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Digital Marketing Strategy and Consumer Behavior: A case study of E-Commerce Businesses

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Abstract: *In an era of rapid technological advancement, digital marketing has emerged as an important strategy for businesses, especially in the e-commerce sector. This research investigates the relationship between digital marketing strategies and consumer behavior in e-commerce businesses. Through a case study approach, this research explores how various digital marketing tools such as social media marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), email campaigns, and influencer endorsement influence consumer decision-making, purchase intent, and brand loyalty. Data was collected through surveys and in-depth interviews with e-commerce managers and consumers. The findings reveal that personalized marketing and social media engagement significantly influence consumer trust and purchase behavior. In addition, the study highlights the importance of content quality and responsiveness in shaping consumer satisfaction and retention. This research contributes to the growing literature on digital marketing by providing practical insights for e-commerce businesses aiming to improve their marketing effectiveness and build long-term relationships with customers in a competitive digital landscape.*

Keywords: *digital marketing, consumer behavior, e-commerce, purchase intention.*



INTRODUCTION

The development of information and communication technology has created a major transformation in various sectors of human life, including in the economic and business fields. Along with the increasing use of the internet and digital devices such as smartphones, computers, and tablets, people's consumption patterns have also undergone significant changes. One of the real impacts of these changes is the emergence of a digital-based business model known as e-commerce. E-commerce allows businesses to offer products and services online to consumers without geographical and time restrictions. Transactions that used to be done in person can now be done easily through a few clicks, making the buying and selling process faster, more efficient and practical. The rapid growth of e-commerce, especially in the post-COVID-19 pandemic era, is proof that people's shopping behavior has massively shifted towards digitalization.

This change in consumption patterns requires businesses to adjust their marketing strategies to effectively reach and influence consumers in the digital realm. In this context, digital marketing comes as an approach that is not only relevant, but also very strategic. Digital marketing is a form of marketing that utilizes various digital platforms and channels such as social media, search engines, email, websites, and mobile applications to reach consumers directly and interactively. The main advantage of digital marketing lies in its ability to deliver personalized and data-driven messages, allowing companies to get to know their consumers' preferences, behaviors, and needs more closely. This makes digital marketing a key tool in building brand awareness, increasing engagement, driving sales conversions, and maintaining customer loyalty.

In this digital era, marketing strategies that are not adapted to the behavioral characteristics of modern consumers tend to be

ineffective. Today's digital consumers are more independent, critical and have high expectations of the shopping experience. They no longer passively receive information, but actively search, compare and even leave reviews that influence other potential customers. Con This research focuses on the relationship between digital marketing strategies and consumer behavior, taking case studies of several e-commerce businesses that have actively implemented digital marketing strategies. Through a case study approach, this research aims to dig deeper into how various forms of digital strategies-such as social media marketing, paid advertising (ads), interactive content, search engine optimization (SEO), and collaboration with influencers-affect consumers' decision-making process. The process includes various stages, from awareness, interest, consideration, to purchase and post-purchase decisions such as reviews and loyalty (post-purchase behavior). The research also looked at how personalization, responsiveness and content quality in digital strategies contribute to creating positive experiences for consumers. sumers are also highly exposed to content on social media and tend to follow recommendations from digital personalities such as influencers, celebgrams, and other content creators. Under these conditions, one-way and conventional marketing strategies are no longer sufficient. Therefore, it is important for businesses to understand the behavior of digital consumers, as well as how this behavior is influenced by the elements in the digital marketing strategy they implement.

This research focuses on the relationship between digital marketing strategies and consumer behavior, taking case studies of several e-commerce businesses that have actively implemented digital marketing strategies. Through a case study approach, this research aims to dig deeper into how various forms of digital strategies-such as social media marketing, paid advertising (ads), interactive

content, search engine optimization (SEO), and collaboration with influencers-affect consumers' decision-making process. The process includes various stages, from awareness, interest, consideration, to purchase and post-purchase decisions such as reviews and loyalty (post-purchase behavior). The research also looked at how personalization, responsiveness and content quality in digital strategies contribute to creating positive experiences for consumers.

