

WEB INFLUENCER: INNOVATION OR ILLUSION?

"The difficulty lies not in believing new ideas but escaping from the old ones".

This is what John M. Keynes thought, considered the initiator of macroeconomics and one of the most influential economists of the twentieth century.

Although he lived at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century, he had a very innovative vision of the economy, in fact this thought is still usable to describe an innovation in the work world: the web influencer.

The web influencer is a person who, using various digital platforms and different social networks, is successful in establishing himself among the "internet public" thanks to his knowledge of a topic, gaining a large number of followers.

This new idea of work has been created "out of necessity" because traditional jobs are unfortunately experiencing a period of crisis and this also led to find new solutions.

Above all the Millennials, or otherwise known as Generation Y, use this new type of job to react to the increasing unemployment that has been striking our country in the last ten years.

The Millennial Generation is made up of individuals born between 1980 and 2000 and is the generation that is most affected by the effects of the crisis because the so-called "traditional" work world doesn't offer them employment opportunities suited to their abilities or to their qualification.

Another problem also comes up if someone accepts a job that falls short of the expectations because there's the risk of getting caught in this occupation, considered a transition to a better future, because the work world is stationary.

Financially speaking, the situation can be easily explained by the insider-outsider model: this theory is based on the problem of the very high costs of the workforce replacement.

The insiders are the employed workers while the outsiders are the unemployed looking for work; the first are excessively protected while the least aren't at all in fact the problem arises when they are replaced with each other.

As has been said previously, given that the costs of work replacement are very high and Italy being hit by a deep crisis that has led to huge cuts in public spending, the transition of positions would be expensive so young people have looked for new employment alternatives.

The expansion of the phenomenon has also been accelerated by the fact that the world of work has adapted to new technologies and also because Generation Y is characterized by having a good use and a good familiarity with communication, mass media and digital technologies.

In fact an influencer can use different platforms to get to know himself: currently the most popular is Instagram because it is immediate, easy to use and it allows to communicate exclusively through images, but are also used daily Facebook or Youtube.

Who better than a youngster knows these social networks?

This explains why these alternative jobs, if they can be called in this way, are widely disseminated among the very young people.

Being the world of internet very huge it is difficult to distinguish which and how many types of influencers exist but it is possible to briefly describe the main categories: the celebrity, the publisher, the fan and the friend.

Summing up to become an influencer you need to know a topic, have experience in that particular field, be original to stand out from the crowd, get known by the public, interact with the latter to make viral what we share and gain confidence of the followers to become their point of reference.

The figure of the web influencer is destined to grow up in the future given that the current percentage of employment is very high in the sector and also because it allows reaching a broad audience, much more than could be reached with more traditional communication channels.

Just think that on a social network like Instagram people can be qualified as a public figure if they have at least two thousand followers.

Only this information shows that even the least known of public figure can reach this quantity of people.

Although these figures reach a large numbers of people and influence their purchasing decisions, on the other hand it is very difficult to win public confidence.

This is due to the fact that the number of web influencers is increasing uncontrollably and the public has difficulty in understanding who deserves his trust and who doesn't.

To be successful an influencer must become the expert of the consumer choosing, a friend in the dispersive world of the internet.

This figure is seen as a person who suggests the consumer from a distance, a kind of friendly face that advises him.

Not everyone can become an influencer, in fact if on the one hand it is an easily practicable way at the beginning, it is difficult to carry on because it requires a lot of perseverance given the time it takes to establish itself among the consumers of the web.

Furthermore you need to have a certain budget available, especially if you carry on the so-called self-promotion, that is if you don't work for some brands but you only want to assert yourself on the web.

In order for companies to notice the potential web influencer it is important that he shows off himself and to make this happen, he must invest on himself and on his image, that's why, especially at the beginning, it is essential to have good financial resources.

Precisely companies can engage these familiar faces to promote their products.

This is what Pantene has done, a line of hair products, which uses Chiara Ferragni, one of the most famous fashion bloggers in the world, to promote its articles as a global ambassador.

Chiara Ferragni took her first steps in 2009 by opening her blog "The blonde salad" where she initially shared her life in Milan and then focused exclusively on her outfits.

Only a year later she inaugurated her own shoes line.

In 2017 Forbes, a magazine, defined her "the world's most important fashion influencer" and Swarovski chose her as a testimonial for her campaign along with celebrities of the caliber of Naomi Campbell.

