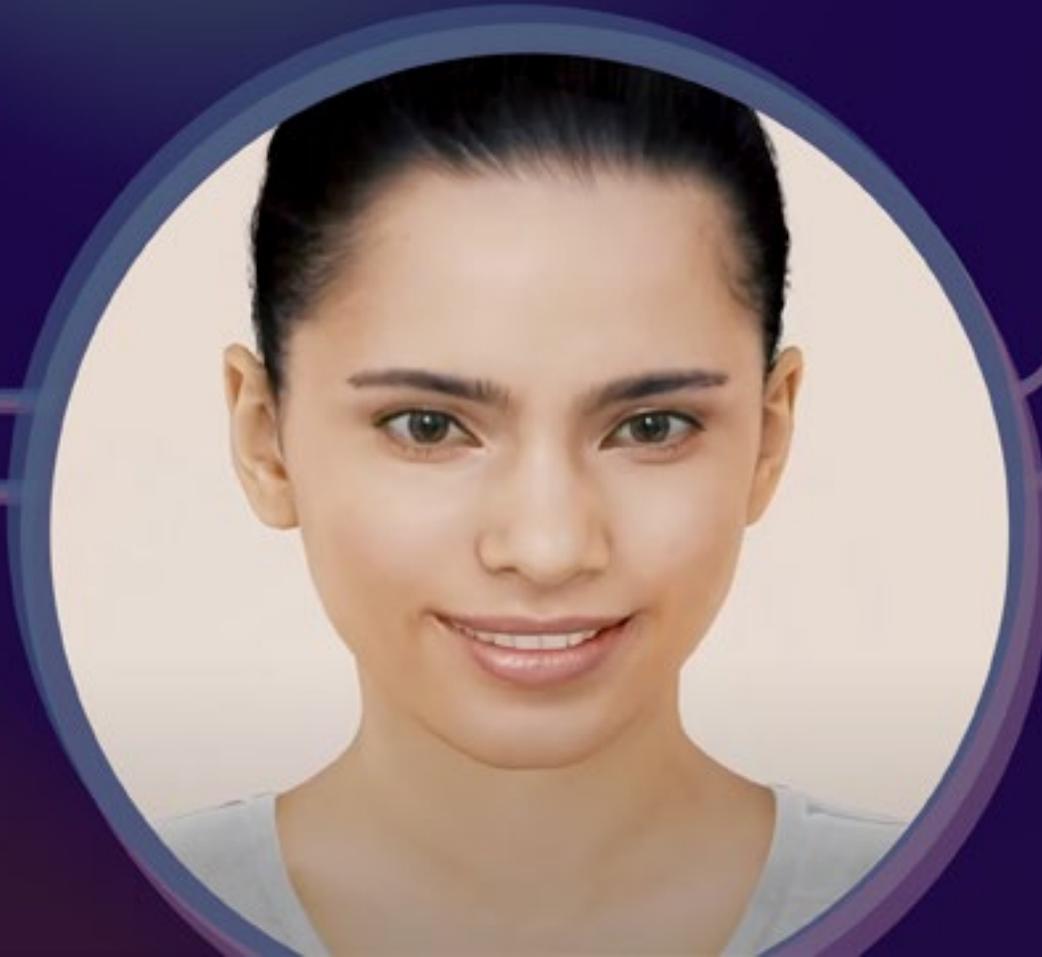


Digital Influencers

The Power of Influencer Marketing



soul machines

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A woman with long dark hair, wearing a red floral off-the-shoulder top and blue jeans, is sitting on a green chair. She is holding a smartphone in her right hand, which is mounted on a ring light. The ring light is illuminated and positioned in front of her. To her left, on a wooden desk, is an open laptop and a glass of iced coffee with a pink straw. The background is a dark, textured wall with a potted plant.

The Rise of Influencers

What Are Influencers?

With the rise of social media, influencers have gone from mostly including high-profile celebrities and a select few bloggers to being a widespread group across practically every industry. Influencers are primarily social media users who grow a dedicated audience through regular content creation that aligns with their personal brand and interest on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and Twitch.

They build genuine connections with their audience over time to such a degree that the audience trusts them to make recommendations for goods and services that align with their brand from home goods and fashion to complex business services. The development of these micro audiences with highly focused interests creates an opportunity for brands to find influencers that align with their goods and work with them to provide samples or sponsorship to promote their brand to a base that is highly likely to be interested in their services.

