

INFLUENCER MARKETING: AN ANALYSIS OF ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS WITH MICRO-INFLUENCERS IN REGIONAL NICHES <https://doi.org/10.63330/aurumpub.064-008>**Paulo Henrique da Cunha Silva¹****Abstract**

Influencer marketing has become established as an important communication strategy in the digital environment, particularly given the growth of social media and companies' need to build closer, more targeted relationships with consumers. In this context, micro-influencers have gained prominence because they engage with smaller, more segmented communities characterized by greater closeness, identification, trust, and interaction with their followers. This study aims to analyze the use of micro-influencers in advertising campaigns targeting regional niches, considering their contributions to bringing brands and consumers closer together, strengthening local communication, and encouraging consumer behavior. The research is based on a literature review and an analysis of studies related to influencer marketing, authenticity, trust, segmentation, and regional communication. The findings discussed indicate that campaign effectiveness is not necessarily related to an influencer's number of followers, but rather to the quality of the relationship established with the audience, the compatibility among the creator, the brand, and the target audience, and the ability to adapt communication to the local context. Micro-influencers may also represent a strategic alternative for small and medium-sized enterprises, especially those operating in geographically defined markets. It is concluded that influencer marketing in regional niches has the potential to strengthen brands, increase their visibility, generate engagement, and encourage consumption, provided that campaigns are planned according to appropriate criteria for selection, authenticity, transparency, and results measurement.

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INTRODUCTION

The advancement of digital technologies and the consolidation of social media have significantly transformed communication between companies and consumers. In this context, influencer marketing has assumed a prominent position in advertising strategies, allowing brands to build closer relationships with specific audiences through content creators who possess credibility and recognition within particular communities. Among these professionals, micro-influencers stand out because their audiences, although smaller, exhibit characteristics of closeness, identification, and interaction that may foster consumer trust and receptiveness to advertising messages (Kim; Kim, 2021).

The use of micro-influencers becomes especially relevant when associated with regional niches, given Brazil's cultural, social, and economic diversity. These creators understand the characteristics of their communities and can use language, customs, references, and experiences that resonate with local audiences. Advertising can thus become more contextualized and better aligned with consumers' realities. Data presented by Opinion Box and Influency.me (2025) demonstrate the relevance of this phenomenon, indicating that 69% of respondents follow regional influencers and 55% report feeling better understood by these creators.

In this context, campaigns involving micro-influencers may represent a strategic alternative, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises that do not always have the resources to invest in large-scale advertising initiatives. Selecting creators with a strong presence in a particular city, region, or thematic community makes it possible to target communication toward audiences that may be more interested in the products and services being promoted. However, the effectiveness of these campaigns does not depend solely on the number of followers, but also on factors such as trust, authenticity,

identification, thematic relevance, quality of engagement, and compatibility among the influencer, the brand, and its target audience (Kim; Kim, 2021; Audrezet; De Kerviler; Moulard, 2020).

Against this background, this study aims to analyze advertising campaigns conducted with micro-influencers in regional niches, considering their potential to bring brands and consumers closer together and strengthen communication with specific audiences. It seeks to understand the importance of regional proximity, authenticity, trust, and segmentation in developing these strategies, as well as the main aspects related to planning and evaluating their results. The relevance of the study lies in the need to understand how companies can use the new possibilities offered by social media to develop communication that is more targeted, contextualized, and appropriate to the characteristics of different communities and local markets.

METHODOLOGY

This study is characterized as bibliographic research, developed through the collection and analysis of scientific studies, articles, academic papers, and research concerning influencer marketing, micro-influencers, social media, authenticity, trust, and regional communication. The purpose of the research was to gather relevant information to understand the use of micro-influencers in advertising campaigns targeting regional niches, considering their characteristics, potential, and challenges.

The analysis was qualitative and sought to interpret the information identified in the literature and relate it to the objective proposed by the study. The works examined addressed the relationship between digital influencers and consumers, the importance of regional proximity, engagement, audience segmentation, and factors that may contribute to campaign effectiveness. The methodology thus made it possible to bring together different theoretical perspectives in order to understand the contribution of micro-influencers to digital advertising strategies.

DEVELOPMENT

The advancement of digital technologies and the consolidation of social media have profoundly transformed communication between companies and consumers. In this context, influencer marketing has assumed a prominent position in advertising strategies, particularly because it allows brands to build closer relationships with specific audiences through content creators who possess credibility and recognition within particular communities. Unlike traditional advertising, which is often characterized by unilateral communication between brands and consumers, influencer marketing draws on certain individuals' ability to produce content, build social ties, and influence perceptions and consumer behavior. This transformation is particularly relevant when considering micro-influencers, whose audiences, although smaller in absolute terms, tend to have greater thematic, geographic, and relational proximity to them (Kim; Kim, 2021).

