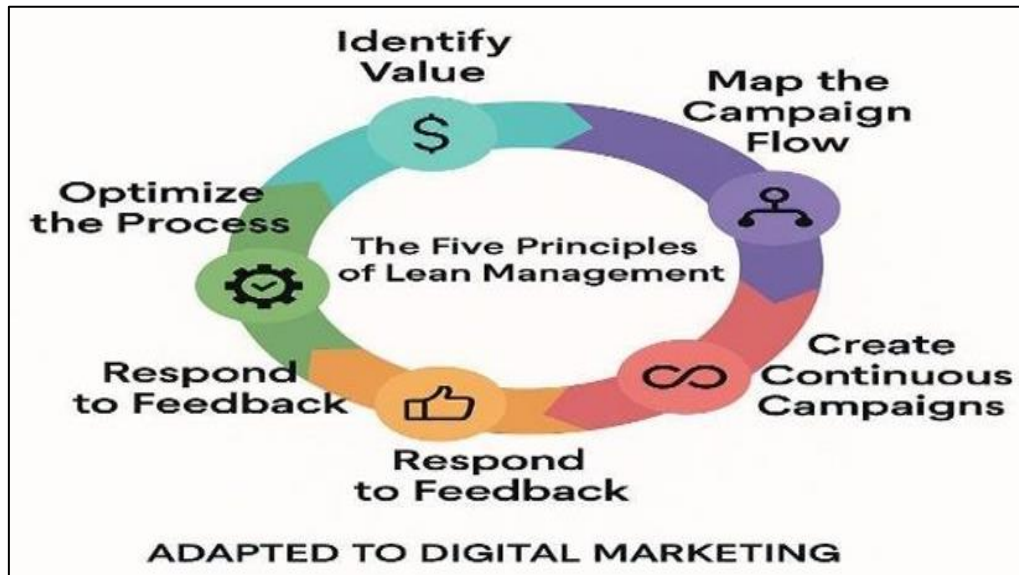


Fig 5 The Five Principles of Lean Management Adapted to Digital

➤ Project Management (Six Sigma)

Six Sigma is an analytical and driven technique designed to promote improvement through enhancements in the quality, effectiveness, and overall productivity of business processes. the DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) framework for affiliate marketing strategy can be utilized in a systematic way to manage affiliate marketing strategies:

- Define, Identify the objectives of the affiliate marketing campaign, including the target audience and the metrics of success for establishing the brand image of Sunsilk.

- Measure, Data will be collected regarding the performance of beauty content creators. The data will include engagement, reach, and conversion.
- Analyze, The information collected will be looked at to find out what type of content or strategy does not work.
- Improve, We will change our strategies by finding the best influencer and creating the best content that fits with our audience's preferences.
- Control, We will monitor all of our campaigns constantly to make sure that they continue to produce the highest quality content that drives positive perceptions of Sunsilk and builds the Sunsilk brand.



Fig 6 DMAIC Process

Unilever company will benefit from DMAIC methodologies used in the development of its affiliate marketing strategy by ensuring each step in the development of the campaign is performed using a systematic and data based process, ultimately leading to an increase in the positive impact on the brand image and efficiency of operations for Sunsilk.

➤ Business Solution Alternatives

• Aligning Business Mindset

Unilever indonesia company are having a major interference on the success of its affiliate marketing strategies and as a result its overall success of building the brand image of Sunsilk via beauty content creators. The General Manager within Unilever indonesia company will transfer the

company's strategic objectives to all of the directors, who will in turn transfer them to their corresponding teams, and so on. As a result, there are numerous departments involved within this campaign (e.g., Digital Marketing, Creative Content, Influencer Relations, etc.), which will create a disconnect, and therefore will create difficulties in achieving a consistent message across all content developed. Additionally, if there are no clear guidelines regarding each strategy improvement initiative or collaboration with Beauty Content Creators, this will also contribute to issues regarding brand messaging consistency and campaign success. the organizational challenges of Unilever's indonesia company affiliate marketing campaign, a multifaceted approach must be employed. First, establishing a culture of open communication and collaboration among all departments is of high importance.

