

## **A study on new trends in the social media promotion of the Fashion Industry**

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### **Abstract**

In this digital era, social media have played a great role in the fashion industry by enabling consumers and anyone with an interest in fashion to have more interaction with fashion designers and high-end clothing, shoes and accessory firms. Our dependence on social media has grown a lot and has become more integrated into our lives. People have become more influenced by what they have been exposed online in an un-presidential way especially when it comes to fashion. With social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Blogs, we can essentially become our own magazine editors, sharing our personal style with a potential to reach millions of users, fashion is more fluid and interactive than ever before changing the way fashion brands connect with their core audience. While traditional advertising platforms, such as billboard ads, magazine ads and television commercials lack immediate response, digital platforms with their interactive features have the potential to provide consumers and viewers an opportunity to like, comment, share or re-post in response to the digital branding of a fashion.

This study tries to understand the new trends and techniques in the social media promotion of the fashion industry. How and what ways they are different from the conventional and traditional branding techniques in the fashion industry. This paper will draw an extensive discourse analysis of the selected social media promotion of the fashion industry in the form of fashion blogs, individual fashion promotions and corporate commercials on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Blogs.

*Keywords:* Social Media, Fashion, Branding, Instagram, Blogs, Facebook

### **Introduction**

Mirchevska et al (2008) argues social media as the fastest tool to boost the brand awareness, understand their customers, receive feedback and increase the traffic to the website of a company. Ozeum et al (2008) observed that in the age of traditional media, the sales of the products were the only way to measure the success of a media campaign of a product. Whereas, the real time communication with consumers on social media helps the brands to measure their marketing strategies and campaigns more effectively. Armelini and Villanueva (2011) states that we are living in an economy driven by consumer opinions including that on social media platforms.

Fashion is a highly visual industry and at the present age of digital media, any person who owns a fashion brand needs to do social media marketing strategy. It's easy to be present on many social media platforms like Instagram or Facebook. There are plenty of new platforms, new algorithms and new trends available in the internet world. Creative social media helps to reinforce the brand message and expand the reach of the social media posts and in return boost the sales of the product. Social media is considered a tool for creating hype & "buzz" of new products in the market. Now a days every organization has social media pages, you can target certain individuals, groups, companies, industries to show the latest trends and products. Social media provides relatively data regarding location, likes and dislikes, target market and the reach of the product. One can know the response from group, location where the demand is more or less.

Netbase, Edition Research U.S, 2013 did a survey on “Trend setting on women’s who’s purchased are influenced by social media”. In this study, they have shown which are the social media sites that are most popular, and women are specially influenced by them. They have selected four different brand products such as Casual Clothing, Special Occasion Clothing, Fitness Clothing and Professional Clothing. Followed by this, they studied six media platforms such as Fashion Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and Tumblr where these 4 clothing brands were available. After the survey they found out that Fashion Blogs has the most influencing purchasing power in three categories- Casual Clothing, Special Occasion Clothing and Fitness Clothing, then followed by as Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Tumblr and Twitter. Whereas in Professional Clothing, Tumblr top the list. With this comparative study we can conclude that for different fashion brands, relatively different social media sites work accordingly to their demand and their publicity.

Andrew Hutchinson (2017) in his study about the online fashion by Facebook, which looks at how fashion purchases are being influenced by online platforms and social platforms. This study specifically explores the impact Facebook is having on fashion. Drawing from a Facebook data survey of over 6,000 people across six countries, he finds “half of people who use Instagram, and four in ten Facebook users, say they've discovered fashion inspiration on the platform. And with three out of five people surveyed admitting to having been tempted to buy a fashion item they didn't intend to buy, the opportunity to influence and advise potential fashion buyers on Instagram and Facebook is huge.”

Hutchinson’s (2017) first major finding is that Instagram is the number one platform for fashion product discovery. The choice of both Instagram and Pinterest shows that this are the two social media sites which are more popular among the audience with regard to fashion, while Facebook, fashion magazines and snapchat are relatively below these two social media sites and their percentage of response to other social media. Facebook, in the same study, has mentioned that social media channels are significantly more likely to provide fashion inspiration for people of age group 18-34 years.

