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DO SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT MARKETING AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT INFLUENCE PURCHASE INTENTION? EVIDENCE FROM INDONESIAN CUSTOMERS

APAKAH PEMASARAN KONTEN MEDIA SOSIAL DAN KETERLIBATAN PELANGGAN MEMENGARUHI NIAT MEMBELI? BUKTI DARI PELANGGAN INDONESIA

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Abstract

Content marketing emerged as a popular strategic marketing initiative for the digitization of information, which has undergone dramatic changes. The emergence of social media has becomea driving force behind change in the field of marketing, especially in relation to connecting with customers and engaging them in the activities of creating or sharing content and businesstransactions. Therefore, this research aims to reveal the influence of content marketing and customer engagement in social media on purchase intention. This research uses a quantitative- deductive approach and uses the survey method to collect data. There is empirical evidence that consumer engagement mediates the relationship between content marketing and purchase intention. Other empirical analysis results are expressed in the discussion section.

Keywords: *Content Marketing; Customer Engagement; Purchase Intention; Social Media*

Abstrak

Pemasaran konten muncul sebagai inisiatif pemasaran strategis yang populer untuk digitalisasi informasi, yang telah mengalami perubahan dramatis. Munculnya media sosial menjadi pendorong perubahan di bidang pemasaran, terutama terkait dengan berhubungan dengan pelanggan dan melibatkan mereka dalam aktivitas pembuatan atau berbagi konten dan transaksi bisnis. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap pengaruh content marketing dan customer engagement di media sosial terhadap minat beli. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif-deduktif dan menggunakan metode survei untuk mengumpulkan data. Ada bukti empiris bahwa keterlibatan konsumen memediasi hubungan antara pemasaran konten dan niat beli. Hasil analisis empiris lainnya diungkapkan pada bagian pembahasan.

Kata Kunci: Pemasaran Konten; Keterlibatan Pelanggan; Niat Beli; Media Sosial

INTRODUCTION

Since social media has become more integrated into our daily lives, it has opened up new avenuesthrough which businesses may grow and flourish. Therefore, it is considered that the importance of social media in commercial contexts is growing (Zhang & Du, 2020; Shahbaznezhad, Dolan, &Rashidirad, 2021). As Malthouse et al. (2016) posit that the key benefit is the opportunity for two-way interaction between the brand and the customer, which increases the likelihood of consumer engagement with brands on social media platforms.

It is crucial for companies to comprehend the aspects that affect consumer engagement in order toproperly communicate with customers on social media. Although academic research

in this area isextensive, it does not capture sustainable development in the presentation of content that is beneficial in drawing customers to social media, where customers are given an experience that is both entertaining and informative and free of distractions that could otherwise interfere with the shopping process (Lim & Ting, 2012; Edelman & Singer, 2015; Steward et al., 2018). Lim & Ting(2012) remarked that customers must be provided with a more entertaining and informative onlineshopping experience. Implicitly, this has ramifications for the capacity to develop engaging digital content and manage the digital experience of the consumer.

It is essential to recognize that in orderto implement engaging content marketing, brands may analyze the customer's preferences throughout the information search, and what they want will stimulate the intention to purchase (Ahmad & Ilkay, 2019; Milhinhos, 2015). Therefore, this study aims to help managers and brandsanalyze their customer engagement better, in particular, to understand the influence of certain factors on the content that brands share with their customers. This research will contribute with deeper insight and narrow the knowledge gap on how content marketing influences customer engagement on social media platforms and arouses customer intention to purchase.

Literature Riview

Social Media Content Marketing

Content marketing is an important source of information when considering how customers view information as a marketing communication activity (Gamble, 2016; Koiso-Kanttila, 2004; Lou &Xie, 2020). Before introducing the concept of content marketing, it is necessary to define the concept of content. Baltes (2015) noted that content consists of two dimensions. The first is contentcreated by businesses, and the other is content created by consumers. Content prepared by businesses plays an active role in the purchase phase of products and brands. Consumer content depends on consumer satisfaction and ensuring that potential customers are reached by advertising products and brands through social media platforms, blogs, websites, and other channels. Content marketing is relevant to the management process both in identifying, analyzing, and fulfilling customer requests to gain profit through the use of digital content distributed through electronic channels (Rowley, 2008).

Pulizzi (2013) explicitly describes it in relation to the marketing process in order to

acquire and engage customers by creating and distributing valuable and interesting content. This will also lead to long-term relationships, which will encourage more customer engagement (Taiminen & Ranaweera, 2019; Pulizzi, 2012; Holliman & Rowley, 2014) and make customers more aware andlikely to purchase (Maczuga, 2014).