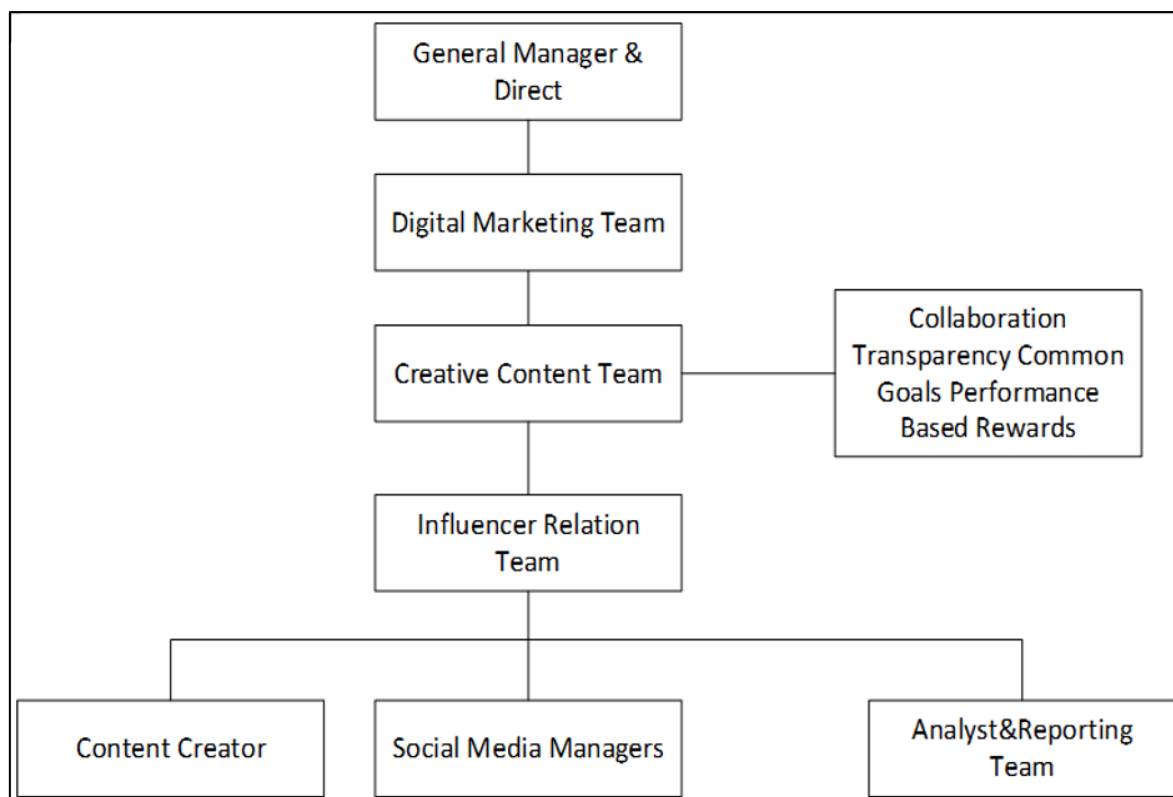


Fig 7 Business Culture Workflow

• Product Catalyst Program

Product Catalyst Program is to achieve the following objectives: develop consistent, standardized guidelines for creating high-quality content; enhance the use of technology and tools to improve efficiency while maintaining excellent service, and provide training resources that will help you improve your ability to work with third parties through a streamlined process and decreased time in completing work. the top management team of Unilever sees an opportunity to speed up impact of affiliate marketing by streamlining processes, creating standardised content guidelines and working with creators to build Sunsilk's brand image faster.

- ✓ Early development strategy, Product Development Workflow: Proposed Improvement. Typically, engineers will conduct evaluations of the product primarily during

the Development Process stage. However, these reviews tend to take place at a higher level and do not focus on evaluating specific technical aspects of the product. the R&D team regarding technological advances within their respective areas of expertise. This will help ensure that prototypes are designed using the most current technology, which will allow for significant discussion of improvements or challenges during the Development Process stage.

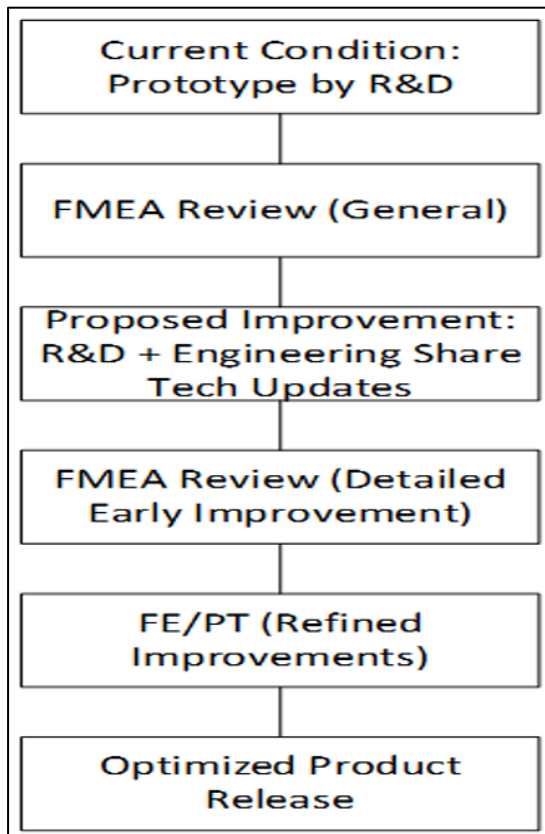


Fig 8 Product Development Workflow – Proposed Improvement

- ✓ Product Highlights,). In the product improvement process, the researcher focuses on the "what" or the actual products themselves along with the specifications associated with those products.
- Features and Requirements, Ensuring the product aligns with designer intentions and customer expectations.
- Functionality, The process to verify the quality of the product and that it operates as expected.
- Design Communication, enhance our ability to work together effectively with R&D and Design as well as Licensors. By ensuring all parties share the same understanding of how they want to use a product and its intended function, we will ultimately improve the ability of engineers to automate processe.

