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Has the use of celebrity influencers in advertising changed through the generations, with a
focus on 3 separate eras.

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Summary of Topic

This Independent Enquiry is designed to find out how long people of celebrity stature have been using their found fame to influence the purchasing decision of a potential customer. It will look at a variety of sources from Psychologists, Professors and industry professionals as well as looking at the positives and negative points throughout. In addition, it will look at 3 periods of time, these being the 1950s, 1980s and 2000 to the present day to see what differs between them. The 3 topics and chapter headings that will be focused on are Lifestyle, Health and Fitness.

Introduction

To start answering the question selected, the term 'influencer' will first need to be defined.

The *Cambridge Dictionary* defines an influencer as "a person or group that has the ability to influence the behaviour or opinions of others." (Cambridge Dictionary, 2012) In relation to Advertising and Brand Design this can be simplified to the person or persons who are selling or personally endorsing a product.

The focus of this Independent Enquiry will be to examine different forms of celebrity endorsement looking back over past examples, leading up to the present day. It will study the way a celebrity influencer communicate with their fans to either endorse their own brand and merchandise or an existing brand they can bring recognition and possible customers to.

WARC (*World Advertising Resource Centre*) describes the use of celebrity endorsement as "Celebrity Endorsement is the forming of a relationship between a brand and an influential individual who 'fits' with the brand and whose personality resonates with the target consumer." (Warc.com, 2016) There will be a focus on how these relationships are formed, looking at medical professionals' opinions and research to arrive at a conclusion on whether celebrity influenced based buying is a positive or negative matter including on mental health.

Throughout this Independent Inquiry it will focus on technological advances and how the innovation of new communication outlets has affected the way celebrities and companies communicate with potential supporters in order to communicate and attempt to make new customers of them. In addition to this, there will be research around how government action is taken where new technology is used and in what way the advertising can take place moving forward.

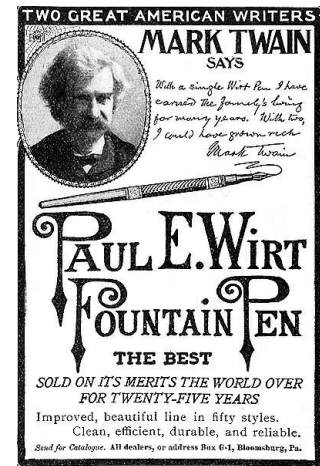
Steve Olenski from *Forbes* an American based business website and magazine stated in regards to the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement, "The potential positive effects on product sales cannot be understated...just one endorsement can spell an increase in sales by 4%, almost immediately." (Olenski, 2016) This implies an immediate advantage to using personal endorsement to sell or promote. This study will look at why these statistics are true of companies that use celebrity to back their products or services and what happens to a potential consumer when they see a person they like or associate with linked with a brand.

It will concentrate on Lifestyle, Health and Fitness as the 3 main consumer areas, as well as focus on 3 different time periods, these being the 1950s, 1980s and 2000 to present day.

Using these chapter titles and time periods will give a better understanding on how different industries have used celebrities to sell to separate generations.

Chapter 1: Lifestyle

For as long as there have been people in notable positions of celebrity stature there have been ways of monetising their influence. Some of the earliest recorded instances of this occurring can be dated back to the early 1890s where Samuel Langhorne Clemens, under his assumed pen name Mark Twain handwrote his personal endorsement of the Paul E. Wirt fountain pen. This handwritten support of the product was used in print campaigns alongside a photo of the famed author, thus being one of the earliest recorded uses of a celebrity influencer in advertising.



Mark Twain FOUNTAIN PENS, n.d.)

