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Building Social Media, in Conjunction with the Brand, to Drive Purchasing Decisions

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Abstract: This article tells about how social media influences sales levels in online clothing stores, the role of social media in the modern era is very important, with this convenience many marketers utilize digital marketing strategies. In addition to the role of social media, the role of brands is needed for purchasing decisions on each product marketed on online media. This study uses a quantitative method by distributing questionnaires to 100 customer respondents. The results of the study showed a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions based on social media and product brands.

Keyword: social media, brands, purchasing decisions.

INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an essential need for many people in the modern era, offering a very effective and efficient way to communicate. In the world of marketing, social media has developed into a very influential tool thanks to its ability to reach a wide audience quickly and efficiently. Through platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok, companies can connect directly with consumers, increase brand awareness, and strengthen relationships with customers. Social media also allows for a more personalized and interactive marketing approach, where brands can create engaging content, interact with followers through comments or direct messages, and monitor consumer behavior and preferences using data obtained from user activity. (Imran et al., 2019).

Additionally, social media allows businesses to implement more measurable and targeted marketing strategies. With features like paid advertising, businesses can target specific demographics based on age, location, interests, and online behavior, making marketing campaigns more effective. Influencer marketing is also becoming a popular option, where brands work with influencers or public figures to promote their products to the right audience. This approach not only increases brand credibility but can also accelerate sales through recommendations from individuals their audience trusts. (Göçer et al., 2014).

In addition to the role of social media, having a strong brand is a crucial component of a successful marketing strategy. A strong brand helps differentiate a product or service from competitors, while creating an identity that is memorable to consumers. A solid brand also builds trust and customer loyalty, as consumers tend to choose products from brands they already know and trust. This is especially important in today's digital age, where consumers can easily compare products and services online. A strong brand also adds value in every

aspect of marketing, from product design, packaging, to the message conveyed in advertising campaigns. For example, a brand that is known for its high quality can charge a premium price because consumers are willing to pay more for products they perceive as valuable. In addition, consistency in conveying brand messages and identities across platforms, including social media, ensures that the brand remains relevant and resonates with the target audience. Therefore, the combination of consistent use of social media and brand reinforcement is the key to success in a modern marketing strategy (Samarah et al., 2022).

The relationship between brands and social media is very close, especially in today's digital era. Social media provides a platform for brands to build their identity and personality in a more dynamic and interactive way. Through social media, brands can convey their values, vision, and mission to their audience in a more direct and personal way. Consistent and relevant content, such as posts about the story behind the product, the brand's views on certain issues, or direct interactions with followers, help build a strong and sustainable brand image. In addition, social media allows brands to hear the voice of consumers, get real-time feedback, and adjust their strategies according to the needs and wants of the market (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2020).

On the other hand, social media also allows brands to leverage the power of community and user-generated content (UGC). Consumers who feel connected to a brand are more likely to share their experiences on social media, whether through reviews, photos, or videos, which can then strengthen the brand's online presence. This user-generated content not only adds credibility to the brand but also expands their reach to new audiences. With the right strategy, social media can be a very effective tool for building and strengthening a brand, creating customer engagement, and ultimately increasing loyalty and sales. (Naeem & Ozuem, 2022).

A purchase decision is a process in which a consumer decides to purchase a product or service after going through a series of evaluation and consideration stages. This process usually involves several steps, including need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, final purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. (Hapzi et al., 2019).

In this decision-making process, consumers consider various factors such as price, quality, brand, reviews from other users, and recommendations from friends or family. Purchasing decisions are also influenced by emotional factors, such as brand perception or personal experience with previous products. In addition, social media and digital marketing often play a significant role in shaping consumer opinions and influencing their final decisions (Ali et al., 2022).

Social media, brands, and purchasing decisions are closely intertwined in shaping modern consumer behavior. Social media has become a primary platform where brands engage with their audiences, convey messages, and build brand identities. Through social media, brands can showcase their values, tell product stories, and reinforce their image consistently. Interactions that occur on social media, such as comments, likes, and shares, help create public perceptions of a brand, which then influences how consumers view and evaluate the brand (Singh & Chakrabarti, 2021).

Brand image and reputation built through social media can greatly influence consumer purchasing decisions. Consumers often use social media to search for information about products or services before deciding to purchase. Reviews, recommendations from influencers, and user-generated content are important sources of information that influence brand perception and trust. Brands that have a positive reputation and strong presence on social media tend to be more trusted by consumers, making them more likely to be chosen when consumers make purchasing decisions (Tyrväinen et al., 2023).

