

Electronic Word-of-Mouth and Social Media Marketing on Brand Image and Purchase Intention

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Submitted:
21 JUNE 2023

Accepted:
16 NOVEMBER 2023

ABSTRACT

Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) and Social Media Marketing are widely used by consumers to gather information about a product. Information obtained from various sources on the internet will affect consumer perceptions of brand image, risk and encourage consumer buying interest. This study aims to examine the effect of electronic word-of-mouth variables, and social media marketing on purchase intention with brand image as an intervening variable. This research was conducted quantitatively on 150 respondents. The research was conducted on all Lampung people who know about Bittersweet by Najla Lampung on Instagram and have made purchases through e-commerce. The method used is Structural Equation Model with SmartPLS 3.3.3 software in 2023. Statistical results after hypothesis testing show that each variable, namely: These results indicate that hypotheses one, two, three, four and five are proven, and it can be concluded that electronic word-of-mouth has a positive and significant effect on brand image and purchase intention, and social media marketing has a positive effect on brand image and purchase intention and is significant to brand image and significant to purchase intention. Meanwhile, brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.

Keywords: *Electronic word-of-mouth, Social media marketing, Brand image, Purchase intention*

ABSTRAK

Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) dan Pemasaran Media Sosial banyak dimanfaatkan konsumen untuk menggali informasi mengenai suatu produk. Informasi yang diperoleh dari berbagai sumber di internet akan mempengaruhi persepsi konsumen terhadap citra merek, risiko dan mendorong minat beli konsumen. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh variabel electronic word-of-mouth, dan pemasaran media sosial terhadap minat beli dengan brand image sebagai variabel intervening. Penelitian ini dilakukan secara kuantitatif pada 150 responden. Penelitian dilakukan pada seluruh masyarakat Lampung yang mengetahui tentang Bittersweet by Najla Lampung di Instagram dan pernah melakukan pembelian melalui E-commerce. Metode yang digunakan adalah Structural Equation Model dengan Software SmartPLS 3.3.3 tahun 2023. Hasil dari pengujian ini menunjukkan bahwa hipotesis satu, dua, tiga, empat dan lima terbukti kebenarannya, dan dapat disimpulkan bahwa electronic word-of-mouth berpengaruh positif dan signifikan pada brand image dan minat beli, dan pemasaran media sosial berpengaruh positif terhadap brand image dan minat beli serta signifikan terhadap brand image dan signifikan terhadap minat beli. Sedangkan brand image berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap minat beli

Kata kunci: *Electronic word-of-mouth, Pemasaran media sosial, Brand image, Minat beli*

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary culinary industry, entrenched in the food and beverage sector, has evolved into a crucial aspect of individuals' lifestyles. Despite the challenges posed by the

JIMKES

Jurnal Ilmiah Manajemen
Kesatuan
Vol. 11 No. 3, 2023
pp. 687-694
STIE Kesatuan
ISSN 2337 – 7860

post-Covid-19 era, this industry has shown resilience and growth. Data from www.dataindustri.com indicates a positive quarterly growth of 2.56 percent and an annual growth rate of 3.75 percent in the first quarter of 2022, highlighting the industry's adaptability and continuous development. Digital advancements play a pivotal role in propelling the culinary sector forward, and Indonesia's increasing internet usage underlines this trend. With over half of the population using the internet, the numbers have risen significantly, reaching 204.7 million internet users in February 2022 compared to 202.6 million in the previous year. The surge in internet use is paralleled by a rise in social media users, which reached 191.4 million active individuals in 2022, up from 170.0 million in the preceding year.

The exponential growth of internet users has translated into a significant shift in consumer behavior, especially regarding online activities. Haudi et al. (2022) suggest, social media has become a platform not only for communication but also for online purchases, facilitated by recommendations from friends and family. In this context, social media serves as a transaction medium, bridging the gap between producers and consumers, providing a plethora of information. Instagram, the second most popular social media platform in Indonesia, holds substantial influence, particularly among teenagers. Offering features like Instastory, Reels, and Insight, Instagram provides a versatile space for buying and selling, allowing users to upload visually appealing content with ease. Businesses, including those in the food and beverage sector, utilize Instagram for marketing purposes, leveraging its features to promote new products or re-promote existing ones (Nursyabani, A. P., & Silvianita, 2023).