With the end of World War 2 (1939-1945) the worldwide economy and manufacturing industry had rebounded and was on the increase, and so was the use of advertisement to sell products and services. Dubbed the 'Golden Era of Advertisements' (The Independent, 2008) the 1950s saw a surge in advertisement revenue. The increase in sales was also true of the household Television set. In the United States, between 1950 and 1953 over television brand, *RETMA* (*Radio Electronics Television Manufacturers Association*) estimates 18 million televisions were bought, opening a new channel of direct communication with potential consumers. This meant that contrary to the previous decade of the 1940s, adverts could now take on a new form, through the new medium. Going from two-dimensional images to moving and talking pictures added a new means of sales strategies, thus allowing the use of public figures to personally and vocally endorse products. A famous example of this in this time period was up-and-coming Frank Sinatra's November 8th, 1954 appearance on *The*

Colgate Comedy hour where he sang a 36 second song regarding the product *Halo Hair Shampoo*. (National Museum of American History, n.d)

With the household television becoming increasingly popular this allowed for the animation of characters to be used in advertising. An example of this from the 1950s is the advertisement for *Bloch and Guggenheimer foods* tinned and frozen sweetcorn in 1954. This is a positive piece of advertising through the use of a child-friendly character to sell and promote healthy food.

In order to understand the positive and negative impacts of advertising to children we first need to consider how children view advertisements, or specifically whether children can distinguish adverts from television programmes or films. Notably, the research around this topic focused on young people's understanding of the persuasive intent of selling a product or service and whether children are likely to believe an advertisement at face value. Macklin and Carlson state 'three-fifths of the kindergarteners and third graders believe that advertising only lies once in a while.' (Macklin and Carlson, 1999) The study looks at 5 to 8-year olds and how the majority perceive commercials as telling the truth, regardless of the message. This is problematic during this time period owing to the new influx of people owning televisions in their homes and having no advertising regulations in place, especially with the issue around this subject not being addressed until the 1970s with the federal bill not being passed until 1996, named 'Just Say No.' (Nelson, 2011)

The 1980s saw the creation of the forward-facing Chief Executive officer, turning the company executive into household names. A prime example of this is *Apple Computers* 1984 keynote speech and introduction of the 1984 *Macintosh*, considered at the time to be the

machine that changed computing and opened it up to a consumer market. Conducting the speech and presentation that day was Steve Jobs, one of the founding members of the company. During this speech you see the charismatic and conventionally handsome



Figure 2: Mac 1984: Steve Jobs Revolutionizes The Art Of Corporate Storytelling, 2014

Jobs interact with the computer, adding a human element to the sales pitch, rather than leaving the computer to operate some pre organised video or similar. Steve Jobs himself stated in his autobiography “If you act like you can do something, then it will work” (Isaacson and Baker, 2011) This statement is not only true of Jobs himself but all salespeople, whether that be social media influencers or spokespeople. “Once a celebrity endorsement grabs their attention, consumers are assumed to become more interested in the advertised object... consumers also tend to be more motivated to assess what kind of object a celebrity is endorsing.” (Knoll and Matthes, 2017) Through his well-spoken words and natural charm, Steve Jobs captures the attention of the public, and in doing so he adds intrigue around *Apple’s* new flagship product. Winterich, Gangwar and Grewal state in their 2018 research article “if the celebrity appears trustworthy, honest, and believable, the consumer accepts influence from this source and internalizes the information (s)he provides” (Gangwar, Grewal and Winterich, 2018) This is very true of Jobs who had a public facing persona that drew a consumer in, building trust and familiarity with his, thus doing the same for the product he was selling.

Steve Jobs conducted all of Apple’s keynote speeches and the unveiling of new products up until March 2011, before his death due to pancreatic cancer in the December of the same year. Since the first speech in 1984 many businesses have adopted a similar format to attract

people to their products. Companies such as *Microsoft* used Chairman Bill Gates in its product launches from 1986 until the launch of the Xbox in 2006.

Since 2005, cleaning brand *Cillit Bang*, a product that is produced and distributed by the *Reckitt Benckiser Group PLC* (*Rb.com*, 2019) have been promoted and the product sale influenced by a person under the name Barry Scott. Scott is in fact an actor named Neil Burgess, parodying a 1990's home shopping channel product pitch such as



Figure 3: Cillit Bang Home Page, 2019

QVC, the televised home shopping from the *Qurate Retail Group*. With products such as *Dyson Vacuum Cleaners* owner Sir James Dyson being the face of the company since his December 1st, 1983 television appearance on *ITV's Afternoon Plus* for example. (Thames TV, 2019) You can understand with Steve Jobs and Sir James Dyson for examples being one of 'real' products creators selling their products to a mainstream audience since the 1980s, On the opposite of this you have actor Neil Burgess playing the part of Barry Scott since 2005, acting the part of the inventor. (Pope 2019)

