Integration of Facebook Micro-Influences into Influence Marketing Strategies in Madagascar: The case of the influencer Tiakaly

RADINASOA Rojo [1], ANDRIANARISON Tsihoarana Kesan[2]

1 Doctorate in Organizational, Management and Dynamics,Social Sciences and Humanities School, Faculty of Economics, Management and Sociology, Madagascar

2 Master degree in Environnement Management and Project, ESMIA, Madagascar

Abstract

Influence Marketing has experienced exponential growth thanks to social media. In Madagascar, micro-influencers, through their closeness to their communities, represent a strategis lever for businesses. This article analyzes the role of Facebook micro-influencers in Marketing Strategy, focusing on the case of *Tiakaly*, a culinary influencer. Using a mixed technology: documentary analysis, observation and data processing from social networks, the study highlights the impact of the influencer's profile and the published contents on community engagement. Results show that the number of followers is not the sole determinant of success, the relevance and the authenticity of shared contents being decisive factors.

Keywords: Digital marketing, micro-influencers, social networks, engagement, Madagascar.

1. Introduction

Social networks have profoundly transformed marketing communication. In particular, Facebook, with its millions of users in Madagascar, serves as a fertile ground for businesses. In this context, influencers, and more specifically micro-influencers, have emerged as effective relays of visibility and currency. In 2016, the digital economy represented only 1,6% of Madagascar's GDP (ARTEC, 2022). This low rate demonstrates that the digital world had not yet gained significant traction within Malagasy society or businesses. However, according to the *Digital Report 2024*, published on February 23, there were 3.8 million active social media users in Madagascar as for the first month of this year. This represents about 12.4% of the national population, according to Kepios'analysis. Still, among all platforms, Facebook remains the most used social medium in the country. Data from Meta advertising indicate that Facebook had 3.8 million users in Madagascar in 2024.

Facebook influencers represent a significative opportunity for companies seeking to enhance their reputation. Their closeness with the community promotes engagement while their currency strengthens brand image. However, some micro-influencers struggle to balance professionalism and influence marketing; which can hinder corporate strategies. Therefore, integrating them into a coherent business strategy remains complex,

raising the following research question: How can Facebook influencers be integrated into an Influence marketing in Madagascar?

This study examines the integration of micro-influencers into influence-marketing strategies in Madagascar; focusing on how influencers profiles affect engagement and what types of content best convince their communities. To achieve this goal, we analyzed different influencers based on their size and their followers' logins habits.

The hypotheses to be tested are as follows:

- Facebook micro-influencers represent a considerable lever in the influence marketing in Madagascar.
- Influencers' Facebook feed content contributes to the success of influence-marketing.

The expected outcomes of the study are:

• A choice for the most suitable Facebook influencer for a successful digital marketing will be performed.

• Online content of influenecers will bring a greater engagement from their Facebook followers.

2. Materials

Case selection: *Tiakaly*, Malagasy culinary micro-influencer.

Tsiory, better known as Tiakaly in the online sphere, is an influencer and a food content creator on social platforms. He shares, with his community, restaurant recommendations, local dishes and culinary spots in Madagascar. Wether it is "mofo akondro" or a high-end gastronomy, he presents all types of cuisine from various origins. Tiakaly began his online journey in February 2020, initially writing food articles on a blog while sharing selected content on his Facebook page. Subsequently, due to low web traffic, he decided to focus exclusively on social media; mostly Facebook and Instagram, adopting the name *Tiakaly* for its meaning "loving food". Initially, his networl activity was purely for pleasure, but upon realizing the value he provided to brands and restaurants, he chose to professionalize his work as a content creator. Currently, active on several major platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Tiktok, *Tiakaly* has become one of Madagascar's leading culinary influencers. Beyond those habitual local spots, he has expanded into culinary travel in order to make his online community discover other cuisine and culture such as in Japan and South Korea.

2.1 Study area: Given that the topic focuses on Facebook influencers in Madagascar, the study area centers on the Facebook platforl within the Malagasy digital environment.