### **Influencer fashion**

Social media has led to the rise of influencer fashion. This is the trend of a popular fashion show livestreaming in Instagram, Facebook and YouTube where consumers get to see various designers’ collection. Secondly, this includes a more individualistic form by using the support base of fashion bloggers to introduce new outfits on social media. This also couples with the new marketing strategy of the option to purchase the same products are provided. Also, designers’ latest fashion could be monitored through the content attached to a hashtag.

The discourse analysis conducted in the fashion blog and live streaming of fashion show have identified the following positive aspects regarding the use of social media. Firstly, since the content is published by the brands itself, there is no room for the manipulation by the third party which helps the potential consumers to get every details of the product and directly review the brand. Viewers, Consumers and industries have instant access to the content available and view as per their choices. Secondly, bloggers and brands stay update with the rapidly changing trends to give information to the viewers, consumers and those from the industry which helps the latter to know all details about the products which are being launched in the market. This provides an entirely different experience from the brand communication through mass media forms such as print or television where limited

amount of the details can be provided. It also helps in promoting sales and deals just by sitting in one location. You can do digital marketing, branding and promotion through social media pages. Unlike the traditional media platforms where consumers are considered as passive entity, the interactive features of the digital platforms enable consumers to give direct feedback such as likes, shares views, and comments. Brand endorsement by celebrity has become popular on social media which indirectly increases the sales of the product. Celebrity followers automatically follow the brand and the type of product used- by them.

The digital platforms help for Increased brand awareness of the product and reaches maximum target audience within a very short span of time globally. You can make the product visible both images as well as video which is a benefit for the consumers. Moreover, you don't have to sit in a corner to view the brands, you are excess to it if you have a multimedia phone and an internet connection which is now available to a significant amount of the global population. The fashion brands can also get more traffic to their website, it means they can allow their social media page to appear in different websites as an advertisement and people will be either click or close the advertisement and in this way you will be receiving maximum visitors to your page. Improved the SEO of the page by applying keywords and allowing our page to appear in the top of the search engines and getting maximum visitors and clicks. This is how the visibility of the brand can be increased. People have the tendency of visiting the page that is on top of the search engine and the trust ratio is more. They will visit the links that is available on the top. Thus, there is possibility of higher rate of conversion.

### **Customer experience and social media**

Social media can better customer experience then magazines and other print medium. You can get the latest updates through social media and you can view the products with different angle and in details, whereas in print medium you must wait till the next print is being published or supplement is being distributed. Moreover it is not possible to distribute to remote places and socialize your brand, and it is very much cost effective, and you cannot reach to every corner of the world where as in social medium you can reach billions of audience very easily at one time with just one click. And you can view the product anytime, anywhere and find the details of the brand very easily and you can also do comparison of the product with another brand available in the internet.

Consumer when pay their loyalty towards a brand is brand loyalty and they also tend to buy the same brand always. Branding is a technique which can build your customer. Branding is a way to succeed in the market. After all its Brand that matters. Brand authority is mainly described as the high recall value of a brand's ability and expertise. Brand authority makes a command and lead towards consumer choice. A company can gain marketplace insights. Customer insights are a company's understanding of their customers and the market that serves them.

This also have an advantage over competitors. The main challenge for business strategy is to find a way of achieving a sustainable competitive advantage over the other competing products and firms in a market. An advantage over competitors gained by offering consumers greater value, either by means of lower prices or by providing greater benefits and service that justifies higher prices.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

### **The Future of Fashion Marketing**

Business to consumer (B2C) industry will continue to evolve as new and innovative apps are being developed. Advantage of Social media should be taken to promote a company's brand. The more exposure, the better is for the brand. Social media allows fashion companies to interact with their customers and established a direct relationship with their consumers. Here the consumer can amplify the impact on business, through sharing positive or negative responses.