Micro-influencers can be understood as content creators who engage with relatively small and segmented communities, building their influence through characteristics such as closeness, identification, specialization, and frequent interaction with followers. Their relevance to advertising strategies does not depend exclusively on the number of people reached, but also on the quality of the relationship established with the audience. In many cases, these creators are perceived as ordinary people who share experiences, opinions, recommendations, and aspects of their daily lives, which can make commercial communication appear more natural. This characteristic contributes to strengthening trust, identification, and perceived authenticity, all of which are fundamental for a recommendation to have the potential to influence attitudes toward a particular product or service (Audrezet; De Kerviler; Moulard, 2020).

The regional dimension adds an even more significant characteristic to influencer marketing. In a country of continental proportions such as Brazil, there are substantial differences in culture, accent, consumption habits, traditions, cuisine, leisure practices, and the specific needs of each territory. Consequently, a campaign developed for a national audience may not produce the same effects when applied indiscriminately across different regions. Because regional influencers have direct knowledge of

the social and cultural context of their communities, they are able to adapt advertising messages to local realities by using references, expressions, and experiences that resonate with those audiences. A survey conducted by Opinion Box in partnership with Influency.me found that 69% of respondents follow regional influencers, while 55% report feeling better understood by these content creators (Opinion Box; Influency.me, 2025).

The use of micro-influencers in regional niches therefore represents a strategic opportunity for companies seeking to reach consumers in a more segmented manner. Rather than investing exclusively in major digital personalities with large numbers of followers, organizations can select creators with a strong presence in a particular city, state, region, or thematic community. This choice makes it possible to direct investments toward more specific audiences that may be more interested in what is being promoted. Research on influencer marketing identifies segmentation capacity and the closeness between influencers and their audiences as important factors in building trust and shaping favorable attitudes toward brands (Kim; Kim, 2021).

The relationship between influence and trust is one of the main foundations of campaigns conducted with micro-influencers. Consumers tend to evaluate not only the product being presented, but also the person making the recommendation. Factors such as subject-matter knowledge, authenticity, identification, and attractiveness can help build followers' trust. The literature demonstrates that characteristics of the message source can function as relational resources capable of influencing trust in the creator and, consequently, attitudes toward the product and purchase intention (Kim; Kim, 2021). Influencers should therefore not be selected solely on the basis of quantitative metrics, such as number of followers, but also by considering the coherence among their identity, content, audience, and the brand's proposition.

In this context, authenticity plays a central role. One of the major advantages attributed to digital influencers is precisely their ability to present products and services in a manner integrated into the audience's daily life. However, when advertising is excessively artificial or creators begin promoting

products unrelated to their positioning, there is a risk that they will lose credibility. Audrezet, de Kerviler, and Moulard (2020) demonstrate that commercial relationships between influencers and brands can create tensions related to authenticity, as followers value the perception of intrinsic motivations and communication that is not excessively commercial. The effectiveness of a campaign therefore also depends on the ability to preserve the influencer's identity throughout the advertising initiative.

Authenticity becomes even more relevant in regional niches. An influencer who produces content about a particular city, for example, can present a local business in context by showing their actual experience with the establishment, its products or services, and its relationship with the community. This approach may be more convincing than generic advertising because the content contains elements the audience recognizes. Brazilian research on nano- and micro-influencers and local communication identified the use of these creators as an advertising strategy for introducing local brands into segmented communities, highlighting their engagement with audiences in the regions where they live and with which they predominantly communicate (Silva, 2023).

Geographic proximity may also have important effects on the sense of belonging. When consumers identify elements in influencers that resemble aspects of their own lives, such as accent, customs, places frequented, cultural references, and everyday experiences, a form of social identification is established that may foster receptiveness to the message. This characteristic is especially relevant to small businesses, restaurants, stores, beauty salons, gyms, hotels, self-employed professionals, and service providers that depend predominantly on consumers from a particular region. In such cases, the local influencer acts as a bridge between the brand and the community, making communication less distant and more contextualized (Silva, 2023).

Another important aspect is micro-influencers' ability to work with specific niches. A niche may consist of people interested in food, fashion, beauty, tourism, education, sports, entrepreneurship, agriculture, regional culture, entertainment, or other subjects. When creators possess recognized authority within one of these segments, advertising can reach people who already have some level of interest in the

subject. In this case, influence does not occur simply because creators have followers, but because there is a thematic relationship between the content produced and the audience's needs or interests. Studies on trust in influencers emphasize the importance of factors such as specialization, authenticity, and identification in shaping the relationship between creators and followers (Kim; Kim, 2021).