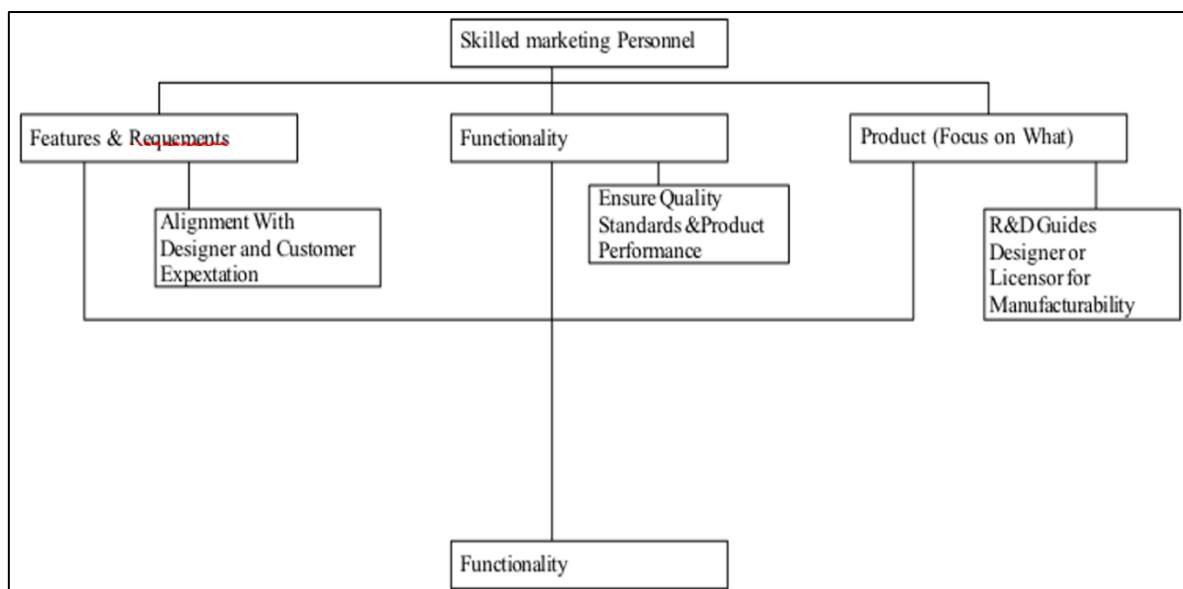


Fig 9 Product Highlight

• Resource Development Program

In the current era of digital marketing, an educated and highly-skilled worker is an invaluable resource, especially in regard to managing an affiliate marketing program. businesses rely upon skilled workers to perform operations and develop new products and services through their use of technology, successful affiliate marketing programs rely upon a group of skilled people who can effectively manage the various digital

tools needed to create, analyze and manage the content they produce on the internet.

Unilever Indonesia company experiences challenges with their affiliate marketing campaigns. To begin with, the marketing team is constrained by limited capacity and has difficulty keeping up with the many different types of affiliate content, creators, platforms, and campaigns that must be managed at the same time. Developing the team's ability

through training and expertise in campaign analytics, content strategy, and performance optimization could produce a significant improvement in the team's overall capabilities,

resulting in a more proactive approach to managing their affiliate marketing program and better alignment with the overall brand of Sunsilk.

Table 4 Challenges and Opportunities in Sunsilk Affiliate Marketing Management

Challenge's	Impact	Opportunities
Limited marketing team capacity	Delays in reviewing content, inconsistent campaign execution, missed engagement opportunities	Train team in analytics and campaign optimization to manage more creators efficiently
High number of content creator and platforms	Difficult to monitor all campaign simultaneously	Implement management tools or dashboards to track performance in real time
Team focus on routine campaign tasks	Less time for strategic tasks such as troubleshooting engagement or improving content quality	Develop team skills in content strategy and audience engagement to enhance brand image
Limited proactive problem solving	Some issues may only be addressed after they occur	Encourage proactive monitoring and early intervention to prevent performance drops

The researcher has proposed a Resource Development Program for Sunsilk's affiliate marketing team in order to combat these issues. This program is designed to fully utilize the capabilities of the marketing department while giving more skilled individuals time to accomplish their goal of providing great quality content and enhancing the effectiveness of campaigns.

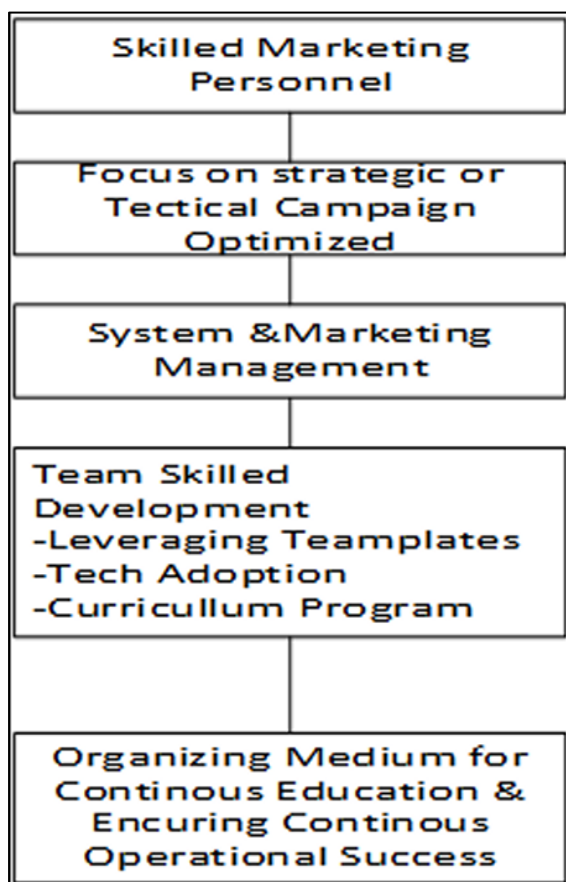


Fig 10 Workflow of the Resource Development Program – Source Sunsilk Affiliate Marketing

- *Process Catalyst Program*

Implementing automated solutions for your Sunsilk affiliate-marketing campaigns, it is advisable to utilize only the basic functions, to have a smooth launch experience.

- ✓ Builds Confidence and Momentum, The simple function will allow the team to see the success of these simple automated functions of your campaign and establish confidence in the team to use other more complex automated tools for future campaigns.
- ✓ Reduces Risk, By focusing on specific, simple processes, it decreases the number of potential failures; thus, helping to ensure a smoother implementation of the new functional processes and ensuring that your campaigns are not significantly disrupted.
- ✓ Provides Learning Opportunities, Automating basic processes will allow the team to gain on-hand practice with digital tools and platforms, increasing their abilities and giving the team the ability to explore and implement best practices for automating more complex processes.
- ✓ Justifies Future Investment, The early successes of automating these manual, labour- intensive tasks have produced tangible returns, therefore giving evidence to support future investments in more complex marketing automation systems.
- ✓ Lays the Foundation for Advanced Automation, Basic automated workflows can combine with more strategic, integrated marketing campaign efforts to prepare teams to implement larger-scale automated solutions.

Sunsilk's affiliate marketing team encountered difficulties when they decided to introduce automation to manage their campaigns more effectively.

- *Technology (Automation)*

Digital marketing and affiliate program management technology is that they will continue to become more affordable. The trend has been shaped by various factors (economies of scale; ongoing software development improvements; increased competition among platform providers; and types of automation technologies).

The Sunsilk Affiliate Marketing Team has already partnered with external automation providers in an effort to simplify the management of affiliate campaigns. The partnership has created opportunities to find solutions to address challenges associated with content scheduling, analytical metrics tracking and campaign optimization.

