

Abstract

The advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed how businesses promote their products or services, including the growing use of influencer marketing strategies. This approach is considered effective in building emotional connections between brands and audiences, particularly on social media platforms. In thematic entertainment industries such as escape rooms, the effectiveness of influencer marketing has yet to be widely explored academically. DoomsX, a zombie-themed escape room located in Bandung, has implemented this strategy but continues to face challenges such as low visitor numbers. This raises the question of how much influencer marketing actually impacts audience engagement.

This study aims to examine audience responses toward the use of influencer marketing and to what extent it affects the engagement rate of Instagram content by DoomsX Bandung. DoomsX is a horror-themed escape room targeting young people as its primary market. However, the low number of visitors remains a major challenge, prompting the use of digital marketing strategies through influencers to boost visibility and audience engagement.

This research employs a quantitative approach with a descriptive method. Data was collected through online questionnaires distributed to 230 respondents who follow DoomsX's Instagram account. The research instrument was tested using validity and reliability tests. The data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify respondent tendencies toward the influencer marketing and engagement rate variables.

The findings show that the audience responded positively to DoomsX's influencer marketing efforts, especially regarding the appeal and credibility of the influencers. However, the resulting engagement rate still falls into the moderate category. This indicates that while influencer marketing has an impact, its contribution to engagement is not yet optimal and needs to be improved through better content strategies and more relevant influencer selection.

Keywords: *Influencer marketing, engagement rate, social media, DoomsX, digital marketing*