E-commerce platforms further contribute to the culinary industry's growth, with Shopee emerging as a prominent player, being the preferred choice for 77% of Indonesian online shoppers. Tokopedia follows in second place with 39% usage. Businesses, such as Bittersweet by Najla Lampung, strategically employ Instagram, Shopee, and Tokopedia for marketing and sales, leveraging the strengths of each platform. Bittersweet by Najla Lampung's Instagram account serves as a notable example of effective social media marketing. With 42.1 thousand followers, the account actively promotes products, engages with customers, and facilitates reviews. The combination of social media presence and online shopping creates a dynamic environment where consumers not only purchase but also share their experiences, contributing to an eWOM phenomenon.

The eWOM strategy employed by Bittersweet by Najla Lampung, as seen in Figure 4, involves consumers and influencers sharing positive reviews on Instagram Stories, creating a viral marketing effect. This strategy, coined by Kotler and Keller (2019) as eWOM, positions Bittersweet by Najla as the pioneer of dessert boxes in Indonesia. The subsequent decline in active Instagram posting, observed in March 2023, prompts an examination into the sustained impact of eWOM and Instagram on brand image and, ultimately, purchasing intention. Replicating research conducted by Hidayat, (2021), this study aims to explore the influence of eWOM and social media marketing on brand image and purchase intention in the e-commerce landscape. Using a quantitative method, the study focuses on the Lampung population active on social media, particularly those following Bittersweet by Najla Lampung on Instagram and engaging in e-commerce activities.

The investigation aims to provide valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of digital marketing within the culinary industry. This research in marketing management aims to bridge theoretical knowledge with practical applications, particularly in the realms of social media marketing, electronic word-of-mouth, and their impact on brand image and purchase intention. The study aspires to serve as a valuable reference for scholars and researchers, providing insights for future studies. Additionally, the research holds relevance for the company "Bittersweet by Najla Lampung," offering potential guidance in utilizing Instagram for marketing activities and maintaining a positive brand image, with the anticipated outcome of influencing purchase intention. The hope is that the findings will contribute to the company's marketing strategies and overall success.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Theory of Acceptance Model (TAM) explores individuals' willingness to embrace and use evolving technology, particularly influencing online business development. Users' reactions and perceptions of information technology play a crucial role in shaping their behavior and acceptance of such technology. Adopted from the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), TAM asserts that an individual's attitudes and reactions determine their behavior. It establishes a model, rooted in psychological theory, describing computer users' behavior through elements like trust, attitude, intention, and user behavior. Developed by Davis F.D in 1989, TAM is widely utilized in information technology research for its simplicity and user-friendly approach.

Marketing management is an organizational function that focuses on creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and managing customer relationships to benefit the organization and its stakeholders (Kotler and Keller, 2019). The key objective is to develop deep and lasting relationships with people and organizations that can influence the success of the company's marketing activities. Marketing management is the art and science of selecting target markets and achieving, retaining, and growing customers by creating, delivering, and communicating superior customer value. Marketing communication is a key aspect of marketing management, involving advertising, sales promotion, events, public relations, online and social media marketing, mobile marketing, direct and database marketing, and personal selling. Marketing communication can strengthen marketing strategies and achieve more comprehensive market coverage. Word of mouth marketing is a conventional marketing method used by buyers who have experience using a product or service. With the development of the internet, the use of word-of-mouth marketing has evolved into electronic word-of-mouth.