Technology Cost Overtime More Affordable Digital Tools • Schedulling and Posting Automation • Alystics Dashboards • Influencer Monitoring Platforms	
Increased Accessibility • Wider Ranger of Marketing Technologies Available • Easier Implementation	
Enhanced Campaign Efficiency • Time Saving and Faster Execution • Better Resource Allocation • Higher Content Quality	
Enhanced Campaign Efficiency • Consisten Content Delivery • Optimized Influencer Engagement • Scalable Campagns Across Digital Platform	

Fig 11 Technology Adoption and Automation in Sunsilk Affiliate Marketing

The Sunsilk Affiliate Marketing Team has already partnered with external automation providers in an effort to simplify the management of affiliate campaigns. Digital marketing tools and automation software will continue to be much more accessible to all marketing programs including Sunsilk which will result in more significant benefits for future campaigns. Technology also will provide a means to help address issues relating to content quality and consistency. In order to speed up the adoption of automation, it is essential to continue working with automation partners and ensure that any tool or platform complies with Sunsilk's internal brand guidelines. The marketing team should place additional emphasis on conducting a thorough analysis of the overall process to be automated. The more thoroughly the process is evaluated and analyzed, the more effective the resulting automated workflows will be; ultimately creating improved efficiencies, consistent quality of content created and significantly increasing engagement with beauty content creators.

- **Project Management**
Sunsilk's Affiliate Marketing Campaign managers facing difficulties completing projects within the established process, they have found that they can improve their ability to run campaigns more effectively by making changes to the way they run their affiliate marketing campaigns.
 - ✓ Clear Project Guidelines, This is defined as the establishment of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for campaign planning, content creation, and coordinating with influencers.
 - ✓ Critical Path Verification, This means identifying critical tasks and dependencies so they can be completed in an efficient and timely manner.
 - ✓ Effective Project Management Tools, This would include implementing dashboards, workflow software, and scheduling solutions for better visibility into progress and responsibilities assigned.
 - ✓ Well-Defined Timelines, This involves providing clear milestones and deadlines for each phase of a campaign to help facilitate accountability and performance.

Sunsilk's affiliate marketing campaigns do not have formal guidelines/timelines for various staff members managing their everyday tasks/campaigns leading to very little coordination between employees/managers and poor overall team performance (especially for high traffic periods).



Fig 12 Project Management Timeline – Sunsilk Affiliate Marketing

- ✓ Peak Campaign Periods, Our Team actively monitors tasks and campaigns on a daily basis to manage KPIs and stay in line with overall objectives.
- ✓ Campaign Proposal & Review, Planning well in advance allows us to prepare proposals and content strategies so that by the beginning of Peak Campaign Periods we are ready for action.
- ✓ Performance Review Awareness, Team members know deadlines far enough in advance to allow them to plan and execute campaigns efficiently to minimize last-minute preparations. By maintaining this structure throughout the marketing team's timeline, we can ensure both that we complete our tasks on time and keep our content delivered consistently; we also can accurately predict our potential resource needs, resulting in longer-term improvements in campaign performance and ROI.

- *Financial Indicators*

Unilever indonesia company that have budgets greater than \$50,000, a complete financial breakdown with supporting projected benefits must be submitted. Marketing managers submit their campaigns to senior management to determine if the campaigns will be funded based on the expected return on investment (ROI).

Management evaluates the campaign proposal based on the following: importance (urgency and how relevant it is to the company's overall goals), impact (how well it aligns with brand strategy and how much influence it will have on the market), and difficulty (how demanding the planning and execution of the campaign will be). Once the proposal is approved, marketing develops a full budget proposal outlining projected financials and anticipated brand impact.

Marketing uses the following metrics to evaluate the performance of the campaign financially: net present value (NPV), internal rate of return (IRR), and payback period. NPV determines the value in today's dollars of future cash flows produced by the campaign, IRR indicates how much return the campaign will yield, and the payback period shows how long until the original investment is received back.

Each of the above metrics works together to account for the time value of money and the cash flows associated with a campaign. Positive net present value (NPV), higher internal rate of return (IRR), and shorter payback periods represent financially attractive campaigns with the potential for quicker return on investments.

- *Analysis of the Alternatives*

Unilever indonesia company could improve the efficacy of affiliate marketing through the use of the following three key initiatives - an Influencer Engagement Program, a Content Campaign Management Program, and a Marketing Resource Development Program - as being the areas considered most likely to help create brand image development while utilizing the least possible amount of resources.

- ✓ Influencer Engagement Program, This programme aims to establish long-term relationships with beauty influencers who share with Sunsilk the same brand values. By working

with influencers who have a strong credibility and whom they can reach large audiences, the campaign will increase engagement rates, reach a wider audience, and authentically promote Sunsilk's products. This method reduces the risk of producing ineffective content and maximises ROI.

- ✓ Content Campaign Management, This strategy involves developing a disciplined approach to the planning, execution, and monitoring of content-driven marketing campaigns. This strategy will include creating a well-defined content calendar, developing a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for tracking campaign success, and recording the results of various performance metrics (impressions, engagement levels, and conversion rates) during the campaign. Having an effective content campaign management process will help to ensure that the content campaigns will be timely, reach their target audience and help to positively influence the consumer's view of Sunsilk.
- ✓ Marketing Resource Development Program, This programme provides the marketing team with the capability to develop internal marketing capabilities such as digital marketing analytics, campaign optimisation, and influencer collaboration. By developing marketing resources internally, the Sunsilk marketing team will be able to provide more effective management of multiple campaigns and reduce their reliance on third-party marketing agencies while maintaining consistent brand messaging through their digital channels.

Unilever indonesia company to use affiliate marketing to enhance its brand image for Sunsilk while minimizing costs and maximizing the success of its campaigns. Additionally, there are three strategies that are not as effective in this situation: Aligning Marketing Mindset, Content Process Optimisation Program, and Implementing New Technology.