Endorsing celebrities to promote a brand's products can significantly increase sales as well as they do have a large support base online. While it is impossible for every company to afford an A-list celebrity to promote their products on Instagram, B-list or C- list celebrities who might have more followers than a particular brand themselves. This would unveil new equations in the realms of fashion marketing. According to Forbes, "Instagram images posted by influencers and celebrities earn an additional 4x engagement rate, for an 8x increase." This also makes a product seem more credible and reliable if an influencer is willing to attach his or her name to it.

At present, Twitter is proven as great platform which helps designers and brands to gain huge fan following and updating their audience about their newest projects and know what other Twitter users are saying about them. A good tweet can get thousands of "retweets," which is a massive asset to increase brand awareness and engagement and helps to spread the tweet like a wildfire. The features of Twitter such as trending topics and reaching many through hashtag encourages those who may not usually engage with a topic, to look at what everyone else is talking about. Precisely, the Netizens would continue to follow and subscribe not just established fashion designers and influencers such as Alexander Wang, Glamour Magazine and Kim Kardashian, but hundreds of emerging celebrities and designers too. In other words, the digital media platforms would help every celebrity and designer to negotiate with brands by showing their support base, in which each individual fan or supporter matters. This might again push celebrities to find ways to creatively and effectively engage with their fan base as digital media changed the scope of latter from anonymous crowd who cheered up and expressed their admiration silently in the age of traditional media to metrics which can define the future and misfortune of celebrities. The fan meet ups and retreats being conducted by many vloggers, bloggers and celebrities, where free passes and refreshments are provided, can be considered as a new step taken by online influencers who know how to take the best of their support base. This draws a huge contradiction from celebrities who used the support of private securities to keep themselves away from cheering fans. In short, the digital media have the potential to change even the microscopic aspects of how brands have built their value through celebrities. While this paper is an effort to provide this phenomenon from a bird's eye view, the future research need to go through the microscopic details of the same.