In addition, this research also looks at the psychological and social dimensions of digital consumer behavior, which are often overlooked in conventional marketing practices. Aspects such as brand trust, perceived value, emotional engagement, and satisfaction with the digital user experience are important indicators in assessing the success of a digital marketing strategy. By paying attention to these aspects, companies can more easily build long-term mutually beneficial relationships between consumers and brands.

By considering this background, this research is expected to make a meaningful contribution, both theoretically and practically. From the academic side, this research can enrich the study of digital marketing and consumer behavior in the context of e-commerce in the era of digital transformation. While from the practical side, the results of this research can be a reference for business people, especially MSMEs and e-commerce startups, in formulating and implementing digital marketing strategies that are effective, adaptive, and based on a comprehensive understanding of their consumers. Given the increasingly fierce competition in the e-commerce world, a good understanding of the synergy between digital marketing strategies and consumer behavior is an important key to winning this highly dynamic digital market.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, which aims

to deeply understand the relationship between digital marketing strategies and consumer behavior in the context of e-commerce businesses. This approach was chosen because the nature of the problem under study is complex and contextual, requiring a deep understanding of the processes and meanings contained in the interactions between businesses and consumers in the digital realm. This research is descriptive, which means it focuses on describing and understanding phenomena in detail rather than quantitatively measuring causal relationships. The research location was conducted at several e-commerce companies in Indonesia that have been actively implementing digital marketing strategies. The selection of research subjects was carried out by purposive sampling, which is based on certain considerations. The criteria used to select subjects are companies engaged in e-commerce (both physical products and services), actively using various digital marketing channels such as social media, search engine optimization (SEO), email marketing, influencer marketing, and willing to provide access to data needed for research purposes.

Data collection was conducted through several techniques, namely in-depth interviews with parties directly involved in planning and implementing digital marketing strategies, such as marketing managers or business owners. In addition, observations were made of the company's various digital platforms, such as websites, social media accounts, and online advertisements used to reach consumers. We also collected relevant documentation, including digital campaign materials, consumer reviews, and user responses on social media. To obtain perspectives from consumers, researchers also distributed open-ended questionnaires to find out consumers' experiences, perceptions, and behaviors towards the marketing strategies implemented by the company. The data obtained from various sources was analyzed using thematic analysis, which involves the process of data reduction, grouping data based on themes, and compiling an interpretive narrative of the field findings. This process aims to identify certain patterns that emerge from the data, such as



trends in consumer behavior towards certain digital content, the effectiveness of using social media in attracting consumer attention, and the role of personalization and interactivity in increasing consumer engagement. To maintain the validity of the data, researchers used source and method triangulation techniques, namely by comparing data from interviews, observations, documentation, and questionnaires.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study reveal that digital marketing strategies have a significant influence on consumer behavior in the context of e-commerce businesses in Indonesia. Based on data obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, documentation, and questionnaires, this research successfully identified several key themes that reflect how e-commerce companies interact with consumers through various digital channels, as well as how consumers respond and engage in these marketing strategies.

1. The Effect of Social Media on Brand Awareness and Consumer Purchase Intention

One of the key findings of this study is the important role played by social media in building brand awareness and increasing consumer purchase intention. Social media has now become an integral part of many people's daily lives and one of the main channels for e-commerce companies to interact with consumers. Based on interviews with marketing managers from several e-commerce companies, almost all of the companies that are the object of research rely on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok to reach their audience. These platforms were chosen because they have a large number of active users, allow companies to reach a wide audience, and provide interactive features that encourage consumers to participate and interact with the content presented.

Consumers interviewed in this study revealed that they are more likely to follow brands or products that are able to present

engaging visual content and creative videos. They feel more attracted to products that are presented in a storytelling format or present a visual experience that can evoke feelings and give a direct description of the product without feeling like a pushy advertisement. With short videos or storytelling being used by many brands, consumers feel like they are getting more direct and thorough information about the benefits of the product. Visual content on social media, involving creative images, graphics or videos, has also proven to bring audiences more into the brand story and create a deeper emotional connection.