The segmentation provided by micro-influencers may be particularly valuable to small and medium-sized enterprises. Organizations with limited resources are not always able to compete with major brands in nationwide advertising campaigns. A strategy based on regional creators, however, may allow a company to concentrate its resources on communities that are more likely to consume its products or services. A study conducted with micro- and small enterprises in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Mexico, observed that the use of local influencers can be an alternative for smaller companies, especially when the commercial relationship is structured in a manner compatible with the available resources, including through exchanges of products and services in certain contexts (Sosa Zúñiga et al., 2024).

This characteristic demonstrates that influencer marketing should not be understood as a strategy exclusive to large corporations. Local companies can use micro-influencers to increase their visibility, present new products, advertise promotions, strengthen their reputations, and encourage consumers to visit their establishments. In certain situations, campaign returns may arise not only through immediate sales, but also through increased brand awareness, growth in social media interactions, the generation of user-generated content, and the formation of a community around the company. The literature on influencer campaigns shows that results should be evaluated by considering different dimensions of performance rather than merely the raw number of views (Ji et al., 2025).

Defining objectives is therefore a fundamental stage in planning campaigns with micro-influencers. A company may hire a creator to increase brand awareness, generate traffic to a physical or online store, promote a launch, publicize an event, acquire new customers, generate sales, or strengthen its institutional image. Each objective requires specific indicators. A campaign designed to generate sales, for example, may use promotional codes, trackable links, or exclusive coupons, whereas an awareness

campaign may prioritize reach, views, and mentions. Appropriate planning makes it possible to evaluate whether the investment made effectively contributed to the expected results (Ji et al., 2025).

Engagement metrics are also highly important. Likes, comments, shares, saves, responses to stories, video views, and clicks are indicators that can help determine the level of interaction between content and the audience. However, an exclusively quantitative analysis may be insufficient. A profile with few followers may have a highly engaged community and produce better results than a much larger account with little connection to the campaign's target audience. The evaluation of micro-influencers should therefore consider the quality of comments, the recurrence of interactions, the relevance of the audience, and the ability to generate concrete actions. Recent studies also indicate that the effects produced by different influencers may vary according to their level of popularity, reinforcing the need for strategies specifically tailored to micro-influencers (Ji et al., 2025).

In the Brazilian context, the regional dimension has particularly significant potential. A survey of Brazilian consumers found that 53% of respondents believe that influencers, content creators, and thematic pages play an important role in preserving their regions' cultural values. Furthermore, 56% reported feeling better represented in advertising campaigns that include regional influencers or creators, a percentage that rises to 66% among respondents from Brazil's Northeast. These findings indicate that regionality can function not only as an element of market segmentation, but also as a means of cultural and social representation (Opinion Box; Influency.me, 2025).

Regional representation may help consumers perceive advertising as more closely aligned with their realities. Campaigns that incorporate local characteristics may be more effective in their communication because they use cultural codes familiar to the audience. It is important to emphasize, however, that regionalizing a campaign does not simply mean incorporating aesthetic or linguistic elements considered typical of a particular region. Communication must demonstrate genuine knowledge of the local context and avoid stereotypes or artificial representations. Research on regionalism and

influence likewise indicates that consumers value respect for local culture and customs and show interest in useful content and honestly shared experiences (Opinion Box; Influency.me, 2025).

Accordingly, micro-influencers should be selected using strategic criteria. The first aspect to be considered is the compatibility between the influencer's audience and the company's target audience. The type of content produced, publication frequency, engagement rate and quality, the creator's reputation, the language used, and their relationship with the community should then be analyzed. It is also important to determine whether the influencer has previously conducted similar campaigns and how their audience responded to earlier advertising. Selection based exclusively on the number of followers may lead to inappropriate choices because effective influence is related to qualitative characteristics of the relationship between creators and their audiences (Kim; Kim, 2021).

Campaign development should therefore respect the influencer's identity. Rather than providing a completely rigid script, the company can establish objectives, essential information, legal boundaries, and mandatory elements of the communication while allowing creators to develop the message using their customary language. This strategy may make the content feel more natural and prevent the advertising from being perceived as excessively removed from the profile's usual output. The need to preserve authenticity is reinforced by studies showing that commercial associations between brands and influencers can undermine perceived authenticity when sponsored content conflicts with the identity previously constructed by the creator (Audrezet; De Kerviler; Moulard, 2020).

Formats should also be selected according to audience behavior. Stories, short-form videos, feed posts, livestreams, and other formats can perform different functions within a campaign. In the Brazilian survey on regional influencers, stories were identified by 58% of respondents as one of their most frequently consumed formats, followed by short-form videos, mentioned by 49%. Among Generation Z, however, short-form videos are even more prominent. These findings demonstrate that the content strategy must consider not only the influencer's profile, but also the characteristics of the intended audience (Opinion Box; Influency.me, 2025).

Short-form videos are particularly important because they make it possible to present products and experiences quickly, visually, and in context. A regional micro-influencer may, for example, produce a video showing an experience at a particular establishment, demonstrating how a service works, or presenting a product in an everyday situation. This format allows advertising to be incorporated into the creator's narrative, increasing the possibility of audience identification. However, the use of a particular format should not be treated as a guarantee of success because effectiveness depends on content quality, the appropriateness of the message for the audience, and the credibility of the person conveying it (Opinion Box; Influency.me, 2025).

Another relevant aspect concerns the frequency of partnerships. One-off campaigns may generate momentary visibility, but ongoing relationships between brands and creators can help build more consistent associations. Recent data from the Brazilian market indicate that recurring creators accounted for a significant share of sales attributed to influencer marketing, reinforcing the importance of continuity in relationships between brands and creator communities. Although commercial data should be interpreted cautiously and cannot be generalized to all campaigns, they suggest that building long-term relationships may be a strategic alternative to hiring different influencers for one-off initiatives (Folha de S.Paulo, 2026).

Continuity also enables influencers to become more familiar with the brand and develop content that is more fully integrated into their regular output. At the same time, followers begin to recognize the association between the creator and the company and may understand the partnership as a more stable relationship. This does not mean that all recurring advertising will automatically be effective; excessive or inappropriate repetition may cause saturation. The central principle should be coherence among the brand, the creator, and the audience. When alignment exists, the partnership can evolve from a simple promotional initiative into a community relationship strategy (Audrezet; De Kerviler; Moulard, 2020).

Regional campaigns also offer advantages related to content production. Micro-influencers often develop materials with an aesthetic closer to everyday social media communication, which may foster a

perception of spontaneity. For small businesses, this offers an opportunity to produce promotional content without necessarily relying on large audiovisual production structures. Creators themselves can record establishments, products, and experiences, producing materials that the company may subsequently use, provided that usage rights have been established in advance. The study on nano- and micro-influencers in local communication demonstrates the use of these profiles as instruments for inserting local brands into content directed at segmented audiences (Silva, 2023).

Despite these advantages, certain risks must be considered. The first concerns the inappropriate selection of an influencer. A creator may have a large number of followers but lack an audience compatible with the company's target market. There may also be fake followers, low-quality interaction, a history of controversial behavior, or an excessive volume of sponsored content. A preliminary analysis of the profile is therefore essential. Digital influence should be understood as a socially constructed relationship rather than simply an audience metric. Characteristics such as trust, authenticity, expertise, and identification influence how advertising messages are received (Kim; Kim, 2021).

Advertising transparency is another fundamental element. Consumers need to understand when particular content has a commercial purpose. Properly identifying sponsored content contributes to a more transparent relationship among influencers, brands, and audiences. In addition to complying with applicable advertising requirements, transparency can help preserve trust by avoiding any attempt to present a commercial message as though it were a completely spontaneous opinion. Studies on influencer marketing demonstrate that awareness of a message's commercial nature can affect how the audience interprets the content, making transparency a relevant component of the strategy (Han et al., 2024).

In Brazil, concerns regarding advertising conducted by influencers are also related to advertising identification standards and principles. Commercial communication must be presented clearly so that consumers can recognize its nature. For companies, this means that campaign planning must consider not only creative and commercial aspects, but also measures related to transparency, responsibility, and consumer protection. The professionalization of influencer marketing therefore requires brands and

creators to understand that social media advertising remains subject to the general principles governing commercial communication, even when presented in apparently spontaneous formats (Han et al., 2024).

Measuring return on investment is another challenge in campaigns involving micro-influencers. Metrics such as reach and engagement are important, but they do not necessarily demonstrate whether sales conversions occurred. To obtain more accurate information, companies can use specific promotional codes, customized links, landing pages, coupons, brand-awareness surveys, and comparisons of sales before and after the campaign. This combination of indicators makes it possible to observe both immediate results and medium-term effects. Recent research also indicates that different categories of influencers may exhibit distinct patterns in terms of conversion and campaign effects, reinforcing the importance of data analysis (Ji et al., 2025).