Figure 1: Location map and delimitation of the study area

2.2 Research Methods:

This document employed a mixed-methods approach combining document analysis, content review of Facebook posts, and quantitative assessment of average engagement rates.

2.2.1 Verification approach for hypothesis 1: "Facebook micro-influencers represent a considerable lever in influence-marketing in Madagascar"

a) Observation of Influencers' Facebook profiles

The study focused on analyzing the Facebook profiles of Malagasy influencers to test the first hypothesis. This phase aimed to determine whether the influence level (macro, mid-tier, or micro) affected engagement and marketing efficiency on the platform. Profiles analyzed included: Macro-influencers such as *Bob Tobias* and *Steve Andriamasy*; Mid-tier influencers like *Fitiavana Mickael* and *Raphaël*; and last Micro-influencers as *Tiakaly* (main case study) and *Romain BadaFit* (a fitness specialist). Profiles details are shown in graphics.

b) **Calculation of Average Engagement rate**

After collecting influencers' data in Excel, the next step was to determine each influencer's average engagement rate to validate the hypothesis. Three (3) posts were selected for each influencer between August and September, chosen based on their similarity in content type and relevance to each influencer's domain of interest. Engagement rates were calculated according to the following formulas:

Image Engagement rate:

Engagement rate = (Total Interactions/ Number of followers) * 100

Video Engagement rate:

Engagement rate = (Total Interactions/ Number of views) * 100

Here, "Total Interactions" represents the followers' interactions with the contents. It includes likes, comments and shares.

c) **Graphical Representation of Average Engagement rates**

The next step of our verification is to compare the average engagement rate with their size. To visualize the relationship between influencer size and engagement rate, a bar chart was produced in Excel and shown as a graphical histogram. The horizontal axis represented influencer categories (micro, mid-tier, macro), and the vertical axis represented the average engagement rate (%).

d) **Linear Regression Analysis**

Finally, a linear regression analysis was conducted using XLSTAT 2019 to determine whether a dependency existed between the number of followers and the average engagement rate. We took as dependant variable the average engagement rate and as independent variable the total number of followers. The goal is to identify any correlation to compute the coefficient of determination (R2).

2.2.2 Verifiction Approach for Hypothesis 2: "Influencers' Facebook feed content contributes to the success of influence marketing"

a) Survey of Followers

To test the second hypothesis, exploring some questions was imperative. A survey was conducted among Tiakaly's Facebook followers. The objective was to gather specific insights regarding how followers perceive and interact with influencer content. This survey step was deliberately placed to collect specific and concise informations. A ***Google forms*** questionnaire was distributed via Tiakaly's Facebook page on *September 16*

2024. A random probalistic sample of 385 respondents was selected from all received responses. Details of the sampling method, questionnaire, and a summary table of responses are provided in the appendices.

b) Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA)

After the survey data were collected, they were imported into Excel for Analysis. Responses were transformed into binary variables to facilitate interpretation. The first analysis involved *Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA)* using XLSTAT 2019, aimed at profiling respondents based on demographic and behavioral criteria: age, gender, device used, social media preference, and preferred content type. The principal coordinates (F1 and F2) were used to classify respondents into four audience profiles of Tiakaly's followers, ranked by descending order on both axes.

c) Strategic Rectangle (Influence and Dominance)

This stage sought to identify the most influential and dominant content formats according to follower responses. For better data analysis, XLSTAT 2019 is used. Responses about the size that are most engaged by the online community are registered as a table on an Excel sheet. The first step is to carry out a test of correlation in order to draw out a *Pearson correlation matrix.* The produced variables are speficicly suggested by individuals, if the variable is among the individual's choice, it will be labeled by 1, on the contrary, it will be marked as invalid. Then the matrix will be computed from binary data, with a correlation threshold set at 0.100. Row sums (L) and column sums (P) were calculated, followed by the indicators. X=L/P and Y=L*P. Variables with X higher than 1 (X> 1) were considered Influential, while dominance was determined based on the value of Y.