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has evolved as a powerful strategy in marketing, particularly through social networking sites like Instagram and Twitter. Unlike traditional word of mouth, eWOM leverages digital platforms, allowing consumers to share reviews, recommendations, and product information with a wider audience. According to Hidayat (2021), eWOM, expressed through social media, serves as an effective tool for building consumer loyalty. Research by Mohammad Jasin (2022) emphasizes that lively and interactive online media, such as Instagram, significantly impacts brand image and, consequently, purchase intention. Sharing product advantages on social media enhances a company's brand image and provides valuable information to consumers.

Brand Image is integral to a product's success, serving as a significant added value for goods and services. Companies continually introduce and promote their brands to target consumers, recognizing the profitability of a strong brand. Defined by Kotler and Keller (2019) as customer perceptions and beliefs, a positive brand image is crucial for competitive advantage and consumer loyalty. Achieving this involves strategic brand elements, including logos and advertising, with a focus on conveying brand value and maintaining the right positioning. Advertising plays a pivotal role in directly showcasing a product's attributes. Brand image, stored in consumers' minds, is pivotal for building brand loyalty and influencing marketing outcomes (Azizan & Yusr, 2019).

Purchase intention is a precursor to consumer behavior, signifies an individual's predisposition before engaging in an action, serving as a predictive factor for behavior. It holds significant weight for marketing managers, guiding strategies to influence buying decisions and forecast future sales. Intertwined with the decision-making process, purchase intention arises after an individual recognizes a need, reflecting the strength of their desire to actualize a behavior. Rooted in the tricomponent attitude model, which encompasses cognitive, affective, and conative elements, it illustrates the complexity of consumer purchasing behavior. Consumer motivation to buy, influenced by external stimuli, further adds intricacy to the process, making purchase intention a critical stage in consumer decision-making.

eWOM and Brand Image (H1): Drawing from past research (Jalilvand and Samiei, 2012; Widyawati), the hypothesis asserts a direct and positive correlation between eWOM and Brand Image. This highlights the influential role of eWOM in shaping

consumer perceptions, subsequently impacting purchase interest. eWOM and Purchase Intention (H2): With support from studies (Cynthiadewi and Hatammimi, 2014; Widyawati), the hypothesis underscores the pivotal role of eWOM in driving Purchase Intention. Consumers, influenced by eWOM, are more likely to exhibit a positive inclination toward future purchases.

Social Media Marketing and Brand Image (H3): Affirming the impact of social media (Heskiano et al., 2020; Ellitan et al., 2022), the hypothesis posits a positive association between Social Media Marketing efforts and Brand Image. This accentuates the significance of strategic online marketing in shaping brand perceptions. Social Media Marketing and Purchase Intention (H4): Building on empirical evidence (Jasin, 2022), the hypothesis asserts a direct and positive link between Social Media Marketing activities and consumers' Purchase Intention. Social media emerges as a potent platform influencing consumers' future buying decisions. Brand Image and Purchase Intention (H5): Supported by research findings (Cynthiadewi and Hatammimi, 2014; Jasin, 2022), the hypothesis underscores the pivotal role of Brand Image in driving Purchase Intention. A positive brand image enhances consumers' inclination to make future purchases.

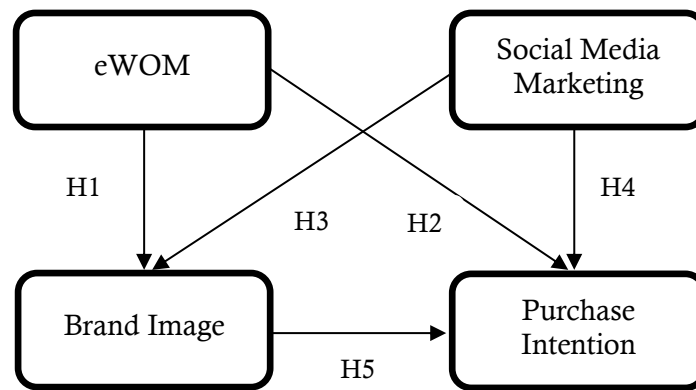


Figure 1. Research Framework

METHODS

This type of research is quantitative research. The approach used is a quantitative approach. found that quantitative data is a method of research based on positivistic (concrete data), research data of numbers to be measured using statistics as a means of calculating tests, relating to problems studied to produce conclusions. The quantitative approach used in this study aims to understand the role of electronic word of mouth, and social media marketing with brand image intermediaries on the purchase intention of Bittersweet by Najla Lampung products.