In regional campaigns, measurement may be even more precise when a business operates within a geographically defined area. A physical store, for example, may provide an influencer with an exclusive code for consumers in the region, making it possible to determine how many people visited the establishment as a result of the campaign. Similarly, a restaurant may create a specific promotion publicized by the influencer and compare the number of orders placed during the campaign period. These mechanisms transform influencer marketing into a strategy that can be monitored and evaluated, reducing reliance on subjective perceptions of campaign success (Ji et al., 2025).

Another relevant point is the potential of micro-influencers to promote products and services associated with regional identity. Food, tourism, handicrafts, fashion, events, culture, local commerce, and experiences are segments that are particularly compatible with proximity-based campaigns. Brazilian research on regionalism shows that travel and tourism, health and fitness, food and recipes, humor, and finance are among the subjects consumers frequently follow in regional content. This demonstrates the existence of multiple segmentation possibilities and shows that regionalism can be combined with different niches of interest (Opinion Box; Influency.me, 2025).

In the food sector, regional micro-influencers can be used in various formats, including restaurant reviews, product demonstrations, promotion of establishments, coverage of food-related events, and recipe presentations. The principal advantage lies in the possibility of connecting the creator's experience with that of the consumer. Credibility, however, depends on the honesty of the evaluation and the coherence between the content and the influencer's positioning. When all experiences are presented as excellent, regardless of their actual quality, audiences may become distrustful. Credibility must therefore be preserved even when a commercial relationship exists between the brand and the creator (Kim; Kim, 2021).

In local commerce, this strategy can be used to strengthen the digital presence of companies that traditionally relied on word-of-mouth promotion. Micro-influencers can serve as a digital extension of this process by conveying recommendations to communities that already follow their content. The difference is that communication becomes measurable and potentially scalable. At the same time, closeness to the audience preserves characteristics similar to those of traditional interpersonal relationships. This combination of digital reach and social proximity is one reason micro-influencers may be especially relevant to local businesses (Silva, 2023).

The analysis of advertising campaigns with micro-influencers in regional niches supports the conclusion that the primary distinguishing feature of this strategy does not necessarily lie in audience size, but in the quality of the connection established. A smaller community that is highly interested in and identifies strongly with a creator may offer substantial value to a particular brand. This perspective changes the traditional logic of advertising, in which reach was often considered one of the principal indicators of success. In influencer marketing, factors such as trust, identification, authenticity, thematic relevance, and regional proximity must be incorporated into the assessment of communication effectiveness (Kim; Kim, 2021).

Available data on the Brazilian market reinforce this perspective. The existence of a significant proportion of consumers who follow regional influencers demonstrates that there is demand for content

that values local identity. Furthermore, the fact that 43% of respondents reported being more likely to purchase from a brand that uses regional influencers demonstrates that the strategy can extend beyond visibility and affect consumer behavior. Similarly, according to the cited survey, 59% reported trusting product recommendations made by regional influencers, demonstrating the relevance of trust in this process (Opinion Box; Influency.me, 2025).

Influencer marketing based on regional micro-influencers therefore represents a strategy capable of bringing brands and consumers closer together through segmented, contextualized, and potentially more authentic communication. Its success depends on planning, appropriate creator selection, objective setting, coherent content production, commercial transparency, and results monitoring. The strategy should not be adopted simply because social media are growing, but because there is compatibility among the influencer, the audience, and the organization's objectives. When these elements are aligned, digital influence can help strengthen the brand, build relationships, and encourage consumption (Audrezet; De Kerviler; Moulard, 2020; Kim; Kim, 2021).

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that influencer marketing involving micro-influencers is a relevant strategy for bringing brands and consumers closer together, particularly in regional niches. The analysis demonstrated that factors such as trust, authenticity, identification, geographic proximity, and knowledge of the audience may be more important than the number of followers in developing effective campaigns (Kim; Kim, 2021; Audrezet; De Kerviler; Moulard, 2020).

In this regard, micro-influencers may represent a strategic alternative for companies, particularly small and medium-sized businesses seeking to reach specific audiences in a more targeted and contextualized manner. To achieve better results, however, creators must be appropriately selected, clear objectives must be established, the authenticity of the communication must be preserved, and results must be monitored through indicators of reach, engagement, and conversion.

The study therefore demonstrates that the use of regional micro-influencers can help strengthen brand communication, build relationships with communities, and encourage consumption. Its effectiveness, however, is directly related to coherence among the influencer, the brand, and the target audience, as well as to campaign planning and transparency.

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