2.2.3 Limitations:

The study focused on a single case study (Tiakaly), limiting the generalizability of findings to all Malagasy Influencers.

3. Results

3.1 Facebook Micro-Influencers as a lever of Influence marketing

The analyzed variables for the first hypothesis are introduced in the following table:

Table 1: Table of variables for hypothesis 1

Code	Analyzed variable	Purpose
Mid-T	Mid-Tier Influencer	Identifying influencer size and comparing them to their average engagement rate
Micro	Micro-influenceur	
Macro	Macro-influenceur	
Nb Abo	Number of followers	Knowing the number of followers to determine size and test correlation with average engagement rate
Temoyen	Average engagement rate	Determinating the average engagement rate matrix to measure the marketing efficiency

3.1.1 Calculation of Average Engagement Rate by Influencers

To determinate the efficiency of the various analyzed influencers' influence campaigns, it is necessary to rely on matrix. The next comparison chart shows the size and the average engagement rate.

Table 2: Average influencer engagement rate

Influencers	Size	Average engagement rate
Fitiavana Mickael	Mid-T	3,81%
steve Andriamasy	Macro	2,55%
Tiakaly	Micro	5,06%
Bob Tobias	Macro	5,93%
Romain BadaFit	Micro	1,82%
Raphaël	Mid-T	4,50%

3.1.2 Graphical Representation and Interpretation between Average Engagement rate and size

We will now introduce the results of analyzed average engagement rates into histogram to facilitate the interpretation.

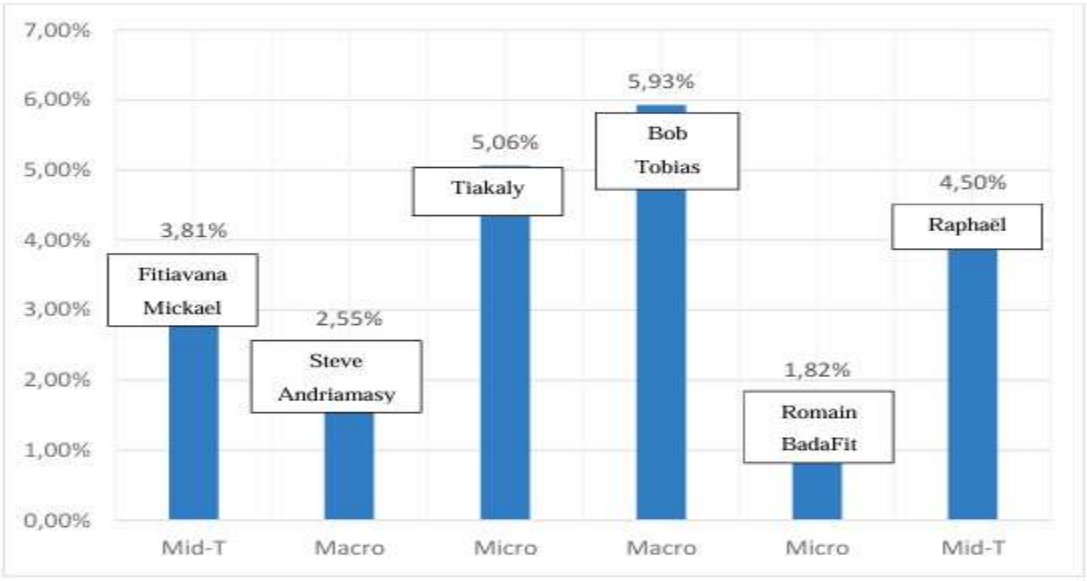

Chart 1: Histogram chart of average engagement rates by influencer size

The histogram here reveals that *Bob Tobias*, a macro-influencer, holds the highest engagement rate (5.93%). However, another macro-influencer is ranked below two mid-tier influencers (*Fitiavana Mickael* and *Raphaël*) in terms of audience interaction efficiency. Despite a relatively small follower base, *Tiakaly* exhibited a better audience interaction with one of the highest engagement rates (5.06%), second only to *Bob Tobias*.