The result is recommendations that come across as more authentic than typical advertising tactics, with the idealized view of social media putting your product or service in the best possible light.





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The Value of Influencers

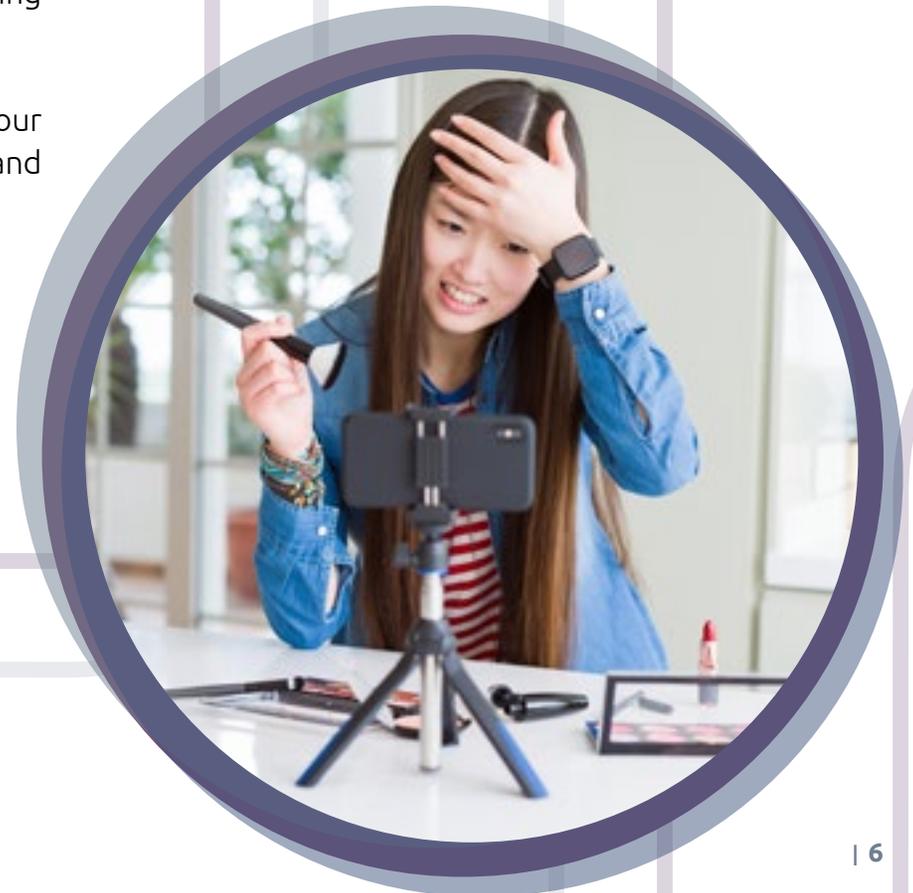
The main value of influencers comes from the highly specialized audience – social media creates bubbles of content with algorithms that quickly refine what is being shown to viewers to match their interests as closely as possible. Other forms of advertising rely primarily on data and assumptions made by the company creating them and might not actually align well with their ideal customer. Leveraging social media where potential customers raise their own hands to indicate their interests creates a much warmer audience for relevant messaging.