- ✓ Aligning Marketing Mindset, While having the marketing team aligned in their thinking is critical for long-term success, it takes time to accomplish and make the necessary modifications. Although it is critical to this effort, it does not provide immediate or quick solutions to the resource constraints for a campaign and/or the need to execute fast. Therefore, aligning the mindset of each marketing person is important but will not directly contribute to the success of their affiliate marketing in the short term. On the other hand, there are many practical strategies a marketing team can pursue to create more productive solutions in order to achieve immediate success and later, as they see their own success through actionable campaigns, they can gradually align their own mindsets to work together.
- ✓ Content Process Optimization Program, The Content Process Optimization Program is related to campaign management, but it is more about improving overall workflow efficiency than it is about directly impacting a campaign's success quickly. This shows that this program, compared to other strategies that would provide similar results to engaging content creators and creating high-quality brand content, is less effective.

- ✓ New Technology Implementation, While it is important to focus on implementing new marketing technologies, a more strategic approach would be to focus on leveraging and maximizing the potential of existing platforms/tools using limited resources. Selecting new technologies is important, but it would have little if no impact if those technologies are not utilized effectively in all three areas; deploying them, managing their content, and optimizing collaborative efforts between creators and brands. The programs selected in each of the strategies are focused on cost-effectiveness, compatibility, and realistic, practical applications, thus addressing this issue.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

➤ Implementation Plan

The focus of this implementation plan is to develop and implement affiliate marketing strategies to build a better brand identity for “Sunsilk” at Unilever indonesia company. There are three phases associated with this plan: Foundation – Skill Development – Implementation & Iteration. The first phase of the Implementation Plan is to establish the foundation for the affiliate program.

Research supports the importance of having defined goals and specific roles for individuals associated with the success of the program. Sunsilk has an implementation plan that outlines how it can use affiliate marketing to build its overall brand image at Unilever indonesia company. The structure of the plan allows Sunsilk and its partners to work together effectively, manage projects in the same way, and continually improve project operations and produce an enhanced brand image within the competitive beauty industry.

The Skill Development Phase of the implementation plan will help to build capacity by providing training and incentive programs for the affiliates. Since affiliates need to continuously upgrade their skills in order to create compelling content and authentically represent the brand, developing and managing skill development programs is very important to Sunsilk.

The implementation & Iteration Phase of the implementation plan will ensure that Sunsilk is able to grow its affiliate marketing efforts by creating robust infrastructure for scaling, monitoring, and improving over time. This is an agile approach to marketing strategy in which there is a feedback loop that is instrumental in responding to changing consumer purchasing behaviour.

Table 5 Implementation Plan – Phase 1 Affiliate Marketing Strategy

Phase	Program	Period	Purpose	No.	Task
Phase 1 – Foundation	Affiliate Program Setup (Initial Focus)	Month 1	Establish the foundation of Sunsilk’s affiliate program	1	Identify key stakeholders: Marketing, Digital, Sales, E-commerce, and Affiliate Network Partners.
	Affiliate Program Setup (Initial Focus)	Month 1	Establish the foundation of Sunsilk’s affiliate program	2	Define the goals of the affiliate program (e.g., increase brand awareness, boost online sales, enhance engagement).
	Affiliate Program Setup (Initial Focus)	Month 1	Establish the foundation of Sunsilk’s affiliate program	3	Set KPIs: clicks, conversion rates, influencer reach, content engagement, brand mentions.
	Affiliate Program Setup (Initial Focus)	Month 1	Establish the foundation of Sunsilk’s affiliate program	4	Choose affiliate platform/tools (e.g., Shopee Affiliates, TikTok Affiliates, or in-house system).
	Affiliate Program Setup (Initial Focus)	Month 1	Establish the foundation of Sunsilk’s affiliate program	5	Create affiliate guidelines (branding tone, approved messaging, do’s and don’ts).
Phase 1 – Foundation	Affiliate Recruitment & Onboarding	Month 2	Build the first pool of Sunsilk affiliates	6	Research and recruit micro and nano influencers aligned with Sunsilk’s Gen Z target market.
	Affiliate Recruitment & Onboarding	Month 2	Build the first pool of Sunsilk affiliates	7	Develop affiliate onboarding kit (brand story, campaign goals, creative assets, discount codes).
	Affiliate Recruitment & Onboarding	Month 2	Build the first pool of Sunsilk affiliates	8	Conduct virtual onboarding/training session with affiliates.
Phase 1 – Foundation	Pilot Campaign Launch	Month 3	Test affiliate performance in small-scale campaign	9	Launch a pilot affiliate campaign focusing on 1-2 hero Sunsilk products.
	Pilot Campaign Launch	Month 3	Test affiliate performance in small-scale campaign	10	Track results: sales, impressions, and engagement.
	Pilot Campaign Launch	Month 3	Test affiliate performance in small-scale campaign	11	Collect affiliate feedback for improvements.

Phase 1 of the affiliate program design (Foundation Phase), the focus will be to build the foundation of the Sunsilk affiliate program. During month 1 (Affiliate Program Setup), the first step will be to identify relevant internal stakeholders including representatives from Marketing, Digital, Sales, E-commerce, and affiliates.

Cross-departmental involvement is critical to ensuring that the Sunsilk affiliate program receives comprehensive

support strategically, technically and operationally. The affiliate program objectives will include to increase brand awareness, increase online sales growth and increase consumer engagement through digital channels. Sunsilk set a solid base in Phase 1 of their affiliate program giving them a of same vision and have a strategy to run successfully through the use of appropriate platforms that engaged with affiliate partners and targeted their digital consumer.

Table 6 Implementation Plan – Phase 2 Skill Development (Affiliate Capacity Building)

Phase	Program	Period	Purpose	No.	Task
Phase 2 – Skill Development	Affiliate Capacity Building	Month 3–4	Improve the skills and quality of affiliate content	12	Conduct a skills gap analysis to identify development needs, such as digital storytelling, TikTok/Instagram trends, and video editing
	Affiliate Capacity Building	Month 3–4	Improve the skills and quality of affiliate content	13	Organizing creative workshops and training to improve affiliate competency in digital content creation.
	Affiliate Capacity Building	Month 3–4	Improve the skills and quality of affiliate content	14	Providing exclusive content templates (captions, hashtags, video hooks) to maintain Sunsilk branding consistency.
Phase 2 – Skill Development	Affiliate Training & Incentive System	Month 5–6	Maintaining motivation and improving affiliate performance	15	Launching a gamification system (leaderboards, prizes for top affiliates) to create healthy competition.
	Affiliate Training & Incentive System	Month 5–6	Maintaining motivation and improving affiliate performance	16	Certifying high- achieving affiliates as “Sunsilk Brand Champions.”

Phase 2 was regarding providing skills development and capacity building for the affiliates to enable and ensure that they supported the effective execution of the Sunsilk Affiliate Marketing Strategy at Unilever Indonesia company. The skills gap analysis included defining digital storytelling skills; digital branding & marketing - being able to explain the trends on TikTok and Instagram; and identifying the key technical skills required to be effective in developing content, including video editing.

The findings from the skills gap analysis allowed Sunsilk to develop training programs relevant to the affiliates to enhance their skill set. Keller (2013) supports the notion that maintaining consistency in brand message is important for strengthening a brand's image. The second phase of the Sunsilk affiliate program not only recruited affiliates to promote the Sunsilk brand; but also provided affiliates with the training, motivation and empowerment to be positive representatives of the Sunsilk brand, thus strengthening Sunsilk's brand image in the eyes of digital consumers in a consistent, credible and sustainable fashion.

Table 7 Implementation – Phase 3 Iteration (Affiliate Marketing Strategy Sunsilk –Unilever Indonesia company)

Phase	Program	Period	Purpose	No.	Task
Phase 3 – Implementation and Iteration	Scaling the Program	Month 6–9	Implementing large-scale affiliate campaigns and monitoring the results	17	Launched a full-scale affiliate campaign across multiple e-commerce platforms (Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada) and social media (TikTok, Instagram, YouTube).
	Scaling the Program	Month 6–9	Implementing large-scale affiliate campaigns and monitoring the results.	18	Monitor key KPIs such as traffic, conversion rate, engagement, brand mentions, and share of voice.
	Scaling the Program	Month 6–9	Implementing large-scale affiliate campaigns and monitoring the results.	19	Documenting best practices and success stories from top- performing affiliates.
Phase 3 – Implementation and Iteration	Feedback & Refinement	Month 9–10	Conduct program evaluation and improvement based on data and input	20	Conduct campaign reviews with affiliates and internal teams to evaluate program effectiveness.
	Feedback &	Month	Conduct program evaluation and		Updating brand guidelines, incentive systems, and content strategies based on evaluation

	Refinement	9–10	improvement based on data and input	21	results.
	Feedback & Refinement	Month 9–10	Conduct program evaluation and improvement based on data and input	22	Determine the next 2–3 Sunsilk products to prioritize in the affiliate campaign.
Phase 3 – Implementation and Iteration	Continuous Improvement	Month 10–12	Building a continuous improvement system.	23	Provide additional training for affiliates regarding new content trends
	Continuous Improvement	Month 10–12	Building a continuous improvement system.	24	Review and update affiliate guidelines regularly to stay relevant with digital developments.
	Continuous Improvement	Month 10–12	Building a continuous improvement system.	25	Develop a continuous improvement system that encourages active affiliate participation in providing input and creative ideas.

Phase 3 implementation was achieved through the execution and measurement of large scale affiliate campaigns, continual performance monitoring and ongoing iterations to ensure the effectiveness of Sunsilk's affiliate marketing strategy at Unilever Indonesia company. This phase was focused on the actual execution of affiliate marketing strategy on the ground, as well as improvements based on evaluation results.

Sunsilk implemented affiliate campaigns at a much greater volume across numerous different e-commerce and social media platforms. Activity in phase three included the monitoring of key performance indicators (KPIs) including the volume of traffic, sales conversion rates, share of voice and number of brand mentions.

Digital analytic tools were used to monitor the KPIs, allowing the company to assess affiliate performance in real time. Digital analytics are critical to optimizing marketing strategies by providing data-driven decision-making. In addition, documenting experiences and challenges relating to the implementation of organizational systems provides important information for evaluating, or building, organizational knowledge.

• Resource Requirements

The affiliate marketing strategy at Sunsilk in Unilever Indonesia company successfully, the company will need sufficient resources in four major categories (human, financial, technological, and partnership). Proper allocation of these resources will allow for smooth execution of the implementation process, allowing for successful achievement of overall goals. According to Barney (1991), organisations can achieve sustainable competitive advantage by developing and deploying "valuable", "rare", "inimitable", and well-organised resources through their Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory.

The role of human resource is of paramount importance. Sunsilk will need an internal marketing team focused on affiliate program execution, an affiliate programme coordinator, and content creation. Skilled people will be needed to effectively manage affiliate partnerships, monitor

key performance indicators (KPIs), and ensure consistent branding.

The second category of resources required is financial. funds will need to be allocated for production of content for use in affiliate campaigns, and to support potential paid promotional campaigns. Proper financial planning allows organisations to effectively balance their costs with their anticipated returns on investment. digital tools are important enablers of contemporary marketing strategies, especially in terms of performance tracking and alignment with goals.

Partnerships with (e.g.) e-commerce sites (e.g. Shopee, Tokopedia, Lazada), social networks (e.g. TikTok, Instagram, YouTube), and external training providers are also essential elements of an affiliate marketing strategy. Sunsilk's affiliate marketing strategy is influenced by the interdependence of human, financial, technological and partnership resources and thus the resource requirements of these dimensions determine the success of Sunsilk's affiliate marketing strategy as a whole. If the resources that support Sunsilk's affiliate marketing strategy can be used efficiently and effectively, Sunsilk will increase its brand equity and remain competitive in the beauty industry.

V. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, AND RECOMMENDATION

➤ Conclusion

Unilever Indonesia company, through the Sunsilk brand name, is increasingly utilizing affiliate marketing techniques that are reliant on the use of micro and nano influencers as affiliates for the Sunsilk brand.

- What is the role of affiliate marketing in building Sunsilk's brand image through collaborations with beauty content creators? affiliate marketing relationship is critical in the establishment of the Sunsilk brand image by providing beauty-oriented, digital content creators with the tools to become credible brand ambassadors and thereby fulfil the role of providing an authentic connection between the corporate brand and the consumer. Establishing Authenticity and Trust: Because of the nature of the

content produced by traditional advertising and marketing vehicles, the forms of content produced by affiliate marketers (e.g., tutorials, product reviews, etc.) are considered to be more personal and reliable than any form of traditional media. The content created by the affiliate marketers includes actual demonstrations of each of the products in a real-life setting, which generates a "trusted friend" image for the Sunsilk brand instead of a "corporation" image. Targeting Gen Z and Younger Audiences: By partnering with the creators of content on sites such as TikTok and Instagram, the Sunsilk brand is defined as a "memorable and youthful brand." The use of affiliate links allows the creators of content to direct their followers from the "discovery" of the products to the "purchase" of the products, thus reinforcing a contemporary digital-first brand image. Generating Social Proof (UGC): Collaborating with affiliates creates a reason for people to create user-generated content (UGC) such as hair styling tips and showing how products work. This ongoing stream of content created by peers continues to build Sunsilk's credibility as an "expert hair care solution". Strengthening Community Engagement: Sunsilk's affiliate program develops the "Silky Squad," a group of creators who feel connected and confident with one another. This emotional connection between the creators and the company humanizes Sunsilk, showing that it is more welcoming and supportive of the customer's aspirations. Cost-Effective Reach and Performance Tracking: Affiliate marketing allows Sunsilk to increase their brand's visibility with less risk because typically the payouts are based on results. By following a data-based approach, this will allow Sunsilk to know which influencers align with their values enabling them to manage the brand image over time while still being able to measure ROI.

- What are the key challenges faced by PT Unilever Indonesia company in implementing affiliate marketing strategies with beauty content creators? The hurdles that have created limitations for deploying affiliate marketing according to interviews, document reviews and secondary data reviews have included: 1) Internal coordination issues due to the need for alignment between Marketing, Digital and E-commerce divisions, 2) The need for various variations of products within the line (different types and types of branding) has made it difficult to develop unified affiliate marketing guidelines, 3) Limited funds/resources available to support the management of large numbers of affiliates and limited internal coordinators to work with the large number of affiliates, and 4) Process difficulties to ensure that content is consistent with the many different affiliate creators. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) requires all brand and promotional messages are consistent across multiple mediums have supported the above points. Involve developing a program that focuses on specific categories of "hero" products, such as a Product Catalyst Program, giving affiliates the ability to focus on hero products with high volume against them. Concentrate on developing resources for affiliates to use when creating new content/telling stories by implementing a Resource Development Program, which would create better storytelling capabilities via training and development workshops for affiliates. Involves

implementing a Process Catalyst Program to develop structured processes for affiliates to follow with clearly defined guidelines in terms of how they provide messages to their customers. The final proposed improvement involves a strong project management structure that allows the development of timelines and measurement tools for monitoring results so that affiliates can stay on track with their campaigns. They further emphasize the importance of structured planning in executing digital campaigns. Unilever Indonesia company has to establish a cost/benefit ratio evaluation system to evaluate the effectiveness of affiliate marketing. ROI, CPA, and Engagement rates, among other measurement metrics, provide the basis for evaluating performance levels. In order to validate the results of digital marketing efforts and justify future expenditures on digital marketing, measurable results (that is, KPI's) are required. After adopting structured affiliate programs that focus on products, developing skills, and providing content consistency across platforms, Sunsilk's affiliate-driven marketing strategy has improved its brand image compared to traditional marketing methods. Affiliate-driven campaigns are much more authentic and relatable to Gen Z consumers than traditional promotions, thus conforming with findings of De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders (2017) regarding how effective micro and nano influencers are in establishing relationships between consumers and brands that create trust and brand loyalty. The integration of continuous improvement mechanisms also ensures that Sunsilk's affiliate marketing strategy remains agile and flexible with changing marketplace conditions in keeping with an agile marketing approach. Unilever Indonesia company but also a strategic brand-building mechanism that creates brand awareness, creates brand engagement, and creates brand trust simultaneously. By implementing structure around the implementation of its affiliate marketing strategy, including training and evaluating affiliates in both implementation and performance, Unilever Indonesia company can help create a sustainable long-term brand image for the Sunsilk brand and establish PT Unilever's Indonesia company continued leadership position within the haircare category in Indonesia.

- How do consumers perceive Sunsilk's brand image through influencer and affiliate marketing campaigns? By utilizing influencer partnerships through platforms like TikTok and Instagram, Sunsilk showcases itself as a current and relevant brand that symbolizes the speed of culture. Campaigns promoting women of different backgrounds and their true hair struggles (such as frizzy/curly, damaged hair) establish a strong emotional connection with consumers by increasing relatability. Influencers continue to be an important source for consumers when making purchase decisions, as they rely heavily on their opinion and guidance to help guide consumers towards Sunsilk as a provider of beauty products. Via partnerships with related beauty and hairstylists, Sunsilk is able to create "consumer trust" and build credibility in a crowded market. Affiliate influencer videos and content (like hairstyles), reinforce that Sunsilk has products that provide immediate and practical results for applications during hairstyling.

