

Digital Marketing Strategy Based on Social Media and Word of Mouth in Enhancing Brand Awareness and Consumer Purchase Decisions

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the role of digital marketing strategies based on social media and word of mouth (WOM) in enhancing brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions. This research employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach using the PRISMA framework to identify, evaluate, and synthesize relevant studies published between 2019 and 2025. A number of selected articles from Scopus-indexed and reputable journals were analyzed. The findings indicate that social media marketing significantly improves brand awareness through consumer engagement, interaction, and information dissemination. Meanwhile, word of mouth plays a crucial role in building consumer trust and influencing purchase decisions through recommendations and shared experiences. Furthermore, the integration of social media and word of mouth provides a stronger and more sustainable impact on consumer behavior, particularly in shaping brand perception and purchase intention.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Word of Mouth, Brand Awareness, Purchase Decision, Digital Marketing

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I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of digital technology has significantly transformed marketing practices, particularly through the use of social media and word of mouth (WOM) strategies. In the digital era, consumers are increasingly influenced by online information, peer recommendations, and interactive content when making purchasing decisions. Social media platforms provide businesses with opportunities



to engage directly with consumers, enhance brand visibility, and create meaningful interactions that influence consumer perceptions.

Previous studies have shown that social media marketing plays a crucial role in increasing brand awareness by facilitating communication, engagement, and information sharing between brands and consumers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Tuten & Solomon, 2020). In addition, word of mouth, especially electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), has been identified as a powerful factor influencing consumer trust and purchase decisions, as consumers tend to rely on recommendations from others when evaluating products or services (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006).

Despite the growing importance of social media and word of mouth in digital marketing, previous studies often examine these variables separately. There is still limited comprehensive understanding of how the integration of social media marketing and word of mouth strategies influences brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions simultaneously.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing refers to the use of social media platforms to promote products, services, and brands through interactive communication and consumer engagement. Social media enables companies to establish direct relationships with consumers, increase brand visibility, and facilitate information sharing at a relatively low cost. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) define social media as internet-based applications that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Previous studies indicate that social media marketing significantly influences consumer engagement and brand awareness by creating interactive and personalized communication between brands and consumers.

Word of Mouth (WOM)

Word of mouth (WOM) refers to the process through which consumers share information, opinions, and experiences regarding products or services with others. In



the digital era, WOM has evolved into electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), which occurs through online platforms such as social media, reviews, and forums. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) state that e-WOM has become an influential source of information because consumers tend to trust recommendations from other consumers more than traditional advertising. Previous studies also show that positive WOM significantly affects consumer trust, purchase intention, and buying decisions.

Brand Awareness

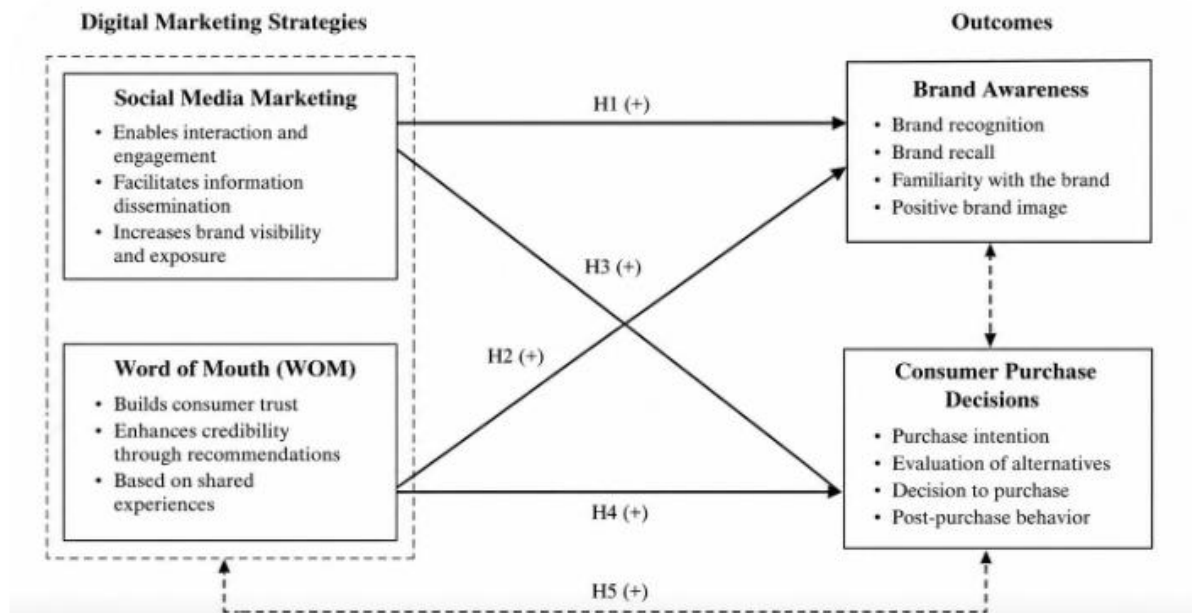
Brand awareness refers to the ability of consumers to recognize and recall a particular brand. High brand awareness increases the likelihood that consumers will consider a brand during the purchasing process. Social media marketing and WOM strategies contribute significantly to building brand awareness by increasing brand exposure and encouraging consumer interaction. Previous studies demonstrate that social media engagement positively affects consumer perception and brand recognition.