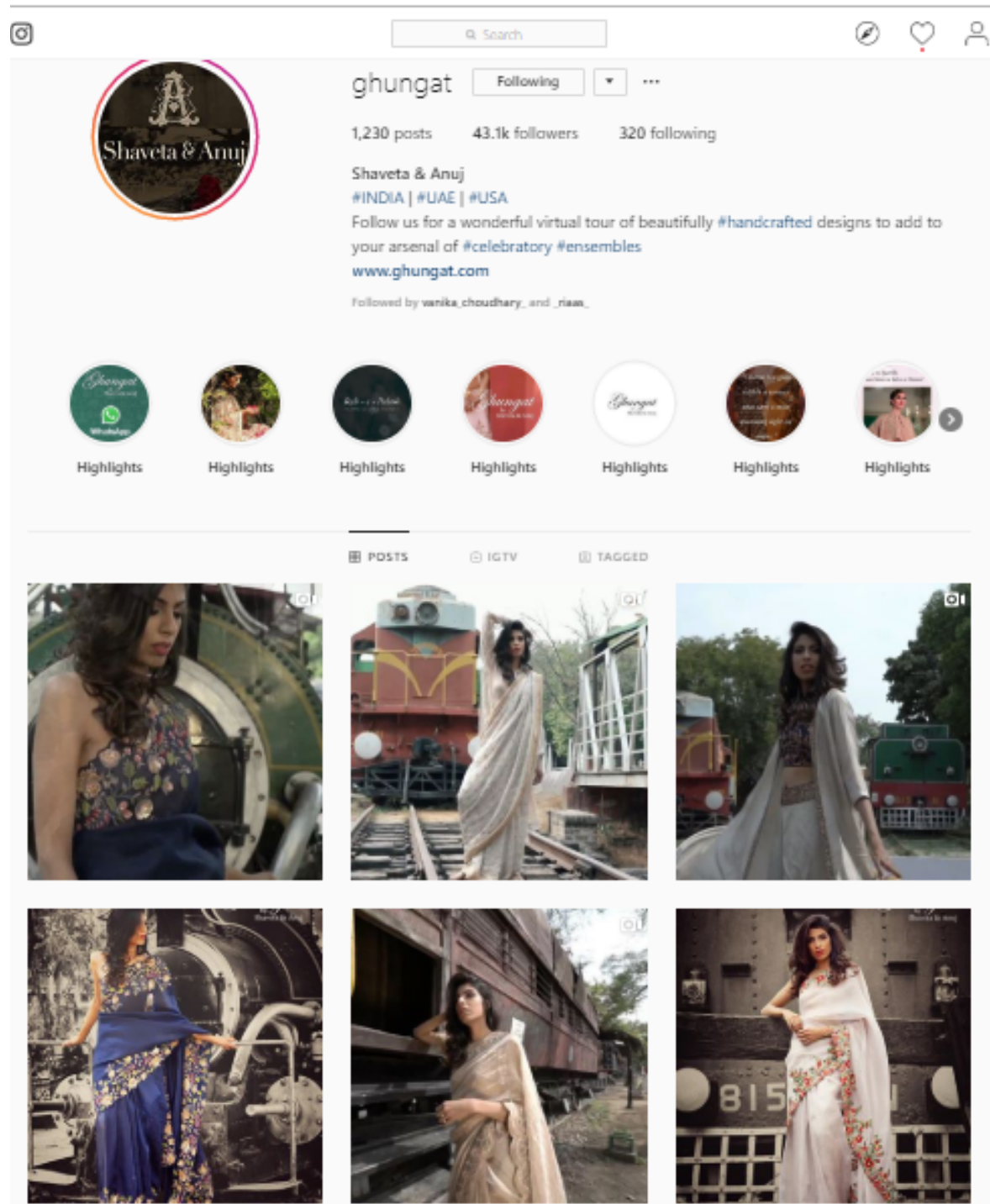
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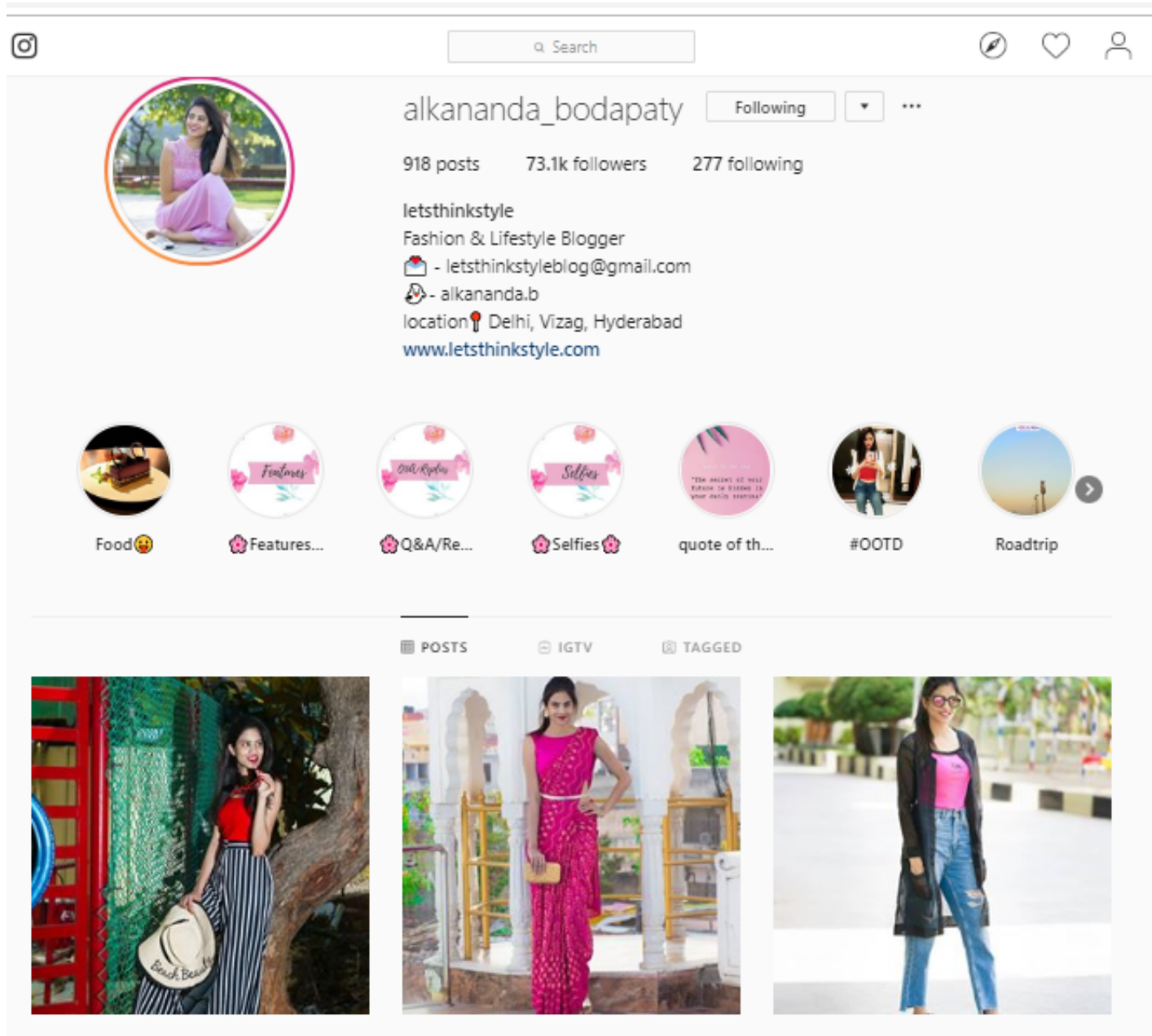
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A few samples of Personal Fashion Blogs, Instagram page, Facebook page are attached below