Conceptual customer engagement is articulated as an initiative to understand customers in order to motivate them to interact with content (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019; Taiminen & Ranaweera, 2019; Wang et al., 2019). In other words, content should arouse the customer's emotional and cognitive responses (Brodie et al., 2019; Hollebeek, 2019). In that regard, customer engagement is needed, especially in the practice of creating and disseminating content during the marketing process (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019; Sheng, 2019; Vieira et al., 2019).

Strauss (2014) explicitly explains "content marketing" is related to a strategy that includes the creation and publication of information on websites and social media platforms. Content marketing serves a crucial function: drawing consumers' attention by generating interaction and encouraging the viewers to become customers (Kucuk & Krishnamhurty, 2007). Halvorson (2010)recognizes a distinction between advertising and content marketing. Content marketing is generated and shared to promote brand content that is valuable to viewers, unlike advertisements,which simply offer information about a single product. In other words, content marketing educates customers and facilitates a positive two-way dialogue between businesses and consumers.

Therefore, in order to fulfill the requirements of content marketing that draws consumers' attention,the prepared information should be easily digested, accessible, absorbed by consumers, and shareable (Ahmet Andac et al., 2016). Similarly, the format of the content should be addressed, regardless if it consists of articles, images, photos, or videos (Milhinhos, 2015). Furthermore, social media pages, communications, and group pages generated on social networking sites are also content forms (Handley & Chapman, 2012).

There are many definitions of content marketing, but the definition by Joe Pulizzi, who founded the Content Marketing Institute, is still popular to this day. Pulizzi (2012) emphasized content marketing as a strategic marketing process that involves the creation and distribution of valuable content to attract, engage, and win the attention of a clearly defined and understood target audience(Pulizzi, 2012). To put it another way, relevant and meaningful content as a

brand initiative to build relationships and customer trust (Holliman & Rowley 2014; Pulizzi 2012; Rancati & Gordini 2014). Content marketing is an approach that aims to produce conversations related to content, including creating, distributing, and promoting interesting, relevant, and useful content for a clearand understandable target audience (Kartajaya, Kotler & Setiawan, 2016).

Kucuk and Krishnamhurty (2007) remarked that content marketing may attract consumers by fostering customer engagement via content sharing and content creation, therefore enabling businesses to serve as sources of inspiration for customers. Karr (2016) identifies five aspects thatbusinesses must consider when assessing the creation of a content item: reader cognition, sharing motivation, persuasion, decision-making, and factors. The aspect of reader cognition associated with the audience of content producers is constantly different with the way in which they digest content; thus, it is vital to provide content with visual, audio, and kinesthetic interaction to reach all readers. The aspect of sharing motivation is associated with broadening the audience's reach and making it relevant.

The specific reason why the audience of a piece of content becomes significant is to boost the self-worth of others, build an online self-identity, engage with the community, expand their network, and raise awareness regarding a specific event. In terms of persuasion, this relates to how businesses persuade their content audience to select one choice overanother. This aspect of decision-making relates to the degree to which people are affected differently by various "supporting criteria" while making decisions. In combination, belief, fact, emotion, and effectiveness all play a part.

Therefore, brands that have balanced content tend to pay attention to their "supporting criteria." The factors aspect is related to the extent to which companies think about other factors that affect their audience, such as the influence of friends, family, and the social environment. Customers will be directed to the stage of the purchase process by evaluating the five dimensions of content marketing (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019; Holliman & Rowley, 2014; Karr, 2016). Content plays an important role in driving customer engagement on social media.

On the other hand, engagement itself also helps to increase the effectiveness of content marketing because it is easier to influence the consumer's perception of a brand or productif they are really involved and pay attention to the content. Otherwise, it will be difficult to actually achieve goals such as establishing relationships with customers and stimulating intent to

purchase.

Customer Engagement

An important factor in business success is the ability to maintain and create long-term relationshipswith customers (Malthouse et al., 2016). Customer engagement is a process of beliefs, feelings, and behaviors (Hollebeek, 2011). It can also provide benefits for the company by driving the company's performance to be better and increasing sales, profitability, and loyalty (Bowden, 2009). Customer engagement involves directly or indirectly involving the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects of customers in order to build a relationship with the brand (Vivek et al., 2012; Brodie, 2011; Hollebeek et al., 2014). In this sense, the relationship between the customer and the brand is formed through the process of interaction facilitated by social media.