The blog is seen as one of the best launch opportunities in the web world because you can earn money through visits, sponsorships, affiliations and much more.

Starting in 2009, in 2015 she has reached 10 million turnover at the age of only 28!

Currently the web influencer is one of the most requested and highest paid jobs.

To demonstrate this, the Daily Telegraph has drawn up a classification of the highest paid fashion bloggers in the world.

At the top there is Huda Kattan, a beauty blogger, with twenty-one million followers who earns eighteen thousand dollars for every sponsored post published on Instagram while in sixth place we find Chiara Ferragni with a profit of twelve thousand dollars and eleven million followers.

Not only women are successful as one might think but also men, in fact is the famous model and affirmed blogger Mariano di Vaio to represent the male category with six and a half million followers on Instagram.

Like Chiara Ferragni, Mariano di Vaio started by opening a blog, inspired by the one of his colleague, called “MDV style”, where he gives to everyone style advices.

He declared to ANSA, a press agency: "I went back to university but then I had the intuition to put in place what I learned abroad, because on this topic they were really ahead. This is how the fashion blog was born, it was the first one made by a man and I believe that for this reason I became a successfull model».¹

The success of M. di Vaio is very probable, if not certain, that resides in the fact that he was the first man in Italy to talk about fashion

He's considered the male figure of Chiara Ferragni and also as his colleague he inaugurated his line in fashion, the “NoHow style”.

The world of influencers is not just about fashion, in fact, it includes every type of sector.

Among the top experts in kitchen there is Chiara Maci, one of the most followed food bloggers in Italy, who makes a splash both on social networks and on TV with a program of her own.

She, like many others, left the university devoting herself to what she loves most.

She declared: "I chose happiness. I chose life. Life when you choose to wake up in the morning, put on a floured apron and with sleepy eyes start to get your hands dirty with butter, milk, sugar, chocolate, eggs to create something day after day, a big dough to shape, a huge cake made from puff pastries”.²

From these examples it emerges that web influencers opt for these innovative occupations because they give a way to combine their passion with their work and thanks to social networks they are able to be known immediately to a vast number of people.

¹ Declaration of the model M. di Vaio at the press agency ANSA.

² Announcement done by Chiara Maci during an interview of a gossip magazine.

There is also to say that this is one of the most requested and paid jobs at the moment, in fact for each post or video published the price that the sponsors pay is mind-boggling.

A youtuber that has between one hundred thousand and five hundred thousand subscribers to the channel earns about \$ 12500 for a post, but if the members exceed seven million he gains \$ 300,000.

On the basis of the gain we find at the second place Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Vine and at the end Twitter.

In 2017 this figure made a splash, in fact many companies opted to invest money in Digital PR.

The figure of the web influencer, according to recent estimates, improves the marketing strategy of a company of 5.2 points.

That explains why 84% of companies in 2017 invested in an Influencer Marketing.

The mission of the brands is no longer talking to as many people as possible, but intercepting, with targeted communication campaigns, those niches of the public that will guarantee a real return on investment.

The reachability of this world makes it very attractive for the student who aims to become a model or for anyone, not having some kind of talent, wants to be famous.

However, all that glitters ain't gold, as it has already been said previously the job of the web influencer is very difficult, it's not just to post beautiful photos but you must also know how to present well what you want to show.

If they are not constant, what they built could collapse at any moment.

For this reason it is important that their storytelling doesn't lose consistency otherwise the public would perceive a change that might not please anymore the character.

One of the reasons that led to the success of this figure is the fact that the people behind are very different from those of nicely made-up and well combed of teleshopping because they are very genuine and remember the face of a friend despite lacking human contact.

Although they show themselves as simple people to make a great product placement you need to have an effective strategy, only in this way the web influencer can become a real profession.

These occupations are welcome if they are an effective alternative to the lack of work in the "real" world and, even if the most skeptical people will certainly disdain them because they don't deserve to be called professions, we can only accept their existence in the present and in the future.

SITOGRAPHY

www.wikipedia.com

www.webinfermento.it

www.ideesoluzioni.it

www.webinsideagency.it

www.cricketadv.com

www.biografieonline.it

www.millionaireweb.it

www.ilfattoquotidiano.it

www.grazia.it

www.donnaglamour.it

www.ninjamarketing.it

AUTHOR:

Claudia Proietti

Università degli studi di Perugia

Matricola: 275537

claudia.proietti24@gmail.com