In this study, quantitative data is employed, characterized by numerical expressions reflecting the magnitudes of the variables under consideration. The data sources are categorized into primary and secondary data, following Primary data, obtained directly from data collectors, is a key focus of the research, specifically gathered through the distribution of questionnaires on Instagram to both followers and consumers of Bittersweet by Najla Lampung. Conversely, secondary data, as outlined serves as a supportive element for the primary data. This type of data does not directly reach data collectors; instead, it traverses intermediary channels and documents. The secondary data in this study is derived from the sales data of Bittersweet by Najla Lampung on platforms such as Shopee and Tokopedia. This dual-source approach allows for a comprehensive analysis by integrating direct insights from primary data with additional contextual information from secondary data, enhancing the depth and reliability of the study's findings.

This research adopts a quantitative and descriptive approach, utilizing closed-question questionnaires distributed through an online platform (Google Form). The closed-

question format, employing the Likert scale, streamlines data analysis. The Likert scale is chosen for measuring attitudes, opinions, and perceptions, providing indicators for the variables under consideration. The population for this study consists of Lampung residents who are active on social media, specifically Instagram followers of Bittersweet by Najla Lampung, with an interest in or prior purchases through e-commerce. The total Instagram followership is 42,100 (Instagram @Bittersweet_by_Najla_Lampung, 2023). Employing the Slovin formula with an 8% error rate and 95% confidence level, a sample size of 150 was determined to adequately represent this population, considering practical constraints in terms of time and cost.

The data analysis in this study is focused on examining the influence of eWOM and Instagram as a Social Media Marketing platform on Brand Image and Purchase Intention in the context of E-commerce for Bittersweet by Najla Lampung. The structural equation model – partial least square (SEM-PLS) is employed for analysis using SmartPLS software. This choice is based on its suitability for predicting and explaining latent variables rather than testing a specific theory.

The Outer Model, considered as the measurement model, is evaluated through various parameters such as Convergent Validity, Construct Reliability, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Discriminant Validity, and cross-loading. Convergent validity, assessed by outer loading values, indicates the reliability of each indicator, with a threshold of 0.70. AVE, which measures the validity requirements for discrimination, requires a minimum value of 0.50. Construct Reliability, equivalent to Cronbach's alpha, should surpass 0.70 for reliability. Discriminant validity examines how distinct latent constructs are from each other, with higher values suggesting uniqueness in explaining the measured phenomenon. Cross-loading, another discriminant validity measure, assesses whether loading values of each item against the construct are greater than cross-loading values.

Moving to the Inner Model or structural model, its assessment involves various parameters like Collinearity assessment coefficient of determination (R²), Effect size (F²), and Predictive relevance (Q²). R² values categorize the strength of relationships, with 0.67 being substantial and 0.19 being weak. F² values gauge the influence of predictor variables on the structural setting, ranging from weak to strong. Predictive relevance (Q²) values above 0 indicate well-reconstructed observed values, demonstrating the model's predictive capability. Hypothesis testing, particularly bootstrapping structural research path, is employed to assess significance levels and probabilities of direct, indirect, and total effects. This includes evaluating t-statistical values, P-values, and original sample results for regression coefficients, aiding in accepting or rejecting null or alternative hypotheses.

RESULTS

The respondent characteristics in the study encompass 150 Lampung individuals engaged in social media and followers of Bittersweet by Najla Lampung on Instagram, specifically those interested in or having purchased products through e-commerce. The distribution of questionnaires involved 150 engaged and completed responses, with no damaged or incomplete surveys. Gender distribution revealed 68% females and 32% males, demonstrating a slightly higher female representation. Age-wise, those under 25 dominated with 41.6%, while 99.4% of respondents were Lampung residents. Regarding education, 54% held high school degrees, and only 1.3% had doctorates.