Purchase Decision

Purchase decision refers to the process by which consumers select and purchase products or services based on their needs, preferences, and available information. Consumer purchase decisions are influenced by various factors, including social influence, online reviews, and brand perception. Previous studies suggest that social media marketing and WOM significantly affect consumer decision-making processes by shaping attitudes and trust toward brands.

Based on the literature, social media marketing and word of mouth are identified as important digital marketing strategies that influence brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions. Social media marketing enhances consumer engagement and information dissemination, while word of mouth increases consumer trust and credibility through recommendations and shared experiences. These variables are expected to have both individual and combined effects on brand awareness and purchase decisions.





Based on the literature review, social media marketing and word of mouth (WOM) are identified as key factors influencing brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions. Social media marketing facilitates consumer interaction, engagement, and information dissemination, which significantly enhances brand recognition and visibility (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Tuten & Solomon, 2020). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Social media marketing has a positive effect on brand awareness.

In addition, word of mouth (WOM), particularly electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions and trust. Consumers tend to rely on recommendations and shared experiences from others when recognizing and evaluating brands (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006). Thus, the second hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H2: Word of mouth has a positive effect on brand awareness.

Furthermore, social media marketing not only influences brand awareness but also affects consumer behavior in making purchase decisions. The accessibility of information and interactive communication through social media platforms can significantly shape consumer preferences and buying intentions. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:



H3: Social media marketing has a positive effect on consumer purchase decisions.

Similarly, word of mouth has a strong impact on consumer decision-making processes, as consumers tend to trust peer recommendations more than traditional marketing communications. Positive WOM can increase purchase intention and influence actual buying behavior. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Word of mouth has a positive effect on consumer purchase decisions.

Finally, the integration of social media marketing and word of mouth is expected to create a stronger influence on both brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions. These two variables complement each other in shaping consumer perceptions and behavior in the digital environment. Thus, the final hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H5: Social media marketing and word of mouth simultaneously have a positive effect on brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions.

III. METHODS

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to analyze the role of social media marketing and word of mouth (WOM) in enhancing brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions. The SLR method is used to systematically collect, evaluate, and synthesize relevant studies to ensure comprehensive and reliable findings.

This research adopts the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework, which consists of four stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. This approach ensures a transparent and systematic process in selecting relevant literature.

The population of this study consists of all scientific articles related to digital marketing, social media marketing, word of mouth, brand awareness, and consumer purchase decisions. The sample includes selected journal articles that meet the inclusion criteria and are relevant to the research objectives.

Sampling Technique

A purposive sampling technique was applied to select articles based on the following criteria:

1. Articles published between 2019 and 2025



2. Studies focusing on social media marketing, word of mouth, brand awareness, or purchase decisions
3. Articles published in reputable journals indexed in Scopus or SINTA
4. Articles written in English

Based on the selection process, a total of 30 articles were included in the final analysis.