Other empirical research has documented a positive relationship between digital content marketingand purchase intention (Ahmad & Ilkay, 2019; Du Plessis, 2022; Milhinhos, 2015); however, recent research has found the relationship to be insignificant (Malthouse, Calder, Kim, & Vandenbosch, 2016). including the relationship between content marketing and engagement (Leeet al., 2018; El Kedra et al., 2020). Although informative content such as price and availability canreduce engagement when customers order, there is an exception when combined with persuasive content attributes (Shahbaznezhad et al., 2021; Voorveld et al., 2018; Islam et al., 2019).

Purchase Intention

Intention refers to the deliberate planning to do something and can be defined as the primary indicator of the desire to engage in any behavior (Pacherie & Haggard, 2010). Considering the concept of intention from the point of view of consumers and customers, this is a situation betweenthe evaluation of purchase alternatives and the process in which purchase behavior will occur (Pachauri, 2001). In other words, purchase intention related to person's behavior when purchasinga product or brand.

The intention to purchase is one of the most significant stages in the purchase process because consumers are expected to give a certain reaction to stimuli in this process. The relationship between consumers' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors about products and brands is explained by theconsumer behavior model. The amount and strength of consumer confidence in a product determines the consumer's general attitude towards the product. Attitude affects

the formation of behavior. Attitude leads first to behavioral intention, then to purchase action. From the perspectiveof consumer behavior, the concept of behavioral intention shows the tendency of consumers to purchase products and brands. Purchase intention can be expressed as a behavioral disposition topurchase a specific product or brand.

According to Spears and Singh (2004), purchase intention describes a consumer's deliberate purchasing behavior. Purchase intention refers to a consumer's desire to acquire a certain productor the potential of planning ahead to do so. The intention to purchase occurs separately in the conditions of product and brand selection, product category and class selection, identification of general needs, and identification of specific needs. Purchase intention pertains to a complex process that involves customer behavior, perception, and attitude. and view purchase intention asa useful predictor of product sales. Purchase intention precedes the ultimate purchase decision. Intention to purchase is a multistep process; customers first obtain information about the desired brand before evaluating the product's attributes after use.

If the product meets the customer's desire,the customer begins to consider purchasing. Therefore, purchase intention refers to an individual'sdesire to acquire a product or service, which helps to predict actual purchase behavior. Many academics have shown the positive effect of customer engagement on the purchase process, including interactions and customer experience (Algharabat, 2018; Gambetti & Graffigna, 2010; Verhoef et al., 2010). Hence, the author assumes that content marketing and customer engagementare predictors of customer purchase intention. In relation to that, this research proposes the development of the following hypotheses:

H1: Content marketing has a positive and significant effect on customer engagement.

H2: Content marketing has a positive and significant effect on customer purchase intention. H3: Customer engagement has a positive and significant effect on customer purchase intention.

H4: Customer engagement significantly mediates the relationship between content marketing andpurchase intention.

Research Methods

The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of social media content marketing and customerengagement on consumer purchase intentions. This study utilizes consumer

purchase intention as the dependent variable, social media content marketing as the independent variable, and customerengagement as the mediation variable. Therefore, the sort of research used in this study is quantitative, which indicates that the emphasis will be more on numerical results and data analysisthan on subjective judgment. For this study, quantitative-deductive research methodologies were employed to gather consumer insights and anticipate hypotheses. Convenience sampling, which isone of the non-probability sampling approaches, is used to calculate the sample size for the onlinesurvey questionnaire. The rationale for utilizing this method is that the questionnaire will be administered online, and individuals who have access to it will be capable of filling it out. In this study, a survey was given to 120 participants ranging in age from 15 to 28 years, including both men and women. To get useful information, a survey questionnaire has been given out with regardsto social media content marketing, customer engagement, and consumers' intentions to purchase.

Results

Measurement model analysis

Tabel 1: The measurement model results

Variables	AVE	CR	R^2
Content Marketing	0.905	0.987	
Customer Engagement	0.694	0.947	0.537
Purchase Intention	0.803	0.961	0.730

The AVE of each variable is greater than 0.5, as shown in Table 1. In other words, the validity criteria based on an AVE greater than 0.5 have been fulfilled (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Similarly, Fornell and Larcker (1981) advocate a composite reliability (CR) greater than 0.7. For each variable, the CR metric reveals a value greater than 0.70. In addition, the r-square measure (coefficient of determination) for each endogenous variable reveals that the r-square of customer engagement is 0.537. This result might be construed to indicate that content marketing has a 53.7%impact on customer engagement. The coefficient of determination (r-square) of purchase intentionyielded a value of 0.73, indicating that content marketing and customer engagement affect purchase intention by 73%.