One e-commerce company that actively uses Instagram revealed that they choose to showcase their products in a way that highlights the lifestyle or values that the product has, instead of just showing the product itself. They prefer to focus their campaigns on the user experience, such as how their products can provide comfort, convenience, or happiness in everyday life. This shows that social media, when used wisely, can serve as a very effective platform to build brand awareness in a more creative and engaging way. However, an emerging challenge in marketing through social media is the fact that consumers are increasingly saturated and skeptical of ads that feel too commercial or too promotional. With more and more brands vying to utilize social media as a marketing channel, audiences are becoming more selective in the content they consume. In interviews, many consumers revealed that they get annoyed if the content they see on social media is too obviously commercial ads that only focus on selling products without offering any relevant added value or entertainment elements. They tend to skip such ads or even block accounts that constantly send promotional messages without any emotional engagement or compelling narrative.

This phenomenon requires e-commerce companies to be smarter in designing their content. One solution that can be applied is to create marketing campaigns that not only talk about the product but also tell the experience or story behind the brand. Campaigns that focus on the emotional value offered by the product-



such as fun, convenience, or a sense of fulfillment will appeal more to consumers who are increasingly looking for connectedness and relevance in their digital interactions. For example, companies can put forward narratives about how their products can improve quality of life or make a positive impact in consumers' lives. In this way, the resulting content serves not only as a promotional tool, but also as a means to build long-term relationships between brands and consumers.

2. Influencers' Effect in Increasing Consumer Trust and Loyalty

In recent years, the use of influencers in digital marketing strategies has become one of the highly effective tactics in attracting consumers' attention and influencing their purchasing decisions. The results of this study show that influencers have a huge role in building consumer trust and loyalty towards brands. Based on interviews with consumers and stakeholders in e-commerce companies, many consumers revealed that they are more likely to buy products promoted by influencers they follow and trust. Consumers perceive influencers as authoritative or credible figures, whose opinions have a significant influence in shaping their preference for a product or brand. This phenomenon is in line with the concept of social proof first introduced by Robert Cialdini in his book *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*. This concept explains that people tend to rely on the recommendations or opinions of others, especially from figures they consider influential, as an indicator that a product or service has good value or quality. Therefore, when an influencer with a good reputation and a large audience recommends a certain product, consumers feel more trusted to make a purchase, as they see it as valid social proof. Social media has provided a very powerful platform for influencers to influence their audience. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube and TikTok allow influencers to share their experiences of using products directly and honestly, which can create a sense of closeness between influencers and their followers. In some cases, consumers feel that they trust recommendations coming from influencers

more than traditional advertisements or promotional content created by companies. This is especially true for influencers who can build a more personalized and authentic relationship with their audience, given that many consumers feel that they have an emotional connection with the influencers they follow.

However, while the positive influence of influencers on purchase decisions is clear, the study also identified a decline in trust towards influencers who have no direct connection to the products they promote. Consumers are increasingly critical of influencers who appear to only pursue financial gain without demonstrating personal experience or a deep understanding of the products they recommend. For example, some consumers are skeptical when influencers promote products that do not align with their personal values or that do not seem relevant to their audience. Most consumers revealed that they are more likely to follow influencers who are authentic and transparent about their relationship with the promoted brand. The use of words like "sponsored" or "paid partnership" in influencer content is considered important to maintain honesty and transparency. When consumers feel that an influencer is promoting a product solely for financial reward, their trust in the recommendation is likely to diminish. This suggests that integrity is a very important aspect in the relationship between influencers and consumers. Influencers who too often accept offers to promote various products without regard to relevance or fit with their brand may lose credibility and, in turn, the loyalty of their audience.