In the series of adverts released since 2005, Burgess playing Scott can be seen in an over enthusiastic manner explaining the products in visual ways. These range from showing how quickly the product can be used to clean the dirt of a one pence piece to show the *Cillit Bang brand unblocking kit* in a visual way through the use of Scott going down a waterslide that is

used to represent the pipe. (Youtube.com, 2014) The way 'Scott' speaks during his appearances in the advertisements is in a loud and almost an 'in your face' manner, verging on shouting. In terms of selling the product in this manner, this may not be the best way of forging a relationship with the consumer. Contrary to this is the memorable nature in which the message is portrayed. A phrase that was popularised by American Humourist in the early 1900s is "the squeaky wheel gets the grease." (Merriam-webster.com, 2019) This phrase implies the person who is the loudest in a situation will get what is required, in this case attention. This proverb is true of this advertisement and the actor salesperson, even if it was unintended to have this effect.

The question this leaves is does the *Reckitt Benckiser Group* realise that its potential customers and viewers of these adverts containing the character of Barry Scott could be getting misled during the adverts passionate delivery? The research around this subject has concluded that it doesn't take too much online research to find out the real facts of the company and the actor used. *Reckitt Benckiser* has undertaken a very well thought out and memorable advertising campaign spanning nearly 15 years to the present day, using a tried and tested way of selling through a salesperson, adopting techniques pioneered by figureheads like Steve Jobs.

Chapter 2: Health

During the 1950s smoking tobacco-based products was not considered a risk to an individual's health. Berridge Ph.D. and Loughlin Ph.D. write regarding this "Smoking, the ministry argued, was not a "disease" in the same way as cancer or, indeed, infectious disease. It might lead to disease, but not for many years. The notion of long-term "risk" was not part of public health in the 1950s." (Berridge and Loughlin 2005) As this was the case it was also the same for advertising around the subject. An example of a celebrity's influence to sell or promote a product is from Christmas in 1951 where Santa



Figure 4: When Doctors, and Even Santa, Endorsed Tobacco, 2008

Claus was used in the selling of *Pall Mall Cigarettes*. The use of Santa Claus is significant as it uses a famous character and exploits the emotion that is evoked from the used image. With Santa Claus being an eternal and everlasting fictional figure, this evokes emotion from a potential new customer, as well as an existing one. Elizabeth Pearson Waugaman writes for Psychology Today "[Santa Claus creates] ... Stories that foster the imagination, develop creativity, self-confidence, and empathy." (Psychology Today, 2012) With all these emotions being true, the use of a child friendly figure to sell something that we now know through modern science to be harmful could be problematic.

The BMJ (British Medical Journal) writes "in 1950... All confirmed this growing suspicion, that smokers of cigarettes were far more likely to contract lung cancer than non-smokers."

(Proctor, 2011)

The BMJ states that on December 15th, 1953 executives from the largest tobacco companies met to discuss the way they were marketing their products. Prior to 1953 Tobacco companies such as *Pall Mall* used claims within the advertisement “Guards against Scratchy Throat” as a positive attribute of smoking. Scientific research showed that this was not the case and all the companies decided to drop medical advice from advertisements from then on.

In contrast to Christmas of 1951, during the Christmas of 1954, future president of the United States Ronald Reagan featured in many of *Chesterfields* cigarette advertisements. In print advertisements of the time, Reagan can be seen smoking a cigarette as well as gift wrapping cigarettes to send to his family and friends as Christmas presents. At the times Reagan was a prominent actor in Hollywood as well as a sports journalist, so he was known in diverse sectors. The removal of the child friendly Santa Claus as a positive step, distancing the harmful products away from the Christmas character. In the future Christmas campaigns for *Pall Mall* cigarettes the inclusion of Reagan can be seen within the advertisements, with them predominantly aimed at a more mature audience.

