

The Role of Social Media in Increasing Consumer Trust: Observational Analysis in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory Products

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the role of social media in enhancing consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products. Employing a descriptive qualitative research method, data were collected through interviews and observations, focusing on social media dimensions. The qualitative approach aims to provide in-depth insights into the phenomenon under study. Three informants who had purchased products from PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory participated in the study. The findings reveal that social media significantly contributes to building consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products. Consumer belief in a product is identified as a crucial factor influencing purchasing decisions. The study concludes that a successful social media presence positively correlates with increased consumer trust. Notably, the research suggests that PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory could enhance its social media strategies by advertising on popular platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, and television. Furthermore, endorsing influencers or artists is recommended, considering their substantial influence on society, particularly among followers. In conclusion, the research emphasizes the pivotal role of social media in shaping consumer trust. The implications for PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory include diversifying advertising strategies to reach a broader audience and leveraging influencers to foster increased consumer trust. This study provides valuable insights for companies aiming to strengthen their brand perception through effective social media engagement.

Keywords: Social media trust, Consumer behavior, Qualitative research, Brand perception, Advertising strategy

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menyelidiki peran media sosial dalam meningkatkan kepercayaan konsumen terhadap produk PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory. Dengan menggunakan metode penelitian deskriptif kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dan observasi, dengan fokus pada dimensi media sosial. Pendekatan kualitatif bertujuan untuk memberikan wawasan mendalam terhadap fenomena yang diteliti. Penelitian ini diikuti oleh tiga informan yang pernah membeli produk dari PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory. Temuan mengungkapkan bahwa media sosial berkontribusi signifikan dalam membangun kepercayaan konsumen terhadap produk PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory. Kepercayaan konsumen terhadap suatu produk diidentifikasi sebagai faktor penting yang mempengaruhi keputusan pembelian. Studi tersebut menyimpulkan bahwa kehadiran media sosial yang sukses berkorelasi positif dengan peningkatan kepercayaan konsumen. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory dapat meningkatkan strategi media sosialnya dengan beriklan di platform populer seperti TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, dan televisi. Selain itu, disarankan untuk mendukung influencer atau artis, mengingat pengaruh besar mereka terhadap masyarakat, khususnya di kalangan pengikut. Kesimpulannya, penelitian ini menekankan peran penting media sosial dalam membentuk kepercayaan konsumen. Implikasinya bagi PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory antara lain melakukan diversifikasi strategi periklanan untuk menjangkau khalayak yang lebih luas dan memanfaatkan influencer untuk menumbuhkan kepercayaan konsumen yang lebih besar. Studi ini memberikan wawasan

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INTRODUCTION

Information technology has become a serious concern for management today because information technology is developing very rapidly, and current marketing activities would not be possible without the help of information technology (Mukhopadhyay et al., 1995; Berisha-Namani, 2013). According to Nikoloski (2014), two of the areas of the economy experiencing significant growth are the sector that focuses on new technology-based products and the high-tech sector, which is considered the main source of economic prosperity and job growth in the future. Information technology is important for the business sector as a useful management instrument for optimizing information processing with the aim of producing profitable goods (Nikoloski, 2014). According to Berisha-Namani (2013), by using information technology, companies have the potential to reach more customers, introduce new products quickly, and collaborate with suppliers and business partners from all over the world. PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory is a company that uses information technology well.

PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory is a company that was founded in 1976. PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory has two factories located on Jl Raya Waru No. 29 Sidoarjo, East Java and Jl Raya Serang KM 68, Julang Cikande Village, Serang. PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory has carried out export distribution in many countries. Currently, PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory meets demand in the Asian market. In the next ten years, through product customization, PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory aims to achieve acceptance in the global market. Currently, PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory has more than 100 types of biscuit products to meet domestic and international market demand. The product development of PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory, which is ongoing continuously by the research and development department of PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory, is an implementation of one of the company's strategies to compete in the global market and mass customization. PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory makes products using the latest technological collaboration from Asia and Europe as well as technical support from Malaysia, Singapore and China. PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory has two main goals, namely, to become a biscuit company that is responsible for consumers by producing the best quality biscuits that meet international standards and improving skills & professionalism through consumer customization. These two goals increase consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory. PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory sells biscuits based on trust, prioritizing consumer interests and hard work, and carries out a business understanding of always giving back to the community.