In response to this dynamic, companies have to be more careful in selecting influencers for their campaigns. The selection of influencers who not only have a large audience, but also have a strong relationship with that audience, is critical to maintaining the credibility of the marketing campaign. Authenticity is the keyword in selecting influencers. Therefore, e-commerce companies should pay attention to the extent to which the influencers use the products they promote and whether they consistently show a match



between the products they recommend and their lifestyle. Influencers who are known to have values in line with the products they promote will be more trusted by consumers, which in turn can increase trust and loyalty to the brand. Some companies are now implementing a long-term partnership strategy with influencers who have built strong relationships with their audiences, instead of relying on occasional campaigns. This approach allows companies to create long-term relationships with influencers that can help build sustainable consumer loyalty. This also benefits consumers, as they feel more connected to the products and brands they choose through a more personalized relationship and not just based on temporary marketing campaigns. In addition, companies can expand their influencer marketing by incorporating different types of influencers, from macro-influencers to micro-influencers. Micro-influencers, who have smaller audiences but are more segmented and more connected to their audiences, are often more effective in building trust and loyalty compared to macro-influencers. Despite their more limited reach, micro-influencers are considered more authentic and trustworthy, as they tend to be more.

3. Personalization in Digital Marketing and its Effect on Consumer Loyalty

This research also shows that personalization in digital marketing has a significant impact on consumer loyalty. Companies that implement personalization, such as through email marketing tailored to consumer preferences or product recommendations based on shopping history, tend to get more positive responses. Many consumers revealed that they feel more valued and understood when they receive offers that are relevant to their needs. One respondent even stated that they felt that the company “cared” about them because the offers were tailored to products they had previously viewed or purchased.

However, on the other hand, there are concerns regarding data privacy, which is also an inhibiting factor in the implementation of

personalization. Some consumers revealed that they feel uncomfortable if companies collect too much data about their behavior without clear control or transparency regarding the use of the data. This emphasizes the importance of companies to maintain data security and transparency so that this personalization strategy does not lead to loss of trust from consumers. Therefore, the implementation of personalization strategies must be implemented with due regard to privacy ethics and in accordance with applicable data protection regulations.

4. The Role of Consumer Reviews and Reviews in Influencing Purchasing Decisions

The results also show that product reviews have a very large role in the consumer purchasing decision-making process. Based on the interviews and questionnaires conducted, most consumers revealed that they are more likely to buy products that have high ratings and positive reviews. This shows that product reviews, both those provided by other consumers and those expressed in e-commerce platforms, can increase consumer confidence in the products offered. These reviews are often considered more objective and reliable than marketing claims made by the company itself. However, a challenge that arises in this context is the number of fake reviews or dishonest reviews, which can undermine the integrity of the review system itself. This research found that some consumers are skeptical of reviews that are too perfect and consider them a form of manipulation. Therefore, companies need to maintain the authenticity of reviews by ensuring that reviews are the result of real consumer experiences and are not manipulated for commercial purposes. The use of a review verification system and transparency in displaying reviews can help companies maintain consumer confidence in the quality of the products they offer.

5. Effect of Paid Advertising and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) on Visibility and Sales

Paid advertising and search engine optimization (SEO) have also proven effective in increasing product visibility among consumers. The research found that companies that optimize SEO and advertise on digital platforms such as Google Ads or Facebook Ads tend to get more visitors interested in buying their products. While paid advertising can reach a wider audience in a relatively

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short period of time, its effectiveness depends on the quality of targeting done.

However, research results also show that paid advertising, if not executed with proper targeting, can risk wasting budget because not all audiences exposed to the ads have relevant interests in the products offered. Therefore, it is important for companies to utilize consumer data carefully in order to target a truly potential audience, as well as conduct A/B testing to find out what is most effective.

CONCLUSIONS

Digital marketing strategies are proven to have a significant influence on consumer behavior in e-commerce businesses, especially through the use of social media, collaboration with influencers, content personalization, consumer reviews, and paid advertising and search engine optimization (SEO). Social media is able to build brand awareness and create emotional engagement that drives purchase intention, while influencers play a role in shaping consumer trust and loyalty when they are selected appropriately and authentically. Personalization strategies increase customer satisfaction and engagement, but require ethical and transparent data management. In addition, consumer reviews are becoming a highly influential element in the purchase decision-making process, more so than promotional campaigns. Therefore, the success of a digital marketing strategy depends not only on technology, but also on a deep understanding of the evolving needs, expectations and behavior patterns of digital consumers in this data-driven economy.

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