1. **Instagram Fashion Page of Ghungat** (Ghungat by Shaveta & Anuj, located in South Delhi, India, offers a wide array of Indian ethnic ware with a distinct use of colours, fabrics, and special techniques. Products such as Bridal lehengas, Light lehengas, Sarees, Trousseau anarkalis, Trousseau sarees, Gowns, Party dresses are available).

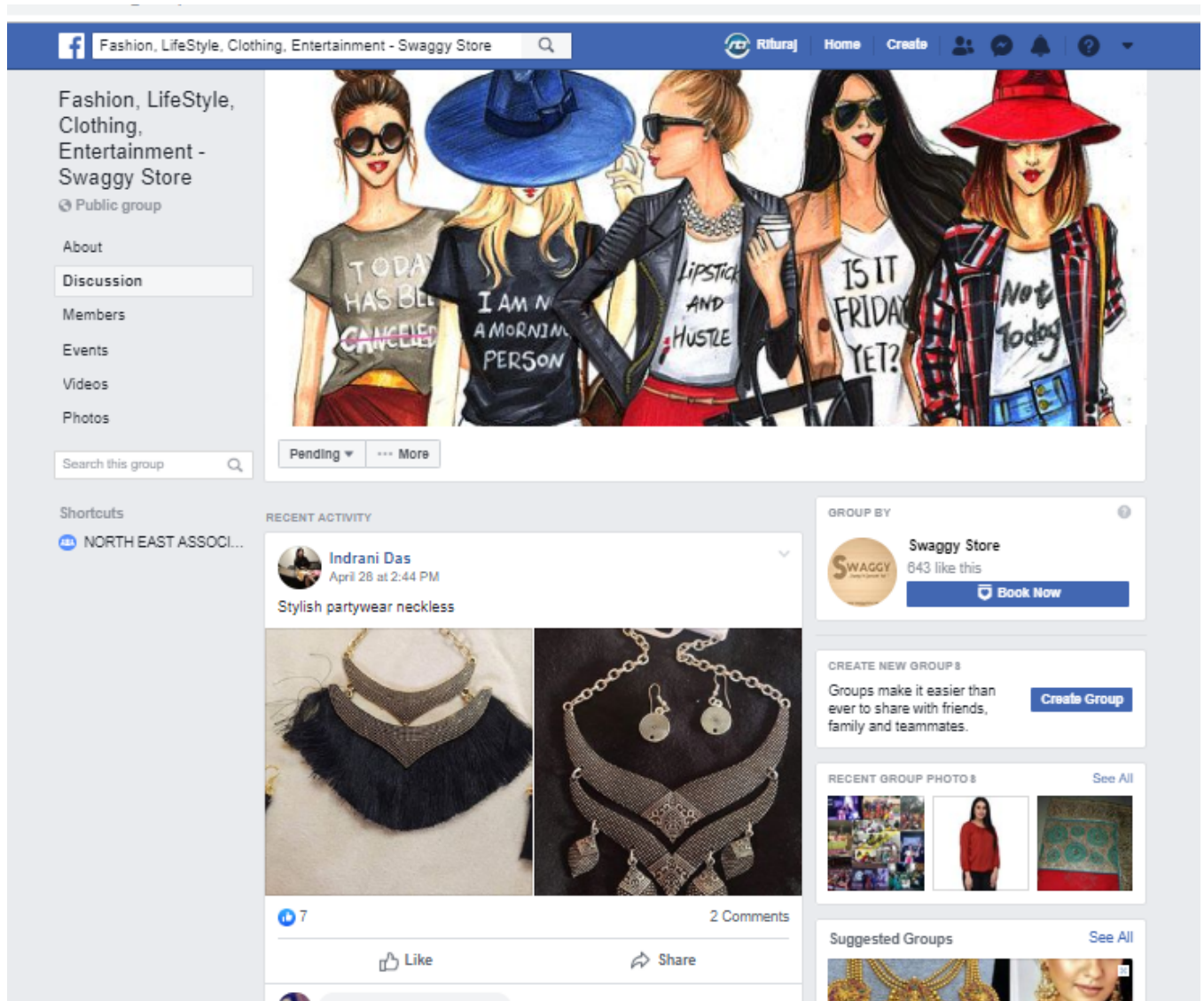


2. **Instagram Personal Fashion Blogger** (Alkananda Bodapaty is a computer science major and a fashion lover from Vishakapatnam, India. She runs her personal blog in the name "Let's Think Style". In 2011 she started a group "Go Girlies" on Facebook which was an instant hit with over 35k members. With this she was inspired to start a fashion blog in hopes of reaching more readers.)