The model analysis involved comprehensive evaluation, beginning with outer model testing. Key criteria such as outer loadings, convergent validity, Cronbach's Alpha, and composite reliability were considered. The analysis revealed satisfactory validity and reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability values exceeding 0.70 for all variables. Discriminant validity testing, employing Fornier-lacker criteria, demonstrated higher correlation values within latent constructs than between different constructs, affirming the absence of multicollinearity issues. The inner model assessment included collinearity evaluation, with VIF values below 5.0, indicating the absence of multicollinearity symptoms. The coefficient of determination (R²) indicated moderate

accuracy for both Purchase Intention and Brand Image, attributing 48.0% and 49.0% variability, respectively, to the studied factors. Predictive relevance (Q2) demonstrated a moderate level of predictive accuracy for both Purchase Intention and Brand Image. Effect size (f2) values suggested varying degrees of influence, ranging from low to substantial, among the studied variables. Overall, the model exhibited validity, reliability, and predictive accuracy, providing a robust foundation for subsequent testing (Table 1).

The analysis of relationships within the model revealed significant positive influences. The association between Electronic Word-of-Mouth (X1) and Brand Image (Z) as well as Purchase Intention (Y) showed Original Sample values of 0.472 and 0.281, respectively, both with P-values below 0.05, confirming the acceptance of Hypotheses 1 and 2. Similarly, the relationships between Social Media Marketing (X2) and Brand Image (Z) and Purchase Intention (Y) demonstrated Original Sample values of 0.418 and 0.253, respectively, with P-values below 0.05, supporting the acceptance of Hypotheses 3 and 4. The relationship between Brand Image (Z) and Purchase Intention (Y) displayed an Original Sample value of 0.331, with a P-value of 0.007, also below 0.05, confirming Hypothesis 5. These findings underscore the significant positive impact of Electronic Word-of-Mouth and Social Media Marketing on Brand Image and Purchase Intention in the context of Bittersweet by Najla Lampung.

Table 1. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Desv
H1	X1 Electronic Word-of-Mouth -> Z Brand Image	0.472	7.311	0.000	Accepted
H2	X1 Electronic Word-of-Mouth -> Y Purchase Intention	0.281	2.989	0.003	Accepted
H3	X2 Social Media Marketing -> Z Brand Image	0.418	5.288	0.000	Accepted
H4	X2 Social Media Marketing -> Y Purchase Intention	0.253	2.828	0.005	Accepted
H5	Z Brand Image -> Y Purchase Intention	0.331	2.729	0.007	Accepted

DISCUSSION

The first hypothesis posits that increasing eWOM significantly enhances brand image. The study, consistent with previous research (Hidayat, 2021; Hidayatullah & Bayu, 2018; Jasin, 2022; Torlak et al., 2014; Balakrishnan et al., 2014), substantiates this claim. It underscores the pivotal role of eWOM as a potent influencer in shaping and fortifying brand perceptions. This aligns with the broader understanding that word-of-mouth, especially in the digital age, holds substantial sway over consumer attitudes. The study delves into the impact of eWOM on Bittersweet by Najla Lampung, emphasizing the importance of consumer-generated content in shaping the brand narrative. Drawing on insights from Torlak et al., (2014) and Balakrishnan et al. (2014), the research underscores how advancements in technology, particularly the emergence of online social networking sites, have transformed the dynamics of information transmission. The study provides practical implications, urging companies to prioritize efforts to bolster brand image by leveraging the pervasive influence of eWOM.