3.1.3 Dependence between number of followers and average engagement rate

To deepen our study into the effect of the influencers' size on the average engagement rate, we will present a figure of linear regression about the correlation of the two variables:

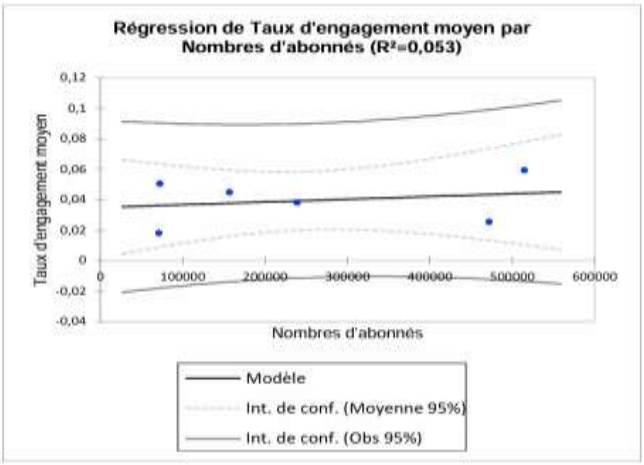

Chart 2: Linear regression line number of subscribers/engagement rate

The linear regression plot demonstrated that the number of followers and the average engagement rate are not correlated, with a correlation coefficient of 0.053 which is far from 1, the two variables are independents.

3.2 Influencers' Facebook feed content

3.2.1 Feed content relative to followers' profiles

This following table presents the analyzed variables for the second hypothesis:

Table 3: Table of variables for hypothesis 2

Code	Analyzed variable	Purpose
F	Femme	Knowing the gender of followers profiles
H	Homme	
13-18	13 ans à 18 ans	Knowing the age of follwers profiles
19- 25	19 ans à 25 ans	
26-35	26 ans à 35 ans	
36-45	36 ans à 45 ans	
45	Plus de 45 ans	
FB	Facebook	Knowing the favorite social networks used by followers
Instat	Instagram	
Tik	Tiktok	
Pint	Pinterest	
Wht	WhatsApp	
X	X	
Snap	Snapchat	
Au.Rs	Others	
Sphone	Smartphone	Knowing followers' habits with the login tool
Laptop	Laptop	
Tab	Tablette	
Ordi	Office computer	
Pub	Publication	Determinating the types of preferred publications of followers
Reel	Reel	
Story	Story	
Vlog	Vlog	
Gaway	Giveaway	
Direct	Direct	

IMG	Image	Knowing the preferred publication format of followers
TXT	Text only	
V-1.30	Short video (less than 1mn30)	
V.5	Average video (about 5 mn)	
V+5	Long video (more than 5mn)	

The following layout divides Tiakaly's followers in four distinct profiles based on their login habits and their content preferences.

	F1	F2
Insta-0	-0,012	0,463
Direct-1	-0,946	0,235
Sphone-1	-0,028	0,174
Laptop-0	-0,024	0,143
Réel-0	-0,103	0,115
Pub-1	-0,160	0,047
V+5-0	-0,132	0,047
Snap-0	-0,004	0,030
Ordi-0	-0,004	0,029
H-0	-0,300	0,027
F-1	-0,300	0,027
FB-1	-0,118	0,015
X-0	-0,039	0,000
Au.Rs-0	-0,036	0,000

	F1	F2
Story-0	0,253	0,361
IMG-0	0,480	0,194
Pint-0	0,072	0,160
Wht-0	0,137	0,152
V-1.30-0	0,542	0,129
Vlog-1	0,191	0,116
V.5-1	0,286	0,090
19-25-1	0,079	0,086
TXT-0	0,105	0,057
Tik-0	0,030	0,055
36-45-0	0,031	0,037
26-35-0	0,023	0,0
Au.Rs-1	1,363	0,010
Gaway-0	0,105	0,004
45-0	0,000	0,000
Tab-0	0,000	0,000

