

GUIDELINES FOR IMPROVING STREAMER'S PERFORMANCE ON YOUTUBE PLATFORM IN THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the desirable traits and strategies for YouTube influencers, emphasizing their role as thought leaders who balance authenticity, creativity, and strategy to engage audiences effectively. Using qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, the study identifies five critical traits of successful influencers: identity, consistency, creativity, content, and sincerity. These traits form the foundation for building trust, emotional connection, and sustained audience engagement.

The study integrates Aristotle's persuasive appeals—Ethos, Pathos, and Logos—as a theoretical framework. While Ethos and Pathos are pivotal for credibility and emotional resonance, Logos has a diminished but contextual role, particularly in educational or factual content. Additionally, The Five Canons of Rhetoric are adapted to guide content creation and delivery. These include invention (generating ideas), arrangement (structuring content), style (choosing appropriate tone), memory (creating memorable experiences), and delivery (utilizing expressive techniques).

The findings reveal that influencers thrive by cultivating a unique identity, maintaining consistent and relatable content, and leveraging creativity to differentiate themselves in a competitive digital landscape. Sincerity, both in content and persona, is crucial for fostering trust and loyalty among viewers. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of modern communication styles, where informal and relatable expressions dominate.

This research offers actionable insights for aspiring influencers, supporting the development of training programs that integrate rhetorical principles, creativity, and ethical considerations. It highlights the transformative potential of influencers in the digital era, offering a roadmap for creating impactful and credible online presences.

Keywords: YouTube Influencers, Rhetorical, Appeals, Content Creation, Audience Engagement

INTRODUCTION

The transition from offline or traditional media, such as television and radio, to the online world has become an unavoidable factor in daily life. It facilitates convenience, access to knowledge, and entertainment. This shift has significantly contributed to the growth of video content platforms like YouTube, a widely recognized application. YouTube, established in 2005, serves as a platform for sharing videos and motion pictures that deliver stories, experiences, knowledge exchange, entertainment,

and product promotion. It has continually gained popularity and shows an increasing trend (Westenberg, 2016).

YouTube's ability to persuade and influence audiences is attributed to its dynamic presentation through visuals, sound, color, and effects, which convey emotions more effectively than static images. This immersive nature inspires content creation and builds audience trust, allowing followers to become creators themselves. The application is particularly influential among the 18–25 age group (Global, 2016). YouTube serves as a medium for influencers, or YouTubers, to connect with audiences effectively, whether through persuasion, building credibility, or providing entertainment. Modern YouTubers cover diverse topics, including makeup tutorials, food reviews, product advertising, travel experiences, and gaming tips. Their content, often educational and entertaining, is fresh, engaging, and widely followed. Influencers are now seen as professionals who generate significant income, making the profession appealing to many.

However, creating engaging content continuously can be challenging. Developing content that resonates with the target audience is a common issue in the current competitive environment. The increasing number of creators adds to the complexity and competition (Zheng, 2020). Ineffective content creation can lead to reduced audience engagement and retention. Additionally, some YouTube content has been criticized for negative impacts, such as inappropriate language and violent behavior, which can adversely affect viewers and society, undermining the credibility of influencers (Henry, 2009).

While online content creation through YouTube can lead to fame and financial success, most research has focused on factors contributing to these outcomes. Studies exploring influencers on YouTube through rhetorical principles are limited. This research aims to examine persuasion and credibility among influencers and their content delivery on online platforms. The findings will inform the design of training programs to develop aspiring influencers, enabling them to understand the desired attributes comprehensively. The training process, based on Aristotle's persuasive appeals—Ethos (credibility), Pathos (emotional appeal), and Logos (logical reasoning)—will include creative content development and non-verbal and verbal communication based on rhetorical and non-verbal communication theories. Integrating the Five Canons of Rhetoric and employing Design Thinking principles, the program will support YouTubers in crafting suitable presentations, enhancing credibility, and creating memorable and impactful content (Kanokorn Ruangsri, 2017). Data derived from case studies of successful influencers, training experts, and academics will guide the comprehensive rhetorical-based training design.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in the principles of rhetorical theory, incorporating classical and modern approaches to persuasion, communication, and content creation. The theoretical framework is designed to analyze and support the development of effective content strategies for YouTube influencers. Key components of the framework include:

Aristotle's Persuasive Appeals: Aristotle's three modes of persuasion provide the foundation for understanding how influencers engage their audiences and build credibility:

1. **Ethos (Credibility)** Focuses on the credibility, trustworthiness, and character of the influencer. This involves examining how influencers establish authority and authenticity to connect with their audience. Examples include sharing personal experiences, expertise, or testimonials (Aristotle, 2007).
2. **Pathos (Emotional Appeal)** Explores how influencers evoke emotions such as excitement, joy, or empathy to resonate with viewers. Pathos is often achieved through storytelling, humor, or relatable scenarios in the content (Aristotle, 2007).
3. **Logos (Logical Reasoning)** Analyzes the use of evidence, facts, and logical arguments in content. This includes product reviews, tutorials, and other informational content that relies on rational persuasion (Aristotle, 2007).

The Five Canons of Rhetoric: The Five Canons of Rhetoric, attributed to classical rhetorical theory, guide the structured creation and delivery of content. These principles are adapted for online platforms like YouTube (Cicero, 1942)

1. **Invention:** Developing original and compelling ideas or content themes tailored to audience needs and preferences. Innovation requires innovators an organization wants to develop into an organization of innovation. (Kunkum, W. 2023)
2. **Arrangement:** Structuring content for maximum engagement, including introductions, main ideas, and calls to action.
3. **Style:** Selecting appropriate language, tone, and presentation styles to match audience expectations and brand identity.
4. **Memory:** Ensuring consistency and memorability of the influencer's persona and message.
5. **Delivery:** Focusing on the technical and expressive elements of presentation, such as vocal modulation, gestures, and visual effects.

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication examines the use of language, tone, and storytelling techniques in content delivery (Mehrabian, 1971).

Non-Verbal Communication is analyzes body language, facial expressions, visual aesthetics, and use of multimedia elements, which play a critical role in engaging viewers on visual platforms like YouTube (Mehrabian, 1971).

Training Framework for Influencers

Using the above theoretical components, the framework supports the development of a training program designed to:

1. Enhance persuasive communication skills using Ethos, Pathos, and Logos.
2. Build effective content creation workflows aligned with the Five Canons of Rhetoric.
3. Foster creativity and innovation through Design Thinking.
4. Address challenges in audience engagement, competition, and ethical content delivery.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this research is to explore the persuasive and credibility-building strategies of influencers on YouTube, with a focus on content delivery through the application of rhetorical principles. Specifically, the study aims to

1. Analyze how influencers utilize Aristotle's persuasive appeals (Ethos, Pathos, and Logos) to establish trust, evoke emotions, and provide logical reasoning in their content.
2. Identify the attributes and practices of successful influencers that contribute to audience engagement and retention.
3. Provide actionable insights for the development of impactful, credible, and innovative content strategies tailored for online platforms like YouTube.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative research project aimed at creating a training program by utilizing knowledge derived from previous data. It employs in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to design and conduct training sessions during May 2023. The methodology is divided into the following sections:

Population and Sample

The study's sample consists of 10 participants divided into three groups 1. Successful Influencers from five YouTube influencers with at least 100,000 followers who excel in promoting, reviewing products, or locations.

2. Training Experts Th individuals with expertise in training program design and facilitation. 3. Rhetoric Scholars

Two academic experts in communication studies and rhetoric with training experience. Additionally, 13 training participants were selected, comprising individuals aged 18–25 interested in becoming influencers or those with YouTube channels having 1,000–5,000 followers.

Research Instruments

The study employs semi-structured interviews, allowing flexibility and open-ended responses to gather precise and relevant data. The interview guide was evaluated for content validity to ensure alignment with the research objectives and suitability for the respondents. The tools were refined to maintain linguistic clarity and relevance to the study's focus.

Data Collection

The researcher explained the study's purpose and sought participants' consent to record interviews and discussions. Efforts were made to create a trusting and friendly environment. Participants were informed about their rights and assured that only aggregate academic findings would be published. Data credibility was ensured using triangulation (Chantavanich, 2016).

1. Data Triangulation: Comparing information from the three participant groups.
2. Theory Triangulation: Employing different theoretical perspectives to validate findings.
3. Methodological Triangulation: Utilizing interviews, focus groups, and document analysis.

Research Process

The research was conducted in five stages:

1. Analysis of Desired Influencer Traits by review of literature on desired characteristics of YouTube influencers and relevant training models informed the design of interview questions.
2. In-depth Interviews were conducted under the framework of Aristotle's persuasive appeals (Ethos, Pathos, Logos) with influencers, training experts, and rhetoric scholars.
3. Training Design Insights from interviews were combined with theoretical frameworks such as Aristotle's appeals and the Five Canons of Rhetoric to design training content. Influencers served as trainers, with experts observing.
- 4.

Data Analysis

Data from pre-tests, post-tests, reflection notes, and focus groups were analyzed to address research objectives:

Identifying desired traits of YouTube influencers. The findings provide actionable insights into developing YouTube influencers through structured, theory-driven training programs.

RESULTS

The research explores the desirable traits of influencers on YouTube and their application within rhetorical and content creation frameworks. The results are summarized as follows:

Desired Traits of YouTube Influencers

YouTube influencers are perceived as thought leaders with unique identities and distinct styles. They excel at presenting varied content that entertains viewers while persuading and inspiring them to take action. The desirable traits of YouTube influencers, derived from interviews, include:

1. **Identity** Influencers must possess a clear and unique identity. Successful influencers establish distinctiveness in their presentations. For instance, food influencers might stand out by showcasing enjoyable and appetizing eating habits that inspire viewers to replicate their experiences. Developing such an identity involves,
 - a. Self-reflection: Understanding one's strengths, preferences, and the type of influencer they aim to be,
 - b. Feedback from others: Using insights from external reflections to refine their persona.
2. **Consistency** is key to maintaining visibility and engagement. Continuous content delivery helps build a recognizable presence among followers. Recommendations for maintaining consistency include
 - a. Planning and aligning video uploads with a specific theme for at least three months.
 - b. Creating content in advance to ensure regular uploads.
 - c. Focusing on relatable, low-cost topics to produce frequent and accessible content.
 - d. Understanding the platform to align content with its usage patterns.
3. **Creativity** distinguishes influencers by making their content more appealing. Influencers leverage personal interests and unique abilities to innovate and create captivating content. Creativity on online platforms varies, encompassing both entertaining and educational elements, allowing influencers to connect deeply with their audience.
4. **Content** Successful influencers deliver relatable and feasible content aligned with their expertise and genuine interests. Most content begins with the creator's passion or unique abilities. Influencers often draw inspiration from self-discovery, feedback, and their surroundings. Content planning involves ensuring relevance, coherence, and authenticity.
5. **Sincerity** In an era of accessible media, sincerity is paramount. Influencers build trust through authenticity, which is evident in two forms
 - a. Sincerity in content: Creating credible and trustworthy material.
 - b. Sincerity in persona: Demonstrating authenticity and transparency in their presentations.

Relevant Theories and Concepts

The study connects its findings with theoretical frameworks, notably Aristotle's Persuasive Appeals, The Five Canons of Rhetoric, and verbal and non-verbal communication theories.