Moving to the second hypothesis, the study explores the relationship between eWOM and Purchase Intention in the context of e-commerce. The findings endorse the hypothesis, indicating a positive and significant correlation between eWOM and Purchase Intention. This aligns with the conclusions drawn from Hidayat (2021), Torlak et al. (2014), and Jalilvand & Samiei (2012), emphasizing the influential role of eWOM in driving consumer interest and shaping future purchase decisions. The research emphasizes the role of eWOM as a catalyst for consumer engagement, asserting that consumers increasingly turn to online platforms for product reviews and recommendations. Drawing on the insights of Jalilvand & Samiei (2012), the study positions eWOM as a critical factor influencing purchase intention, with consumers

relying on shared experiences and opinions in making informed choices. The implications extend to managerial strategies, suggesting that fostering positive eWOM can be a potent tool for enhancing e-commerce sales.

The third hypothesis explores the impact of Social Media Marketing on brand image. The findings substantiate this hypothesis, revealing that an increase in social media marketing significantly boosts brand image. This aligns with prior research (Hidayat, 2021), emphasizing the profound impact of social media efforts on brand perception. The study elucidates the role of social media as a dynamic communication channel, allowing companies to engage with consumers and shape brand narratives effectively. The research emphasizes the importance of providing services and answering consumer queries in a friendly and polite manner through social media. The results suggest that social media marketing is not merely about content dissemination but also about fostering positive interactions, contributing to an enhanced brand image.

The fourth hypothesis posits that Social Media Marketing positively influences Purchase Intention in e-commerce. The analysis supports this hypothesis, establishing a significant correlation between social media marketing efforts and increased consumer purchase intention. While these results contradict some prior studies (Hidayat, 2021), they align with the findings of (Balakrishnan et al. (2014). The study situates social media marketing as a powerful tool for building awareness and driving actions in the e-commerce landscape. Drawing on insights from Balakrishnan et al. (2014), the research underscores the effectiveness of online marketing communications, including social media marketing, in promoting brand loyalty and influencing purchase intentions. The results emphasize the unique dynamics of Bittersweet by Najla Lampung, suggesting that social media marketing plays a significant role in driving purchase interest.

Finally, the fifth hypothesis explores the relationship between brand image and purchase intention. The analysis supports this hypothesis, establishing that an enhanced brand image significantly correlates with increased Purchase Intention. These results resonate with the findings of Hidayat (2021), reinforcing the importance of a positive brand image in influencing consumer buying decisions. The study underscores the critical role of brand perception in shaping consumer behavior. Consumers, according to the research, often rely on the brand image as a reference point in their purchasing decisions. Drawing on the insights of Cynthiadewi and Hatammimi (2014), the study emphasizes the mediating effect of brand image, highlighting its positive influence on electronic word-of-mouth variables and purchase intention. The implications for Bittersweet by Najla Lampung suggest that nurturing a strong brand image is integral to fostering consumer trust and driving purchase decisions.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study thoroughly examined the interplay of Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM), Social Media Marketing, Brand Image, and Purchase Intention within the e-commerce context, specifically focusing on Bittersweet by Najla Lampung. Through a meticulous analysis of five hypotheses, the research empirically validated that eWOM significantly influences both Brand Image and Purchase Intention. The findings underscored the pivotal role of consumer-generated content and reviews on platforms like Instagram in shaping the brand perception and driving purchase decisions. Moreover, the study confirmed the positive impact of Social Media Marketing on both Brand Image and Purchase Intention, emphasizing the need for companies, in this case, Bittersweet by Najla Lampung, to strategically leverage their online presence and engage with consumers effectively. The study provides actionable insights for Bittersweet by Najla Lampung, highlighting specific areas for improvement. Suggestions include optimizing product variety to enhance customer experiences, strategically managing online reviews, ensuring consistency between social media and e-commerce platforms, and actively posting engaging content to captivate the audience. While the research establishes valuable correlations, it acknowledges certain limitations, such as the need for attention to specific indicators, variations in consumer trust, and the importance of catering to

diverse age groups. The study concludes with recommendations for future research, proposing a comprehensive approach that combines quantitative and qualitative analyses to gain a deeper understanding of the intricate dynamics within the e-commerce landscape.

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