Between the 1960s and 1980s the United States saw an increase in the number of men and women who were considered obese or overweight. Between 1960 and 1962 the *United States Centre for Disease Control and Prevention* recorded that 44.8% of men and women were overweight, compared to the statistics from 1982 which showed that it was now 56% of adults.(InfoPlease, 2002) With the rise of these statistics, companies needed to develop their products to meet the needs of the customers.

The 1980s saw the creation of *Diet Coke*, the *Coca Cola Companies* first sugar free alternative to its flagship drink, launched on July 8th, 1982. With the launch of *Coca Cola's* first new product came its first batch of advertising campaigns. In 1983 they launched their first celebrity led campaign in the form of a mock movie premier from *Radio City*, known today as *Radio City Music Hall*. (Diet Coke Commercial 1983, 2011)



Figure 5: Diet Coke Commercial 1983, 2011

Amongst the guests were the popular actor and director Telly Savalas and singer Carol Channing, both seen in the commercial to be consuming a Diet Coke. With a vast selection of famous faces on hand shown celebrating and seemingly enjoying the product, it raises the question why so many different well known people are used in this commercial and how does seeing the glamorous party guests drinking the product help promote it?

“Studies have revealed that people tend to develop relationships with celebrities, merely known from the media, just as they would do with real life persons. Upon encountering a celebrity on television, radio, or the Internet, consumers may parasocially interact with the celebrity, storing this experience in a relationship schema.” (Chandler and Munday, 2011)

Parasocial is a term created in 1956 by Horton and Wohl, used to describe relationships with famous faces. In addition, Chandler and Munday state “Parasocial relationships psychologically resemble those of face-to-face interaction but they are of course mediated and one-sided.” (Chandler and Munday, 2011)

It is worthwhile to consider Telly Savalas for example, from this commercial. According to the *IMDB (Internet Movie Database, 2019)* Savalas had been in over 100 films and television projects up to this date, ranging from 1959 to 1982. The research suggests potential customers of this product psychologically feel like they know Mr Savalas, so to see him in relation to this new product that they may not have considered purchasing before gives a potential customer a face they know, thus the feeling of familiarity and likeability. In total, the 30 second television and pre-movie advertisement shows 16 celebrities of the time within the crowd, with 4 shown consuming the product. With the parasocial connection to Mr Savalas, this must also be true of the other 15 people associated. It seems like *Coca Cola* were maximising the star value with a range of famous people in order to hit different demographics within one advertisement.

Since the beginning of the 21st Century the internet has seen the creation of many social media platforms. With the launch of *Facebook* in 2004, many users and *Facebook* themselves as a business have consistently been developing ways to monetise their brands. This is also the case with other social media platforms. This is never truer than with the launch of Instagram in 2010 when Facebook purchased the platform for a reported 1 billion dollars just 2 years later. (BBC News, 2012) Since this time, Instagram's subscriber figures have soared with recent statistics from Chloe West of Sprout Social in 2019 showing that more than 500 million users access the application every day. (West, 2019)

With this monumental upsurge in attention, there has been the creation of the Social Media Influencer. There are very little credible sources into the definition of Influencer marketing.

However, in 2008 Brown and Hayes defined it as “A third-party who significantly shapes the customer’s purchasing decision but may never be accountable for it”. An individual social media personality with a sizable following brings with them followers with similar interests and views. Businesses are increasingly turning to online personalities to be the face and voice of their product. Social media gives the user the opportunity to portray their life in the way they want it to be perceived and leave out the parts that do not want to share. Dr Danielle Leigh Wagstaff and Mary Sherlock discuss this at length in their research, concluding that “younger participants spent more time on Instagram, and engaged in higher levels of social comparison, these findings suggest that Instagram use could pose an even higher risk to psychological wellbeing in adolescents” (Sherlock and Wagstaff, 2019) Social comparison is described by Wagstaff and Sherlock as “comparing themselves to perceived superior comparators and therefore suffering mentally based on their lack of expensive possessions or grandiose social life.”

This is less problematic when viewing a social media account casually but becomes more of an issue when that person’s account is selling or advertising a product the consumer may believe will help align them with the influencer. In the past few years, there has been a rise in activists fighting against the use of social media influencers to sell dietary products such as Detox teas and appetite suppressing lollipops. *Flat Tummy Tea*, a company created in June of 2013 conducted all their marketing through Instagram and Influencers. Dr S Bryn Austin of Harvard Medical School states regarding these products “weight loss claims for these products are either outright sham or a result of adulteration of the products with potentially dangerous stimulants, laxatives or diuretics.”

Kim Kardashian West, social media and television personality, promoted this product to her audience of more than 150 million people to much public scrutiny at the time. Kardashian West is known to have a sizable personal fortune and has openly discussed plastic surgery on her family's reality show '*Keeping up with the Kardashians*.' (Kim Goes Under The Laser, Keep Up

With The Kardashians, 2018) This post is an issue for her impressionable young audience who through the notion of 'social comparison' will think this is the best

and healthiest way to achieve looks and body image like hers without any side effects. This is not the case and can be actually problematic for people with underlying mental health issues, especially eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. *The Mental Health Foundation* recently polled, 4,505 adults in regards to body image with 1 in 8 people responding they have suicidal thoughts owing to their body image, with nearly half of young adults aged 18-24 blaming social media advertising through influencers for leaving them feeling depressed or anxious. (Mental Health Foundation, 2019)



Figure 6: Kim Kardashian criticised for promoting 'appetite suppressant' lollipops, 2018

Chapter 3: Fitness

The 1950s was a boom period for the personal, at home television. Added to the programming schedule in the United States in 1951 was a man who dubbed himself as “The Godfather of Modern Fitness.” (Jacklalanne.com, 2011) Jack LaLanne is considered to be the first fitness influencer and a pioneer of exercise. Dr Stephen P. Hooker, director of the Prevention Research Centre at the University of South Carolina has stated “Nobody had as much influence on the fitness industry as Jack. He was revolutionary and led the way in everything from fitness TV shows to exercise equipment.” (Gerard, 2015) His television show debuted in 1951 on American television with a focus on getting families involved in exercising. To do this he used childlike inclusions in the show such as his dog *Happy* as well as his wife Elaine, allowing his audience a glimpse into his ‘real life’ and allowing them to understand the real man and his family. Sherril M. Stone from Northwest State University wrote “1950 advertisers used animal themes reflecting strong family relationships, prosperity, and consumer spending... these themes were due to the recovery efforts of the country after World Wars I and II” (Stone, 2014)

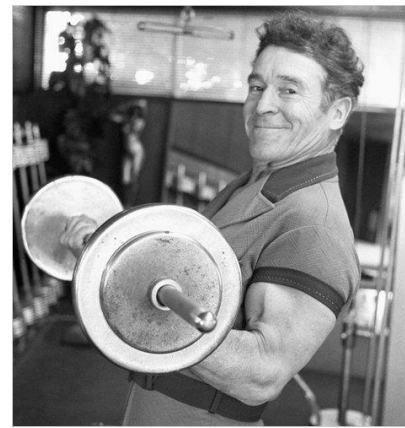


Figure 7: Jack LaLanne, Founder of Modern Fitness Movement, 2011

During the first episode of “*The Jack LaLanne Show*” LaLanne can be seen within the first minute of the broadcast telling the viewer in a very personal way what he is going to be doing for them. LaLanne says “I’m here for one reason and one reason only, to show you how to look better and feel better so you can live longer.” (JackLaLanneOfficial, 2013) This is a very

bold first message to be portraying immediately communicate, but it was used to immediately grab the viewer's attention. This was a constant of LaLanne's television programming which lasted 34 years until the 1980s.

LaLanne's influence on the fitness industry does not stop at television appearances as LaLanne opened the first American health clubs and gym, under the name "*Jack LaLanne Total Fitness*" with over 200 establishments open quickly following. Peter Noel Murray Ph.D. writes for *Psychology Today* "When a celebrity develops a brand based on deeply held aesthetic judgments and principles, the marriage of person and product can have an enormous effect on the consumer." (Murray Ph.D., 2013) Being a household name by this point, LaLanne used his celebrity influence to not only attract people to join his health clubs or watch him on national television, but also to effect social change. Always pushing himself to the limit of personal endurance he kept his name in the press of the time. An example of this is in 1956 "Age 42: [LaLanne] Set a world record of 1,033 pushups in 23 minutes." (Vaidyanathan, 2011) Before technological advances meant the public could gain information quickly, other means of staying relevant was required during this time period. With this just one example of the 6 records listed in the same BBC article, spaced out between the ages of 40 and 70, LaLanne made sure his influence and name were consistently public facing through traditional media means.