Operational Definition of Variables

1. Social Media Marketing (X_1): The use of social media platforms to promote products, engage consumers, and disseminate information.
2. Word of Mouth (X_2): The exchange of information, recommendations, and experiences among consumers regarding products or services.
3. Brand Awareness (Y_1): The ability of consumers to recognize and recall a brand.
4. Purchase Decision (Y_2): The process of selecting and purchasing products based on consumer preferences and available information.

Research Instrument and Data Collection

This study uses secondary data obtained from journal articles collected through databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and ScienceDirect. A literature review matrix was used as the main instrument to extract and organize key information, including authors, publication year, research methods, variables, and findings.

The data were analyzed using a qualitative synthesis approach. The selected articles were categorized, compared, and interpreted to identify patterns, relationships, and research gaps. The analysis focuses on understanding the individual and combined effects of social media marketing and word of mouth on brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions.

IV. RESULTS

This section presents the results of the systematic literature review, including the synthesis, analysis, and interpretation of findings from the selected studies.

Summary of Findings

Based on the analysis of 30 selected journal articles, the results indicate that social media marketing and word of mouth (WOM) are significant determinants of brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions. Most of the reviewed studies consistently demonstrate a positive relationship between these variables and consumer behavior outcomes.

Effect of Social Media Marketing on Brand Awareness



The findings reveal that social media marketing plays a crucial role in enhancing brand awareness. Social media platforms enable businesses to increase brand visibility, facilitate interaction, and disseminate information efficiently. These results are consistent with previous studies, which indicate that social media engagement significantly improves brand recognition and consumer awareness (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Tuten & Solomon, 2020).

Effect of Word of Mouth on Brand Awareness

Word of mouth, particularly electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), is found to have a strong influence on brand awareness. Consumers tend to rely on recommendations and shared experiences when recognizing and evaluating brands. The findings support prior research showing that WOM enhances brand credibility and awareness (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Chevalier & Mayzlin, 2006).

Effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decision

The results indicate that social media marketing significantly affects consumer purchase decisions. The availability of product information, user-generated content, and interactive communication on social media platforms influences consumer preferences and purchase intentions. These findings are in line with previous studies that highlight the role of social media in shaping consumer behavior.

Effect of Word of Mouth on Purchase Decision

Word of mouth is also identified as a key factor influencing purchase decisions. Consumers tend to trust peer recommendations more than traditional advertising, making WOM a powerful driver of purchase behavior. The findings are consistent with previous studies, which demonstrate that WOM significantly impacts consumer trust and buying decisions.

Simultaneous Effect of Social Media Marketing and Word of Mouth

The analysis further shows that the combination of social media marketing and word of mouth has a stronger impact on both brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions compared to their individual effects. These variables complement each other, where social media facilitates information dissemination, and WOM strengthens trust and credibility.



V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study aims to analyze the role of social media marketing and word of mouth (WOM) in enhancing brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that both social media marketing and word of mouth play significant roles in influencing consumer behavior.

Social media marketing contributes to increasing brand awareness by facilitating consumer engagement, interaction, and the dissemination of information. Meanwhile, word of mouth strengthens consumer trust and credibility through shared experiences and recommendations. Both factors are essential in shaping consumer perceptions and influencing purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, the integration of social media marketing and word of mouth provides a stronger and more sustainable impact on brand awareness and consumer purchase decisions. These variables complement each other, where social media enhances information exposure and WOM reinforces trust, ultimately leading to improved marketing effectiveness.

Suggestion

Based on the conclusions, several recommendations are proposed:

1. For businesses, it is important to integrate social media marketing strategies with word of mouth approaches to maximize brand awareness and influence consumer purchasing behavior.
2. For marketers, focusing on creating engaging content and encouraging positive consumer reviews and recommendations can enhance marketing effectiveness.
3. For future research, it is recommended to explore additional variables such as consumer trust, brand image, and digital engagement, which may further influence purchase decisions. Moreover, empirical studies using quantitative or mixed methods are suggested to validate and extend the findings of this study.



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