- What strategic improvements can be proposed to optimize Sunsilk's affiliate marketing effectiveness in the digital era? Develop meaningful improvements to the current strategic framework protocol, managers should establish a strong community-oriented ecosystem; take advantage of the latest emerging technologies (e.g., live commerce) for their marketing efforts and develop an incentivized promotion structure that focuses on long-term brand loyalty rather than the occasional transaction; and implement affiliate marketing strategies later in response to the 2025 consumer market's behavioural changes. Live Commerce for Affiliate Marketing: Livestream stores through social media platforms (e.g., TikTok Live, Instagram Live) where affiliates can conduct demonstrations on using products while also providing real time, exclusive discounts to potential customers. Short Form Video and Challenge Content: Encourage affiliates to create TikTok and Instagram Reels or other short videos using branded hashtag so that their user-generated content can go viral or gain large amounts of user-generated content (UGC).
- How does affiliate marketing contribute to Sunsilk's overall marketing performance And consumer loyalty? Sunsilk's Affiliate Model allows for payment only upon completion of an action that can be traced back directly to a sale (performance-based model). Therefore, an Affiliate Program is more economical than traditional or up-front advertising methods. In addition to the Affiliate Program, Sunsilk also worked to deepen its affinity or loyalty with consumers by creating new affinity programs, such as an online community (Sunsilk Affiliate Squad Community) that allows members access to exclusive benefits (ex. users receive 1-month supply of free pro Affiliate monthly). Real-Time data from pro Affiliates is giving Sunsilk insight into how consumers behave and what their individual preferences are thus enabling the brand to develop targeted and personalised advertising programs (targeted commissions, invitations to brand sponsored events).

➤ *Implication*

This research's findings may be applied in two distinct ways: for Unilever Indonesia company (Sunsilk) and for Affiliate Partners.

- For Unilever Indonesia company (Brand image Sunsilk), After Unilever Indonesia company collaborating with Affiliate Marketing, there has been a proven increase in the Sunsilk brand. The three implications are as follows: Increased Competitive Advantage Social media and digital networks present an opportunity for firms to leverage Affiliate Marketing and create brand equity with consumers. In this case, this is particularly true with Millennial's as they continue transitioning into brand loyalists through social media. Moreover, having a structured affiliate program significantly enhances visibility and recognizability of a brand, thus greatly creating a competitive advantage for Unilever Indonesia company in the beauty industry in Indonesia. , Improved Profitability and Cost Reduction. Affiliate marketing operates on a performance basis, allowing companies to tie

their marketing budget directly to quantifiable results such as click-through rates, conversions and engagement, contrary to traditional marketing. Digital Marketing is markedly less expensive than Mass Advertising. Improved Affiliate Partnership Cooperation and Support.Regarding employee morale, through organizational training, so too do affiliates become more motivated and loyal to an organization as a result of training, onboarding and the use of gamified incentives. Recognition and reward systems increase intrinsic motivation and create long-term commitment for affiliates. Unilever's Indonesia company investment in affiliate skill development and certification (e.g., "Sunsilk Brand Champions") will continue to provide superior content quality and stronger representation of the brand.

- For Affiliate Partners, The affiliates will be required to follow Sunsilk's tone and long-term brand vision, which emphasizes authenticity of content and consistency within the brand. The vendors who can show they adapt to changing digital marketing trends, have the ability to provide transparent reports, and can maintain a long-term relationship with brands will have a competitive advantage. This reflects the commitment and trust theories of relationship marketing, which highlight that trust and commitment are essential for building sustainable partnerships. The outcome of affiliate marketing will generate positive impact for both Sunsilk and its affiliates: Sunsilk will gain competitive advantage and brand equity in the marketplace while affiliates will gain growth opportunities and a more professional position.

➤ *Recommendation*

The following section contains subsection recommendations for future research and recommendations for Unilever Indonesia company (Sunsilk).

- Future Research, researchers may Examining the consumer's perception of the campaigns driven through affiliate marketing, specifically in relation to micro and nano influencers and how they could change how a brand is perceived from a brand image standpoint. Future research Investigating the longitudinal effects that affiliate marketing has on brand equity for a particular brand, where awareness and image are in turn correlated over a longer period of time based on Brand Equity Theory, where building long-term brands are the most ideal. Researchers Conducting comparative effectiveness analyses of evaluating how affiliates are employed in different FMCG brands and looking for best practices that could apply across categories. Studies could explore the Investigating how affiliate marketing aligns with other digital marketing strategies (i.e. influencer marketing, content marketing, and paid media), and look for possible synergies between them to impact the level of engagement a brand receives and how a brand is positioned in the marketplace.
- Recommendation for Unilever Indonesia company of (Sunsilk brand), Sunsilk must commit to ongoing enhancement and evolution of its affiliate marketing program. The company should continuously evaluate and analyze both the results of its affiliate program, as measured by the appropriate key performance indicators

(KPI) Such as click-through rates, conversion rates, and engagement rates, as well as implement structured methodologies for providing feedback to affiliates. Conducting regular reviews of these two areas will ensure the affiliate marketing program stays relevant and provides value for all participants. Secondly, Sunsilk must invest in improving its data analysis capabilities through investment in digital analytics tools and ongoing training/education for all team members involved in the affiliate marketing program. Enhanced data analysis capabilities can help measure the success of campaigns, to understand customer preferences, and ultimately assess the performance and effectiveness of affiliates. Improved use of data will provide direction for on-going decisions that drive real-time, adaptive changes to marketing strategy. Finally, Sunsilk must encourage creativity and co-creation within its affiliate marketing system/culture. Providing incentives for affiliates to develop innovative approaches to content creation will promote greater levels of engagement among affiliates. Additionally, using commitment-trust theory as a guide to developing long-term partnerships with affiliates based on mutual trust and collaboration will contribute to the growth of affiliate loyalty and the growth of branded equity. By integrating and continuously refining the affiliate marketing program, developing an enhanced level of data analysis capabilities, and fostering creativity and collaboration with affiliates, Sunsilk can maintain its position as a market leader and an innovative competitor within the Indonesian hair care market.

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