Along similar lines, the 1980s saw the popularity of the home workout video tape that many used celebrity faces as the primary person whom the customer would engage with. 1975 saw the release of the *Sony Video Home System* or VCR which brought on-demand media into homes for the first time on a large scale. The *New York Times* states that despite the launch

price of \$1,500, by 1984 one in seven homes in America would have access to one.

(Nytimes.com, 2019)

On April 24th, 1982, two-time *Academy Award* winning actress Jane Fonda released her first home exercise and workout VCR, based on the success of her 1981 book titled *Jane Fonda's Workout Book*. The 1982 home video simply named *Jane Fonda's*

Workout (later named *Jane Fonda's Original Workout*), was aimed primarily at a female market and was the first of its kind to

do this. In this appearance, Fonda and her 6 accompanying background performers (4 women and 2 men) can be seen wearing bright colours, leg warmers and what modern society would stereotypically consider to be the workout attire of the

1980s. (Youtube Jane Fonda 1982, 2019) At the time of release, Fonda was 45 years old. Famed in her earlier film acting career

for having a slim figure Fonda was able to use her name and personal brand to create and promote what *CBS News* called the most successful workout video of all time, selling 17 million copies. (Tanglao, 2014)

The use of celebrity name and image to influence the buying of a product during this time was not a new one but was unique in the endorsed video workout industry. With the brand in question being the person's named within the title of the product this adds an additional layer of endorsement. Within seconds of the start of the video Fonda can be seen in tight clothing, showing the potential results of this workout. "If the individual in the advertisement is actually the spokesperson of the product, the individual's credibility is more important in the acceptance of the product." (Baker and Churchill, 1977) This statement is true of this



Figure 8: (JANE FONDA'S ORIGINAL WORKOUT, n.d.)

home video as the credibility of Fonda is visible in many ways. Not only does Fonda introduce the workouts in a personal manner but also narrates them and conducts the exercise as they progress, adding a personal element to the interactions almost as if she is talking directly to the consumer. As previously discussed, 'parasocial' relationships take place between celebrities and the general public. In this case, conducting a potentially new activity in the form of exercise at home mixed with the personal elements Fonda provides through commentary perfectly exemplifies a celebrity influenced product that has shaped an entire industry. Since this initial video, Jane Fonda has gone on to release 16 more on demand videos and DVD's in total with the industry now having more than 1000 celebrity endorsed videos currently on sale on Amazon. Celebrities such as supermodel Cindy Crawford and reality television star Jillian Michaels have also released workout videos based on Fonda's initial format for success.

An example of a fitness influencer from the modern era (2010-present) is Joe Wicks. Wicks is a British former personal trainer turned online nutrition coach and influencer and he has a social media following totalling 2.9 million on Instagram and 750,000 on YouTube. Starting on Instagram in 2011, Wicks' popularity gained traction with 15 second clips of him preparing a healthy meal, always ending with his catchphrase "Lean in 15." The creation of this phrase was based upon not only the initial 15 second clip uploaded to social media platforms but also on the concept that all of his endorsed meals and physical