Aristotle's Persuasive Appeals

- a. **Ethos (Credibility)**
Building trust and credibility is fundamental. Influencers achieve this by being authentic, intentional, and consistent in their content delivery. Unique characteristics and creative approaches strengthen their credibility, while sincerity enhances their trustworthiness, particularly in product reviews.
- b. **Pathos (Emotional Appeal)**
Influencers evoke emotional resonance by leveraging all five desirable traits: Identity enhances relatability and emotional connection. Consistency fosters ongoing engagement and emotional involvement. Creativity captivates audiences with innovative content. Content elicits emotions by presenting relatable and interesting themes. Sincerity builds emotional trust through genuine and straightforward communication.
- c. **Logos (Logical Reasoning)**
The importance of Logos has diminished in modern influencer content, as audiences prioritize entertainment and experiential engagement over evidence-based reasoning. However, Logos remains relevant in specific contexts, such as news or current events, where factual accuracy is essential.

The Five Canons of Rhetoric

- a. **Invention:** Influencers create content through creativity and personal interests. Their stories often revolve around accessible and relatable themes.
- b. **Arrangement:** Content is structured simply and directly to ensure clarity and coherence.
- c. **Style:** Presentations are increasingly influenced by current trends and individualistic approaches. Traditional notions of polished, elaborate rhetoric have become less relevant.
- d. **Memory:** The focus is less on memorization and more on spontaneous and relatable expressions.
- e. **Delivery:** Influencers emphasize authenticity in their verbal and non-verbal communication, adapting to the dynamic nature of online platforms.

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Modern communication styles on YouTube have shifted towards informality and natural expression. Influencers use simple language and relatable body language to create an approachable and engaging persona.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the essential traits and theoretical foundations for successful influencers on YouTube, providing insights into how these characteristics shape content creation and audience engagement. Influencers are more than content creators; they are thought leaders who blend authenticity, creativity, and strategy to captivate and inspire their audience. The research identifies five critical traits for YouTube influencers: identity, consistency, creativity, content, and sincerity. These traits collectively form a blueprint for fostering trust, emotional connection, and sustained engagement with viewers.

The findings emphasize the role of identity as the cornerstone of an influencer's brand, where a clear and distinct persona ensures recognition and relatability. Consistency emerges as a critical factor in maintaining audience interest, fostering familiarity, and reinforcing trust. Similarly, creativity drives innovation, enabling influencers to differentiate their content in a saturated digital landscape. Meanwhile, the authenticity and relatability of the content are essential for establishing emotional resonance, while sincerity strengthens credibility and fosters loyal relationships with followers.

The application of Aristotle's persuasive appeals—Ethos, Pathos, and Logos—further supports the strategic communication framework for influencers. While Ethos and Pathos are pivotal in building trust and emotional connection, Logos plays a reduced but contextually significant role, particularly in factual or educational content. Additionally, the integration of The Five Canons of Rhetoric provides a practical approach to creating, arranging, and delivering content effectively.

The study also reveals that the informal and relatable nature of modern communication is a defining feature of successful influencers. By adopting a more approachable tone and leveraging both verbal and non-verbal communication, influencers create an immersive and engaging experience for their audience.

In conclusion, the study offers a comprehensive understanding of the traits and strategies that underpin the success of YouTube influencers. These findings not only inform aspiring influencers but also provide a theoretical framework for developing effective training programs, emphasizing the importance of authenticity, creativity, and strategic communication in the digital era.

IMPLEMENTATION

The findings of this study can be implemented in various practical and educational contexts to support the growth and development of influencers, particularly on YouTube. The following steps outline actionable strategies for implementation:

- a. Training Programs for Aspiring Influencers
Develop structured training programs based on the identified traits and theoretical frameworks. The training should focus on helping aspiring influencers refine their identity, maintain consistency, foster creativity, curate engaging content, and communicate with sincerity. Modules should also cover the practical application of Aristotle's persuasive appeals and The Five Canons of Rhetoric to enhance content creation and delivery skills.
- b. Workshops and Practical Exercises
Include hands-on workshops where participants practice content creation, storytelling, and strategic communication. Influencers can role-play scenarios to experiment with different rhetorical strategies, test their creativity, and refine their delivery styles in a supportive learning environment.

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