The current period is an internet-intensive era that provides extraordinary opportunities to interact with many people on one platform (Gruzd et al., 2011; Kumar & Sharma, 2020). The growth of the internet in recent years has created new systems that provide a place for business, for example, online communities (Lu et al., 2010; Hajli, 2014). Internet access has expanded user interaction and information exchange (Rapp et al., 2013; Mainardes & Cardoso, 2019). The internet's general availability has allowed individuals to utilize social media from email, Twitter, and Facebook, and they can interact without needing to meet physically (Gruzd et al., 2011; Hajli, 2014). Technological advances have resulted in major transformations in the means of communication between consumers and companies (Hajli, 2014; Mainardes & Cardoso, 2019), and in this context, social media is in the spotlight because 80% of internet users use social media sites (Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2016; Mainardes & Cardoso, 2019). According to Voramontri and Klieb (2019), social media is a relatively new phenomenon.

According to Kumar and Sharma (2020), social media plays an important role in the current digital era because of technology. According to Kwahk and Kim (2017), one of the main features of social media is that people can share their knowledge and opinions with other people, who have similar desires and needs. According to Kwahk and Kim (2017) social media has various types, starting from virtual communities, weblogs, microblogs, wikis, photo or video sharing, social networking sites, social bookmarking, and other social applications. The social media revolution has given birth to new ways to search for and obtain information about products on the market (Voramontri & Klieb, 2019). According to Kwahk and Kim (2017), social media allows consumers to obtain information or certain product attributes or evaluations from other people in their network.

According to Kumar and Sharma (2020), social media provides a better way for consumers to intend to make successful purchases. According to Geng et al. (2021), social media has become an important part of the daily lives of internet users, and this has made more and more companies use social media to advertise their products and brands. On social media, most brands seek to build meaningful relationships with consumers regarding long-term benefits and image formation (According to Kim et al., 2015; Karpenka et al., 2021). For companies, developing the conversational value of a product creates opportunities for someone to talk about the product, thereby spreading brand information by word of mouth via social media (Li et al., 2019; Geng et al., 2021). According to Hajli (2014), platforms with the ability to generate reviews and ratings, such as Amazon, allow customers to review and rate products. PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory has several social media such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook, and PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory has marketplaces such as Shopee, Buka Lapak, Blibli, and Tokopedia so that from these social media and market places consumers can receive information more quickly. Any brand on social media has a lot of freedom and opportunity to encourage consumers to buy its products, and of course, brand trust can emerge (Pathak et al., 2010; Karpenka et al., 2021). In particular, consumers are active in creating and sharing information about products, brands, and companies on their social media sites via message boards, social networking sites, and blogs (Kwahk & Kim, 2017). This is because social media users are considered more trustworthy and reliable than unknown individuals (Chu & Kim, 2011; Kwahk & Kim, 2017). According to Hajli (2014), social media facilitates consumer social interaction, thereby increasing trust and intention to purchase.

From successful social media, consumers believe in the brand and products of a company. According to Rajavi et al. (2019), trust is a key factor that needs to be considered for brand success. According to Hong and Cha (2013), trust is a key element in corporate relationships between companies and individuals and companies. Consumer trust is very important to build stronger customer relationships with companies and establish sustainable market share (Urban et al., 2000; Alhabeeb, 2007). According to Alhabeeb (2007), for each party, the relationship must be expanded based on certain input from the opposite party so that consumers cannot give their trust to a company that does not contribute to building bridges that can increase consumer trust and content. The relationship between consumers and companies cannot be built unilaterally (Alhabeeb, 2007). According to Zatwarnicka-Madura et al. (2016), consumer trust is largely based on subjective experience and the belief that one will not be deceived. Trust consists of perceptions of a partner's competence, openness (desire not to hide information), concern (not taking unfair advantage), and dependability (Gefen & Straub, 2004). According to Afzal et al. (2010), the brand's ability to satisfy customer needs also builds consumer trust in the brand. Using two main objectives, PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory satisfies and builds consumer trust.

The above factor is one of the many problems that PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory must face, and nowadays, many companies are competing in terms of information technology; this has resulted in increasingly tight business competition in the market. According to Karuna (2007), competition is the extent to which companies try to

win business from their competitors. Innovation is an answer that makes it possible to realize competitive advantages over other companies (Reguia, 2014). The background that has been described raises the aim of this research, namely, to find out the role of social media in increasing consumer trust.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social media

According to Elena (2016), social media is defined as a modern instrument that makes it possible to communicate between different individuals, groups and companies from all over the world and can share and exchange information and ideas in an interactive way. According to Russo et al. (2008), social media is defined as a place that provides online communication, networking and collaboration. According to Nair (2011), social media is defined as an online instrument, a place for content, opinions, perspectives, insights and media. Social media is defined as a place produced by consumers that contains various sources of information, which are created and used by consumers with the aim of sharing information with other people on any topic they want (Kohli et al., 2014; Pütter, 2017). According to Campbell (2016), social media is defined as any website that allows someone to create and share content or participate in social networks.