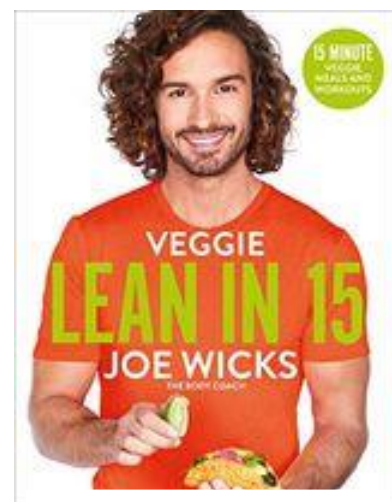


Figure 9: (Joe Wicks Recipes – Calling All 'Eat Lean in 15' Fans, 2018)

workouts would be able to take place in less than 15 minutes a day. This gave Wicks a key demographic of working people with limited time as his potential customers, and in turn, he used his growing social media presence to influence them to grow and participate with his brand. The use of a memorable catchphrase that provided potential customers the ability to recall a person or product on demand. This has a positive psychological impact on their relationship with the influencer. Christopher Peterson Ph.D. wrote for *Psychology Today* in 2011 “Catchphrases tap a common, rich, and indeed vivid understanding, and they offer up an implied metaphor, likening the situation in which they are used to the situation in which they originated.” (Peterson, 2011) With Wicks constantly using the catchphrase across his social media platforms through speaking and searchable hashtags, especially Instagram videos between 2011 and 2016 this cemented it as part of his brand identity and provide a key focus on creating healthy meals and participating in physical activities in a short, 15-minute time period. Throughout Wicks’ social media ventures, he has always shown parts of his life as well as selling and pushing his products, giving the audience a feeling that they know him and are involved in his life. In 2018 Wicks became a father for the first time and used this to help bolster his brand. Using his child in videos gave the audience another element of ‘busyness’ making him more relatable and re-emphasising the inherent time element of his brand.

Through the use of a catchphrase and his bubbly and outgoing (bordering on cheeky) personality Joe Wicks has created a brand for himself using the “*Lean in 15*” title totalling 15 books (including a weaning book for children called *Wean in 15*), following along workout DVD’s, cookware and clothing.

Concussion

In conclusion, this Independent Inquiry has looked at 3 separate industries over 3 different time periods to decide whether the use of celebrity influencers in advertising has changed. The answer to this question is a difficult one. As the world changes and technologies advance there will be an ever-growing pool of new ways to reach audiences. Andres Rivera of *Business.com*, an online digital media company wrote a statement regarding this.

“Advertising on the internet has become a double-edged sword: There are more platforms and places to advertise than ever before, but at the same time, consumers are being shown so much advertising throughout the day that it takes something special to grab their attention,” (Rivera, n.d.)

This quote is a strong representation of what the research conducted suggests. When looking at the 1950s through to the 1980s, the advent of the personal television and associated products such as the VCR, were a large part of new forms of advertising and personal endorsement. The television is still a large part of the advertising industry to the present day with celebrities such as Johnny Depp endorsing *Dior Sauvage Pefum* as recently as 2018. (Johnny Depp in Dior's "Legend of magic hour", 2018) With older technologies still being present, and newer ones ever-growing comes more ways of using celebrities to influence sales and brand awareness.

Milestones in current technologies are being achieved with new followers and subscribers achieved daily. For example, *YouTube*, a *Google* owned video sharing platform recently had its first individual channel to reach 100 million subscribers. Known online as PewDiePie, Felix Kjellberg is in truly uncharted territory with his online fame with subscriber figures raising daily. Kjellberg has been uploading videos to YouTube for over 12 years with his first upload

currently active on his YouTube channel from December of 2006. In that time PewDiePie has accumulated an organic audience of young people generally based around a love of video games. Instead of using his found fame and follower count to sell to his audience, Kjellberg treats himself as the brand, selling self-funded mobile games, clothing and branded merchandise. (represent.com, 2019)

With online platforms being created constantly, businesses and advertisers will only have more means of communicating a message to potential customers, especially through influencer-based advertising means. This is problematic in certain ways as it will dilute the effectiveness of advertisements, as a consumer will be shown so many. Contrary to this, the way the research for this Independent Inquiry has pointed out suggests that online personalities will have many more mobile applications and online programs to attract an audience through. Brands are only going to want to use online personalities through their online platforms more as it gives them a pre-built target audience to advertise and promote to.

“Has the use of celebrity influencers in advertising changed through the generations, with a focus on 3 separate eras?”

Fundamentally no. It is still a famous person using their notability to sell a product or service. A better way of summarising the answer to this question is that it has adapted with the change and progression in technology and will continue to do so in the future.

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