Structural model analysis

Table 2: Structural Model Results

	Correlation	Original	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	*p*-value	Decision
H1	CM -> CE	0.733	0.742	0.079	9.228	0.000	Supported
H2	CM -> PI	0.366	0.357	0.137	2.680	0.008	Supported
H3	CE -> PI	0.549	0.554	0.135	4.052	0.000	Supported
H4	CM–PI (Indirect effect)	0.402	0.410	0.110	3.646	0.000	Supported
p-value < 0.05							

The results of direct and indirect effect testing are presented in Table 2. The first hypothesis assertsthat content marketing has a significant and positive effect on customer engagement. With a numerical path coefficient of 0.73 and a p-value of 0.000, H1 is supported. The numerical path coefficient for the second hypothesis is 0.36, and the p-value is 0.008. These data provide supportfor H2. The third hypothesis proposes that customer engagement has a positive and statistically significant effect on purchase intention. H3 is supported since the numerical path coefficient is

0.549 and the p-value is 0.000. For H4, customer engagement significantly mediates the correlationbetween content marketing and purchase intention, where the p-value displays the number 0.000.Therefore, H4 is supported.

Discussion

According to empirical findings, content marketing has a positive and significant influence on purchase intention. This suggests that appealing content marketing has a significant role in drivingpurchase intention. In other words, appealing and informative content will guide customers as they seek the required information intensely throughout the evaluation process, transforming their attitude into a deliberate intention to purchase. The empirical results support earlier research findings (e.g., Ahmad & Ilkay, 2019).

Consumer intent may serve as the foundation for brands andbusinesses to develop content that is compelling, consistent, and simple to comprehend, which inturn can inspire consumer purchase intents and foster stronger customer relationships (Naidoo & Potgieter, 2017). Informative content marketing must be fascinating and simple to digest, so it is best if reader cognition is addressed. This manifestation is reflected in the customer's behaviors after digesting a variety of content, regardless of whether the customer can comprehend the digested interaction, sound, or kinesthetic learning.

Customers who find the information interesting may leave comments and share it on social media.This reflects customer interest in each piece of content. When the customer needs product knowledge, this will increase their cognitive engagement (Pronschinske et al., 2012; Hollebeek &Macky, 2019). As a result, it stands to reason that content marketing has a significant effect on customer engagement. In other words, informational content will be able to enhance customer cognitive engagement. These empirical results highlight the importance of customer engagement in predicting purchase intent.

The outcomes of this research support the conclusion that customerengagement has a positive and significant influence on purchase intention (e.g., Brodie et al., 2011;Pansari & Kumar, 2017; Sashi, 2012; So et al., 2016; Van Doorn et al., 2010; Verhoef et al., 2010).Hence, the higher the customer engagement, the greater their intention to purchase the goods. This result supports the assertion that engagement is a crucial antecedent in influencing shopping behaviors (Harrigan et al., 2018; Husnain & Toor, 2017; Prentice et al., 2019).

The findings also reveal that customer engagement is an important factor in mediating the link between content marketing and purchase intention. This supported previously established empirical evidence (Husnain & Toor, 2017; Huang et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2019). As such, whenthe main goal of digital content marketing is to create links and engagement that lead to purchaseintention, it will benefit both customers and companies.

Conclusion

The aim of this study is to investigate if there is a relationship between content marketing, customerengagement, and purchase intention. Published content should educate on at least one or two topicsor answer queries that customers may have. Companies or brands should provide content that is clear, comprehensible, objective, relevant, and valuable for target customers who wish to be influenced by the content. The study also recommends that organizations or brands prepare in advance for which channel the content will be released on and what the content's primary aim willbe. For instance, target consumers who may access content ranging from basic information to sharing on social media. After figuring out what the content and channel are for, the company should focus on other important things, like making content that changes over time or stays the same.

Content that changes on a regular basis offers followers up-to-date information on the newest trends in the brand, business, and lifestyle domains. As a result, companies or brands

should periodically communicate information with customers on brand advancements, such as thelaunching of new product types. Similarly, it is suggested that organizations or brands integrate the two content models, both evolving and unchanging, for key moments. For optimal interactionwith target customers, content that offers active interaction with them must have a dynamic character. Hence, organizations or brands should focus on a variety of themes to ensure that the content is interactive. It is common knowledge that customers prefer content messaging that maybuild emotional relationships with them by engaging them in brand narratives. Organizations or brands could include their followers in their content. This would not only make the followers feelappreciated, but it would also show other potential followers that they can trust the brand or organization, which would encourage them to follow it on social media.

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