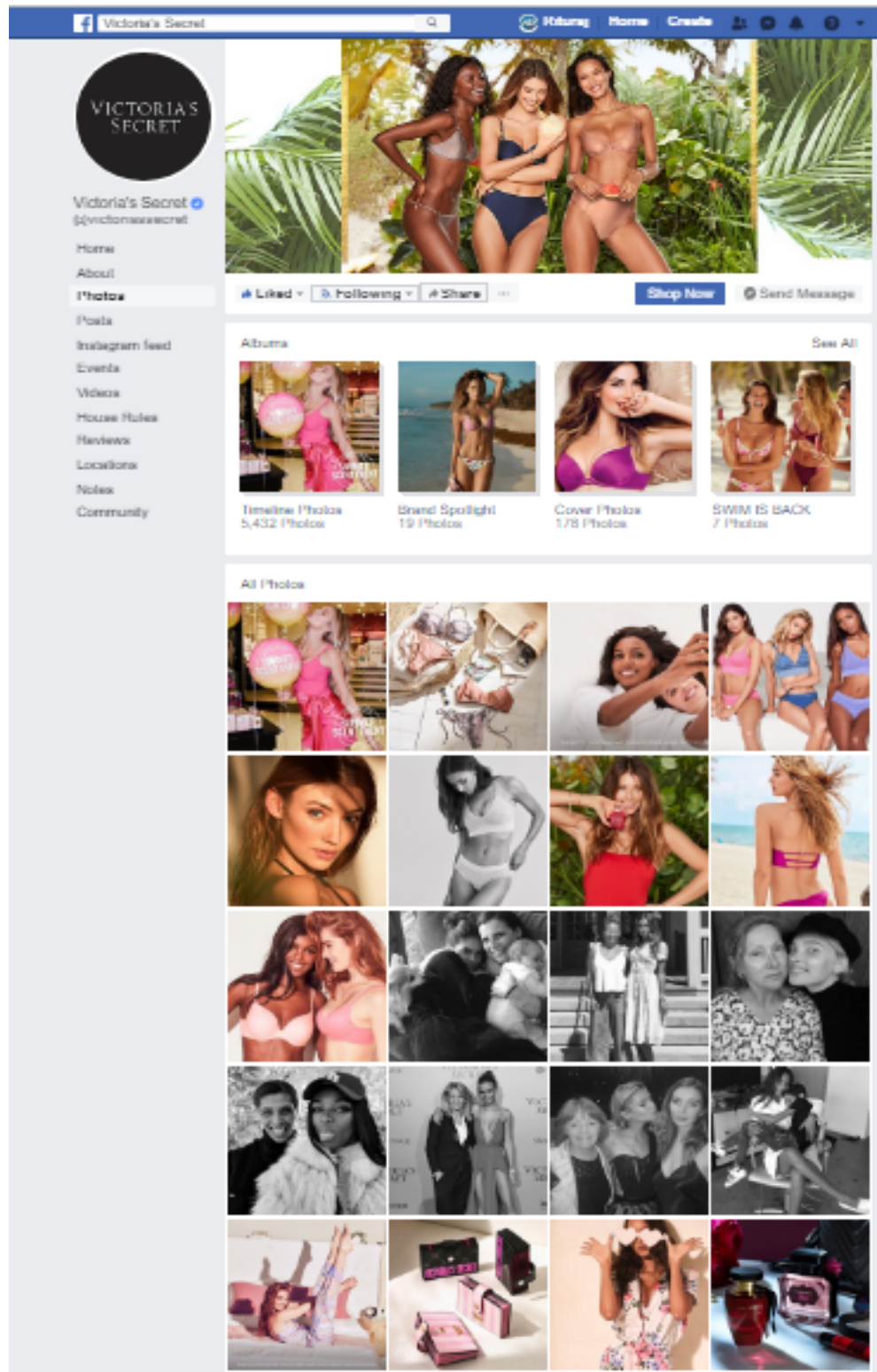


3. **Facebook Fashion Page** (Fashion, Lifestyle, Clothing, Entertainment- Swaggy Store page was created in 14<sup>th</sup> December 2017. This Facebook page is operated in India and it show cast various products related to daily fashion mostly for females. It has more than 4900 plus members who get access to fashionable products.)



4. **Facebook Fashion Page of Victoria's Secret** (Victoria's Secret, founded in 1977 by Roy and his wife Gaye Raymond is an American designer, manufacturer, and marketer of women's lingerie, womenswear, and beauty products. It has more than 29,300,759 visitors worldwide).





## **Conclusion**

Social media allows fashion companies to interact with their customers on a level that they could never do previously. With social media one thing that has changed dramatically in recent years is the direct relationship brands now have with their consumers. Consumer can amplify or give negatively impact on business, through sharing positive or negative responses.

Any exclusive event such as catwalk can now be viewed live by millions. Access to the designers' latest fashion lines was often something that we could only hear about through magazines and the press. Now however, we can keep up with the latest through monitoring the content attached to a hashtag. When social media first became a global phenomenon, it was mostly about Facebook and Twitter. But, now there's a new player on the scene — and it's taking over. Instagram reached 800 million monthly active users in September 2017 and these users have the highest level of engagement (time spent using the app) compared to other social media sites.

Instagram has become a platform for fashion brands to connect with their audience directly, rather than through a catwalk show or print advertising campaign. This encourages brands to think more about 'real' people, with different bodies, skin tones and fashion preferences — it's opened a whole new world for fashion marketers.