Consumer Trust

According to Zhang et al. (2019), consumer trust is defined as a simple assessment of the ability and integrity of other people. Consumer trust can be interpreted not only as the belief that the products provided are reliable but also that consumers' long-term interests will be met (Martinez & Rodrigues, 2013; Kollat & Farache, 2017). According to Park et al. (2014), consumer trust is defined as consumer trust that a company will work in accordance with expectations regarding its expertise, integrity and good intentions. Kim and Kim (2005) define consumer trust as consumer trust that the company will fulfill its transactional obligations as understood by consumers. Consumer trust is defined as consumers' dreams that a brand will be trustworthy and realize their good intentions in situations characterized by a level of risk for consumers (Delgado-Ballester, 2004; Swaen & Chumpitaz, 2008).

METHODS

This research method uses qualitative research methods, which are descriptive in nature, which is the research method used in this research. Qualitative research is described as an iterative process that increases the understanding of the scientific community by making significant new distinctions as a result of coming closer to the phenomenon under study. The aim of qualitative methodology is to produce in-depth and illustrative information to understand the various dimensions of the problem being analyzed. Interviews and observations are data collection procedures in this research. The purpose of interviews is to find out what is on someone's mind and to find out from them things that we cannot observe directly. The questions used in the interview refer to the four dimensions of social media, namely, technological, social, economic and ethical. The informants in this research were three informants who had purchased products from PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory. The data analysis technique in this study focuses on data collection, data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions/verification. Data is collected by conducting interviews or observations; after that the data is collected. can be reduced to a manageable amount but still meaningful. When presenting data, the data must be clear to the reader after that the research process ends with a conclusion and the conclusion must include information about the credibility of the informant, whether the statement was made spontaneously and whether the informant influenced the group members.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this research show that four dimensions of social media have an important role in increasing consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products, including technology, social, economic and ethical. This means that the more successful social media is, the higher the level of consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products. This is in line with the statement according to Hajli (2014) that social media facilitates consumer social interaction, thereby increasing trust and intention to buy.

Technology refers to the instruments companies use to communicate with consumers such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Based on the results of the interview, it was stated that “Technology can increase consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products because social media can be used as a medium for communication and this can increase consumer trust through the ease of communicating with PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory.” Based on observations made by researchers, “PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory is active on all its social media”, so this activity can also increase consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products. From the interviews and observations that have been described, it can be concluded that technology has an important role in increasing consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products.

Social refers to social media which is often used to build relationships and trust with consumers, for example creating challenge content on one of the social media, or responding to consumer comments and questions. Based on the results of the interview, “Social media can increase consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products because it can bring the company closer to consumers, and consumer desires can be satisfied.” Based on observations made by researchers, “PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory is active in responding to comments and questions from consumers addressed to it on its social media, and PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory sometimes also creates challenge content on its social media with the aim of building relationships with consumers.” From the interviews and observations that have been described, it can be concluded that social media has an important role in increasing consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products.

Economy refers to the business model used in company social media, for example creating content on social media, having its own website, having the WhatsApp Home Delivery option, and having various marketplaces (Shopee, Buka Lapak, Blibli, and Tokopedia). Based on the results of the interview, “Economics can increase consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products because it can make it easier for consumers to buy PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products and can reach all PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory consumers.” Based on observations made by researchers, “PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory often creates content on its social media, and then PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory is also active in all its marketplaces.” From the interviews and observations that have been described, it can be concluded that the economy has an important role in increasing consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products.

Ethics refers to the actions that have been taken and the company’s social responsibilities on social media, for example providing appropriate product prices in market places and offline stores, providing appropriate product information on social media, and never cheating or disappointing consumers. Based on the results of the interview, “Ethics can increase consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products, because if consumers feel cheated or disappointed then consumer trust will decrease or even not trust PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory at all, and vice versa if consumers receive information and product prices are appropriate, consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory will increase.” Based on observations made by researchers, “PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory has never carried out actions that disappointed consumers or felt cheated or violated the law on its social media.” From the interviews and observations that have been described, it can be concluded that ethics has

an essential role in increasing consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products.

CONCLUSION

The results concluded that social media has an important role in increasing consumer trust; therefore, it can be understood that the more successful PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory's social media is, the more consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory will increase. Consumers of PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory products rarely, in fact, never come across PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory advertising its products on popular applications at the moment, and consumers also never know that PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory endorses Influencers or Artists. Therefore, the researcher's suggestion to PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory is that it is hoped that PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory will not only be active on social media but PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory also needs to advertise their products and brands on applications that young people, such as Tiktok, Youtube, Instagram and Television often use. It is also hoped that PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory will endorse influencers or artists because Influencers or artists have a very big influence on society, especially groups that follow these influencers or artists. Hence, this causes increased consumer trust in PT United Waru Biscuit Manufactory.

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