Gaway-1	-0,614	-0,024
26-35-1	-0,044	-0,041
Tik-1	-0,038	-0,070
V-1.30-1	-0,327	-0,078
V.5-0	-0,330	-0,104
19-25-0	-0,099	-0,107
IMG-1	-0,376	-0,152
13-18-1	-0,281	-0,170
Story-1	-0,196	-0,265
Wht-1	-0,286	-0,317
36-45-1	-0,602	-0,722
Pint-1	-0,349	-0,771

Direct-0	0,028	-0,007
X-1	2,133	-0,009
TXT-1	0,991	-0,539
Réel-1	0,058	-0,064
FB-0	0,542	-0,069
Pub-0	0,271	-0,079
V+5-1	0,510	-0,180
Insta-1	0,005	-0,185
H-1	2,107	-0,187
F-0	2,107	-0,187
Snap-1	0,154	-1,127
Ordi-1	0,467	-3,710
Sphone-0	0,746	-4,68
Laptop-1	0,822	-4,849

Chart 3: Multiple Correspondence Analysis of Tiakaly subscribers

The Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) allowed to obtain four types of distinct profiles among the followers. We can see that the youngest aged from 13 to 18 and millennials aged from 26 to 45 show more interest for contents in image and short videos formats. The Generation Z, filled with people aged from 19 to 25, can be captivated by longer videos of about 5 minutes.

3.2.2 The influent publication formats

The following chart describes the content formats that are influent and dominant according to followers.

Table 4: strategic rectangle publication formats

Variables	X	Y
V-1.30	1,159	2,000
V.5	0,759	1,786
IMG	1,668	1,668
V+5	0,698	1,433
T1T	0,939	1,351

Variables Influents

Variables Dominants

4. Discussions

4.1 The Impact of Micro-influencers on Engagement rate

According to *KOTLER* en *2016*, the engagement rate measures users' interaction with the content, encompassing likes, shares, comments and other forms of participation. It reflects the quantity of interaction between the brand and its audience. The results obtained align with that theorical perspective.

4.1.1 Engagement rate of Micro-Influencers

Despite a very low engagement rate for *BadaFit*, one of the micro-influencers, which only represents 1.82%; *Tiakaly* (5.06%) detains a more significant engagement rate exceeding that of mid-tiers influencers and even one macro-influencers. This low engagement rate from *BadaFit* may stem from his small follower base, which limits audience reach.

Conversely, *Tiakaly*'s higher interaction rate can be explained by his close connection with his followers. The members of the Facebookosphere often feel a sense of proximity to nano and micro-influencers, who are generally more accessible and responsive to comments and private messages. Thus, while micro-influencers may reach smaller audiences, they can foster deeper and more authentic engagement, providing mixed but insightful evidence regarding their impact on digital-influence campaigns.

4.1.2 Engagement rate of Mid-Tier Influencers

According to the obtained results in the table 6, mid-tiers influencers generate consistently strong engagement rates. Both *Raphaël* (4.50%) and *Fitiavana Mickael* (3.81%) achieved stable, above-average interaction rates. This suggests that mid-tier influencers offer a balanced option, they maintain sizable communities while still encouraging actively with their audiences. For marketers, they represent a reliable choice for compaigns seeking a blend of reach and community connection.

4.1.3 Engagement rate of Macro-Influencers

Macro-Influencers, by definition, possess the largest audiences. However, this does not necessarily translate into higher engagement. For example, *Steve Andriamasy* recorded an engagement rate of only 2.55%. Large communities may dilute intimacy and diminish followers' sense of belonging, reducing willingness to interact. Nevertheless, there are exceptions: *Bob Tobias*, with roughly 500 000 followers, achieved the highest engagement rate (5.93%) among all influencers studied. This highlights that macro-influencer performance can vary widely depending on content strategy, authenticity, and audience relationship.