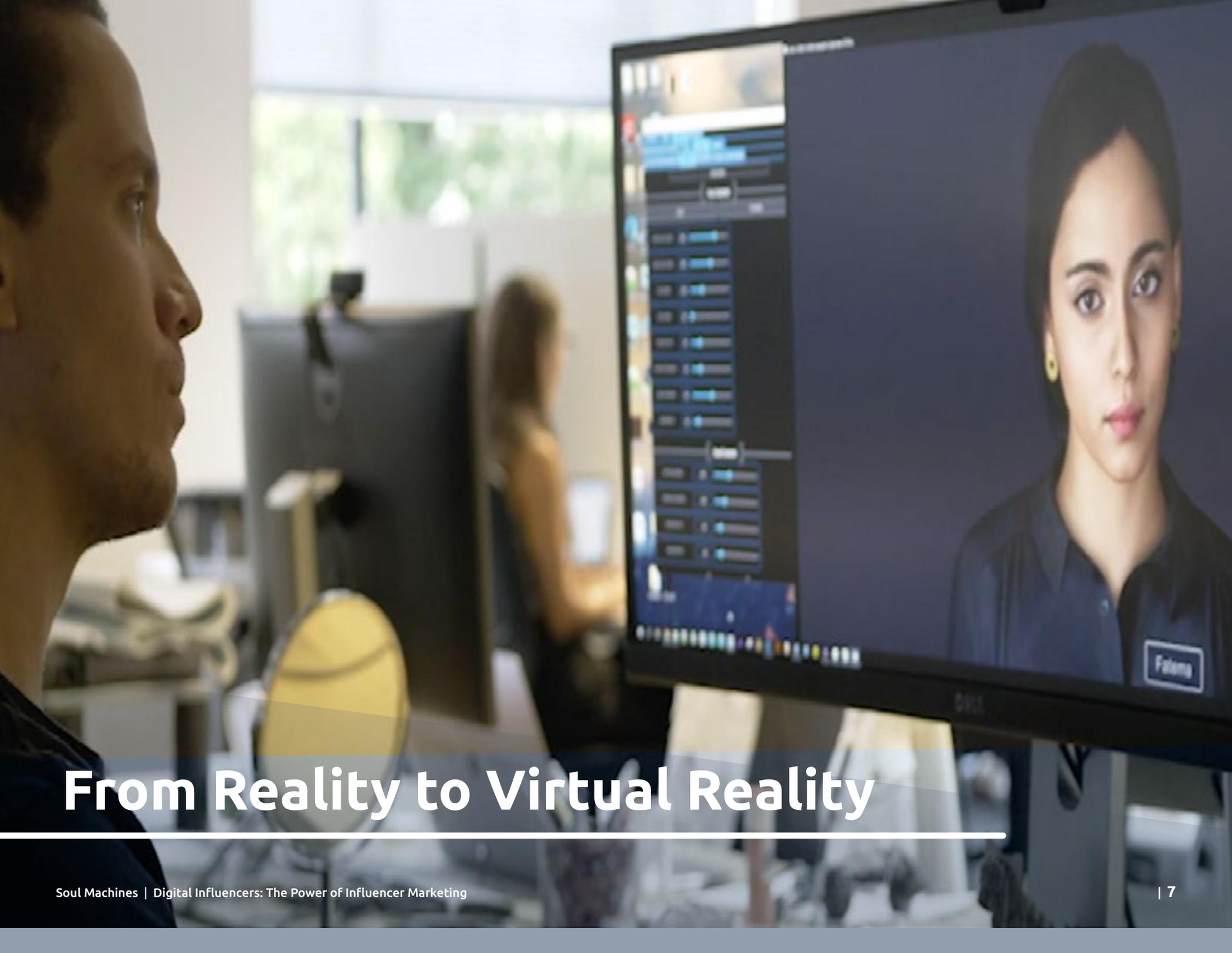
As long as you as the sponsor are doing adequate research to ensure that an influencer's base matches your desired audience, the resulting promotions will fall on much more receptive ears than those reliant on geography, purchased lists, or the less precise audiences created in other forms of paid online advertising. According to a study done by the Influencer Marketing Hub, 66% of brands are expected to increase their influencer marketing budgets in the next year, with micro-influencers typically outperforming their high following counterparts.

What working with Influencers looks like today

With all of the benefits of working with Influencers, there are also unique challenges that come with including them in your advertising strategy. Part of the difficulty with working with influencers comes in the fact that they are individuals – and depending on their level of experience can be generally untrained or unaccustomed to developing advertising messaging. They require more diligent management and engagement to ensure that the promotions you partner on come out in a timely manner and are representing your brand as accurately and authentically as possible.

If your approach is too hands-off, or you misjudged the audience, your product could be perceived as irrelevant or too forced and paint your brand in a worse light.





From Reality to Virtual Reality

What are Digital Influencers?

With the benefits of influencers and the solutions to several of their challenges, comes digital influencers – a growing concept of artificially created digital personas that can create and grow their own brand or be specifically designed to represent a single company. These digital influencers fall into several different categories of how they were created and how they are used in this evolution of influencer marketing.



Soul Machines Digital Twin: will.i.am

Digital People as Digital Twins:

This first type of digital influencer is the digital twin – a recreation of a public figure, celebrity, or real-world influencer that matches their appearance and personality.

These can be developed by companies focused on virtual character design and then leveraged by the individual to participate in events, partner with other brands, or exist as a resource and memory that is more accessible than the individual is.

Soul Machines has been on the mission to humanize AI and deliver the goodness of human-machine collaboration by creating avatars that look more like us. Its Digital People can hear, see, understand, speak and respond autonomously with emotions and gestures.

The company has not only created the technology to design and animate avatars with hyper-realistic human features and natural gestures but also developed a rich and scalable collaboration platform where brands, their creators, web and UX designers can make their own Digital Influencers.



Digital People as Virtual Ambassadors:

Unlike a digital twin, a virtual ambassador is a digital person who is created specifically by a brand to represent them by aligning with their offering, aesthetic, and values.

They can be developed with their own personality and style to ensure that they are as interesting and relatable as possible to the audience the brand wants to reach.

Who is Using Digital Influencers?

Companies across a wide range of industries are both creating their own digital influencers and partnering with other virtual influencers to reach new audiences and create stronger connections with their desired base. According to a survey done by the Influencer Marketing Factory, 75% of those aged 18-24 follow at least one virtual influencer, and 45% of respondents aged 35-44 have bought a product promoted by a virtual influencer.

Brands like IKEA, Calvin Klein, and Porsche have partnered with already existing virtual influencers like Lil Miquela to promote their content, while others like Nestle, Maryville University, and Bank ABC have created their own personas with Soul Machines Digital DNA Studio to engage audiences in their brand experience.

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The Value of Digital Influencers

Digital Influencers allow companies to leverage the benefits of real-world influencer marketing with niche audiences and more authentic feeling promotions while also skirting around the issues of having content align exactly with what you as a brand are looking for, being constantly available, and being available to a truly global audience.

For brands creating digital twins, they are creating an opportunity for the twin to be more available and accessible than the actual influencer is. This can allow for more meet-and-greets and promotion collaborations than were possible. For brands creating imaginative ambassadors, they can create an influencer that is in full harmony with their messaging and create a relatable touchpoint for the new audiences they are trying to reach.

Digital Influencers in Reality



With a focus on use cases by Soul Machines, let's see how companies are using Digital Influencers today

Digital Twins

Extending Reality

When creating a Digital Twin, the focus is on capturing their likeness, personality, and expertise into an interactive time capsule. These creations provide access to their counterparts in a way that has never been experienced before – because they exist in the online world, they can engage with their fans face-to-face in their own languages. The result is a highly scalable personal interaction that can be done on a computer, smartphone, and now – in the metaverse.



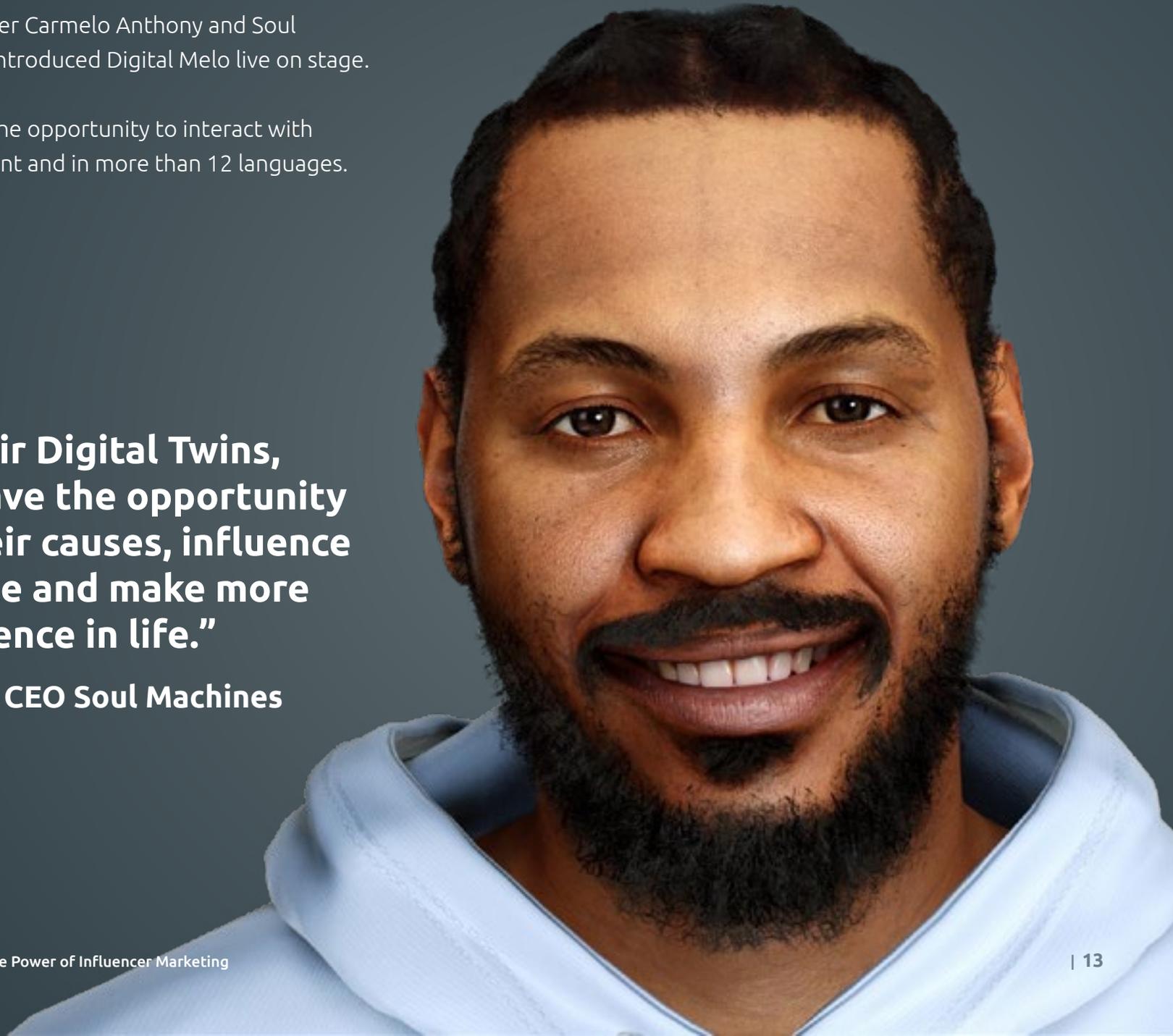
Meet Digital Melo

At Collision 2022, NBA player Carmelo Anthony and Soul Machines CEO Greg Cross introduced Digital Melo live on stage.

Digital Melo will give fans the opportunity to interact with Carmelo whenever they want and in more than 12 languages.

“With their Digital Twins, celebrities have the opportunity to further their causes, influence more people and make more difference in life.”

-Greg Cross, CEO Soul Machines





Meet Digital Jack

Recently, Soul Machines partnered with the Nicklaus Companies to create the Digital Twin of Golfing Legend Jack Nicklaus as he was in 1978 at the height of his career. He now lives in an online world where he can participate in partnerships to talk to fans about his iconic 1962 U.S. Open win, his family and childhood, and even help perfect their swing. His likeness can now survive in a way that can continue to influence people around the world for years to come.

Digital Jack has a wealth of applications planned for the future including:

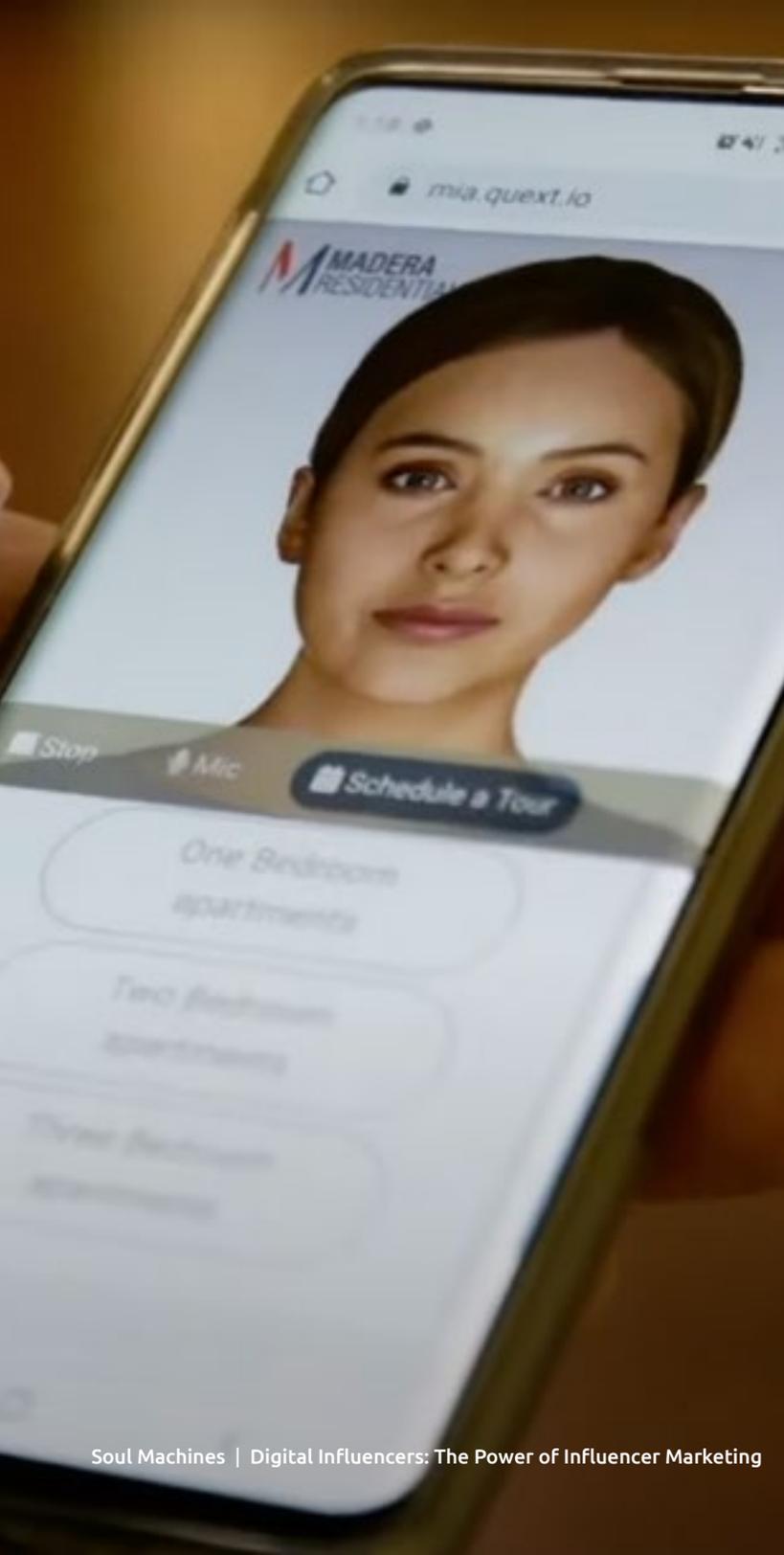
- A Presenter and Commentator
- An Interviewer of other PGA golfers
- A Coach to improve your golf game
- A Resource for Engaging with Fans

“Putting digital twins of real celebrities in a digital world makes them available 24/7. They can connect and monetize their brand in ways that we’ve never imagined before.”

-Greg Cross, CEO Soul Machines

Virtual Ambassadors





Goals of Virtual Ambassadors

Virtual ambassadors can be custom-created to have skills, appearances, and personalities that align with the goals of the brands they are designed for. Whether they are appearing as occasional guests on a company's regular social media feed and at events or building their own social media presence while integrating with their brand's content – virtual ambassadors need to have enough interest around them to build a following.

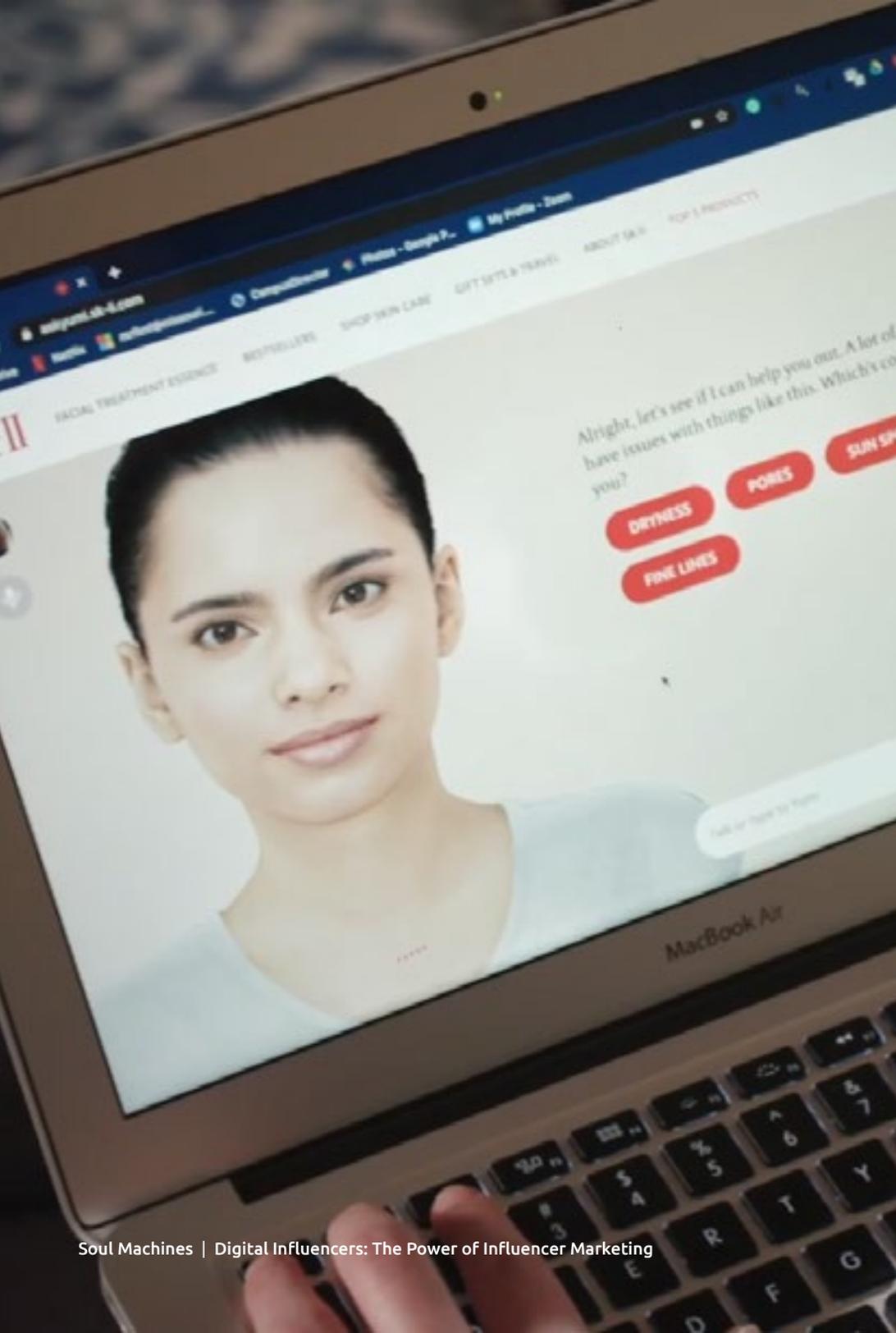
By tailoring their characteristics to align with your target audience, you can ensure that the audience will have an interest in what you are trying to sell.

The Soul Machines Astrologizer

Designed to be an example of a Virtual Ambassador, the Soul Machines Astrologizer was created with striking looks and smart skills tied to horoscopes, lucky numbers, and more. Giving a virtual ambassador special skill sets like reading a horoscope gives their audience the ability to engage with them and have an outcome that they are excited to share.

Much in the same way that online quizzes are more captivating than standard marketing content, these smart skills give you tools to capture your viewers' attention across platforms and learn more about them at the same time.





Yumi: Skin Care Product Ambassador

Another virtual ambassador is Yumi, a Soul Machines digital person designed to target an audience mostly made of women in their 20s to offer skin care advice and promote products from a multinational CPG Company. She visually fits neatly into the world of beauty influencers while offering an ambiguity that can't be provided by a real person.

In addition to being relatable and having a wealth of resources to share information, for individuals who are uncomfortable with discussing their skincare with a real person, Yumi is a game-changer. Especially in younger audiences who are known for their dislike of phone calls and in-person engagement, Yumi provides the comfort and security of a trusted confidant.

Into the Metaverse

Having only been around for 15 years, Influencers are still a new phenomenon – let alone digital influencers who have only begun surfacing in the last 5 years. But we are now on the doorstep of the next stop for the world of digital engagement – the Metaverse. While influencers will always be a force on social media as it exists today, Digital influencers will have greater prominence in the metaverse than ever before.

As people create their avatars to participate in the metaverse, brands have the opportunity to start creating their own representatives to engage on a personal level with each and every viewer who connects with them. It's time to narrow down the audience you want to reach, research real-world influencers, and consider what features and abilities you would give your brand's digital person so they can be the start of your digital strategy for years to come.

[Read more about Digital People in the metaverse \(eBook\)](#)

[Read more about Digital DNA Studio Suite](#)