Ultimately, purchasing decisions are often the result of a combination of the impressions formed by a brand on social media and the individual needs or preferences of the consumer. Social media serves not only as an information channel, but also as a place where consumers can feel a personal connection with the brand. Purchasing decisions driven by

positive interactions on social media demonstrate how these platforms can influence the consumer journey from awareness to purchase, reinforcing the role of social media as a strategic tool in brand marketing.

METHOD

The method used in this study is quantitative by collecting questionnaires from 100 respondents. Each respondent filled out the questionnaire using googleform. The questionnaire distributed contained statements related to social media, brands and purchasing decisions. Respondents who filled out the questionnaire were required to have purchased goods with online media.

The data processing method used is smart PLS. Smart PLS can handle complex structural models with many latent variables and indicators. This allows researchers to test more complex relationships between variables. Unlike covariance-based SEM techniques, such as AMOS or LISREL, Smart PLS is more tolerant of small sample sizes. This is suitable for exploratory research or studies with limited samples. (J. F. Hair et al., 2013).

The data analysis method used is the outer and inner model test where the Outer model refers to the relationship between latent variables (constructs) and indicators (observation variables) that measure the construct. The outer model test aims to ensure that the indicators used can actually measure the construct well, convergent validity, discriminant validity and Composite Reliability. The inner mode test includes the R Square, F Square, Path Coefficient tests, which are used to answer the research hypothesis.(J. Hair et al., 2017).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Results
Outer Model

Tabel 1. Uji Convergent Validity

Variabel	Indicator	Loadings	AVE	CR
Social Media	X1.1	0.742	0.633	0.912
	X1.2	0.866		
	X1.3	0.807		
	X1.4	0.810		
	X1.5	0.796		
	X1.6	0.744		
Brnad	X2.1	0.898	0.719	0.938
	X2.2	0.900		
	X2.3	0.863		
	X2.4	0.893		
	X2.5	0.786		
	X2.6	0.731		
Purchase Decision	Y1.1	0.822	0.556	0.832
	Y1.2	0.793		
	Y1.3	0.764		
	Y1.4	0.582		

Source: Data 2024

Discriminant validity

	X1	X2	Y
X1			
X2	0.584		
Y	0.667	0.778	

Source: Data 2024

Discriminant validity testing is carried out by referring to the HTMT value. An indicator is considered discriminantly valid if the htmt value on a particular variable is lower than 0.9. Discriminant validity is an essential step to ensure that the indicators that form the variables in the study can clearly distinguish one variable from another. In this process, cross loading

analysis is used to evaluate how well the indicators correlate with the measured variables, compared to other variables (López-Jáuregui et al., 2019)**.**

Inner model

| F SQUARE			
	X1	X2	Y
X1			0.108
X2			0.564
Y			

Source: Data 2024

F-square, or effect size, is a statistic used to assess how much influence an independent variable has on the dependent variable in a regression model, beyond what is explained by the other variables. F-square helps in measuring the strength of the individual contribution of each independent variable in the model. The F-square value is calculated by comparing the R-square values of the model with and without a particular independent variable. In general, an F-square value of 0.02 indicates a small effect, 0.15 indicates a medium effect, and 0.35 indicates a large effect. Thus, F-square provides further insight into the importance of each independent variable in explaining the variability of the dependent variable, helping the researcher in assessing how significant the influence of that variable is in the context of the overall model (J. Hair et al., 2017).

R SQUARE		
Y	0.613	0.605

Source: Data 2024

R-square, or coefficient of determination, is a statistical measure that shows how well a regression model predicts a dependent variable based on the independent variables used in the model. R-square values range from 0 to 1, where a value of 0 indicates that the model cannot explain any variability in the data, while a value of 1 indicates that the model can explain all of the variability in the dependent variable. In other words, the higher the R-square value, the better the model is at explaining the relationship between the variables, and the greater the percentage of change in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. However, a high R-square value does not always mean a good model, because the model could be too complex or overfitting. The R Square value in the study showed good results because it was above 0.50 or 50% (Sugiyono, 2019).
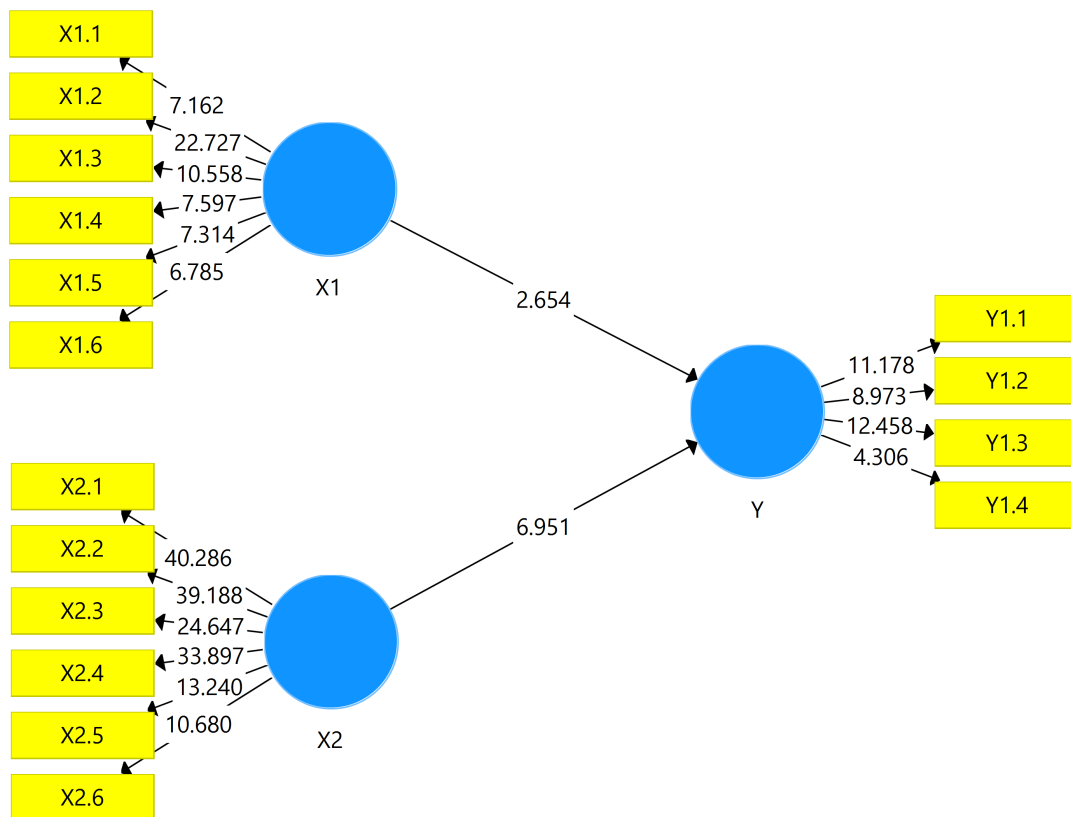
Source: Data 2024

Uji hipotesis

Variable	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics	P Values	Significance Levels
Media social -> Purchase Decision	0.260	2.616	0.009	<0.05
Brand -> Purchase Decision	0.595	6.740	0.000	<0.05

Source: Data 2024

Discussion

The Influence of Social Media on Purchasing Decisions

The first hypothesis in this study shows that the influence of social media on purchasing decisions is indeed true, based on the results of data processing, the T statistic value is 2.616 and the P value is 0.009 which states that the value has passed the threshold in the study. The first hypothesis is accepted. If social media is improved carefully, purchasing decisions will increase rapidly and significantly Mappesona et al. (2020). Social media currently by increasing content and providing interesting and entertaining content will increase purchasing decisions Ali et al. (2019). Social media content by interacting with buyers and potential buyers, this is to provide a bond to consumers. Social media is currently a platform that can increase purchasing decisions, because in social media, many features are displayed such as displaying photos and product classifications that will be offered to customers.(Ebrahim, 2020).

The Influence of Social Brands on Purchasing Decisions

The second hypothesis in this study shows that the influence given by the brand on purchasing decisions is indeed true, based on the statistical test, the T value is 6,470, and the P value is 0,000 which states that the value has passed the research threshold. Therefore, the results of the study can answer the first hypothesis which states that the brand has a positive

and significant effect on purchasing decisions. Based on the research results, this means that if they are increased dramatically, purchasing decisions will also increase significantly Djumarno et al. (2020). Purchasing decisions require a strategy behind them, with the influence of the brand, purchasing decisions will increase sharply. Purchasing decisions are needed by companies both small and large because purchasing decisions will have an impact on the progress of the company. The brand will play a role in increasing the purchasing decision, with the strategy offered by the brand, related to attributes, benefits, values, culture, and personality will reflect prospective buyers, related to the products they will buy (Ali et al., 2019).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study confirms that social media and brands have a significant influence on purchasing decisions. The first hypothesis states that increased activity and engaging social media content can significantly improve consumer purchasing decisions. Social media, with its various interactive features such as product displays, direct communication with potential buyers, and entertaining content, plays a key role in strengthening the bond between consumers and the products offered.

This suggests that companies that utilize social media effectively can see an increase in consumer purchasing decisions. Furthermore, the second hypothesis is also accepted, which shows that brands have a strong and significant influence on purchasing decisions. Strong brands create positive associations in the minds of consumers, thus encouraging them to prefer certain products. Brand strategies that involve product attributes, benefits, values, culture, and personality can help build consumer trust and loyalty, which ultimately improves purchasing decisions. For companies, both small and large, building and strengthening brands is an important strategic step to achieve success in a competitive market.

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