4.1.4 Correlation between follower count and engagement rate

Comparing average engagement rates across influencer categories reveals considerable variation. However, the linear regression analysis demonstrates no significant correlation between the number of followers and engagement rate ($r=0.053$). This independence confirms that a large audience does not guarantee stronger interaction. The scattered data points around the regression line further support this conclusion: engagement depends more on content relevance and audience connection than on audience size.

4.2 Effective contents on Facebook

In 1955, ***Lazarsfeld*** and his student ***Katz*** expanded upon their earlier work "*The People's choice*" in their second book "*Personal Influence*". They argued that opinion leaders serve as intermediaries between mass media and the general public. Exposure to media messages affects individuals differently: "Influentials are characterized by an active attitude combining systematic information-seeking and attention to comprehension". The present study's results offer contemporary evidence supporting that theory.

4.2.1 A Profiles of Tiakaly's followers

The Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) identified four main follower profiles based on connection habits and content preferences.

a) Female smartphone users, primarily active on Facebook. They no strong preference for specific post formats but are highly responsive to live videos and standard posts.
b) Generation Z users (19-25 years old), active on Reddit, Discord, and YouTube. Technologically fluent, they favor vlogs and medium-length videos (aound 5 minutes).
c) Users aged from 13 to 18 years old and from 26 to 45 years, concentrated on Pinterest, WhatsApp, TikTok. They engage most with giveaway posts, stories, images and short videos, mirroring TikTok-style behavior.
d) Male users who connect primarily from laptops or desktop computers. They tend to appreciate text-based posts and longer videos (over 5 minutes) and are also active on X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram.

These insights reveal a segmented audience that interacts differently with each content type, underlining the need for diversified posting strategies.

4.2.1 Influential Content Formats

The Strategic Rectangle analysis (based on Pearson correlations) showed that short videos (under 1 min 30s) and medium-length videos (~5 min) were the most influential and dominant formats among Tiakaly's audience. This result aligns with broader global trends: the popularity of TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts has conditioned users to prefer quick, dynamic, and easily shareable content. Smartphone-based browsing also favors concise formats, enabling rapid consumption during short attention spans.

Although image posts were not dominant variables, they still played an important supporting role in driving reach and interaction. Visual content remains powerful: images evoke immediate emotions-wonder, curiosity, empathy- that prompt likes, shares and comments. Since the human brain processes images 60 000 times faster than text, and 90% of transmitted information is visual, strong imagery continues to be a key driver of engagement and message retention.

5. Conclusion

The rise of social networks has profoundly reshaped marketing dynamics, positioning influence marketing as a strategic pillar for brands across Instagram, Facebook and TikTok. By building communities around their content, influencers now play a pivotal role in promoting products and services.

This study explored Facebook influence marketing in Madagascar, focusing on *Tiakaly*, a micro-influencer specialized in food content creation. The research sought to analyze how micro-influencers contribute to marketing strategies and how content format affects engagement.

Using engagement rate metrics as the principal measure of efficiency, the study produced the following validated findings:

- Micro-influencers are key leverage points in Madagascar's influence marketing landscape. The data confirmed that engagement rate is not dependent on follower count, as shown by Tiakaly's high performance relative to his smaller audience. Authenticity and proximity to followers proved more decisive.
- Feed content plays a critical role in compaign success. The Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) identified distinct follower groups, each responsive to different post formats. Short and medium-length videos, as well as images, emerged as the most influential and dominant content types.

Overall, well-crafted, authentic content enables Facebook micro-influencers to act as powerful tools for corporate communication strategies. Nevertheless, given the rapid evolution of social platforms and the migration of some user segments to newer networks, a pressing auestion remains: For how long will Facebook continue to serve as an effective channel of influence for businesses in Madagascar?

6. Références

- Kotler P. (2016). Marketing Management 15th ed.

- Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Katz, E. (1955). The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications