

The Influence of E-Wom, Online Advertising, Content Marketing on Buying Decisions in the Shopee Marketplace Through Mediation of Customer Engagement

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ABSTRAK

The impact of online advertising, content marketing, and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) on purchasing decisions in the Shopee Marketplace is investigated in this study. 200 Shopee users from Cirebon City and Regency are participating in the study. The study uses online surveys with random sampling approaches to gather primary data using quantitative descriptive research methods. Next, Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Squares (SEM PLS) 3.2.9 is used to analyze the data. Eight out of ten hypotheses are supported or accepted, according to the statistical analysis results. The two hypotheses that are not supported are E-WOM > Customer Engagement and Content Marketing > Customer Engagement > Buying Decision.

INTRODUCTION

One of the industries in Indonesia that has seen notable expansion in recent years is the cosmetics business. The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) report indicates that there was a 5.59% growth in 2020, a seven percent rise in 2021. Online sales will make up 15.8% of overall revenue by 2022. Data Box (2022). On e-commerce platforms, the Indonesian cosmetics business grew significantly in 2023. Sales of beauty items on Shopee, Tokopedia, and Blibli are predicted to reach IDR 28.2 trillion by 2023 based on digital search results (Data Box, 2024). Consumers in Indonesia are still interested in this market, which is expanding quickly.

This phenomena demonstrates how Indonesian consumers are increasingly using digital media and e-commerce sites like Shopee to conduct informational searches, post reviews, and make cosmetic purchasing decisions. Shopee keeps improving the platform's features to provide a wider selection of more alluring products at more affordable costs. In order for it to become the primary draw and distinctive feature for users (Hanif Zaid, 2021). Based on earlier study by Syahrul Pamungkas and Murwanto Sigita (2022) on the epidemic period and the influence of digital marketing, such as email marketing and internet advertising, on purchasing decisions, the author detects gaps. The purpose of this study is to determine whether internet advertising, content marketing, and E-WOM have a beneficial effect on following the outbreak, purchasing selections were made through customer involvement in the Shopee Marketplace. The Shopee company and other businesses of a similar nature may also use this study to further their marketing strategies. Furthermore, it is anticipated that this research will significantly advance our understanding of the dynamics of consumer behavior in the current digital era.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Electronic word of mouth

Electronic word-of-mouth is the term used to describe consumers who use social media to communicate with one another, leave reviews, and recommend products (Gruen et al, 2006). On blogs, forums, review sites, retail websites, newsgroups, and social networks, any customer can write reviews, comments, and opinions (Cheung & Lee, 2012). A new paradigm in communication is being created by the rapid evolution of technology. We employed electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) instead of word-of-mouth (WOM) in the past (Abd-Elaziz et al., 2015). Mou & Lyu (2018) state that there are three components to E-WOM: On open social networking platforms, a. the quantity or strength of user opinions, and b. the opinion's value, or valence. the veracity of the viewpoint, the quality of the product, or negative perception of the given product, which possesses both positive and negative traits. In other words, encouraging remarks and suggestions from users of social networking sites, c. Content on social networking sites contains details about what's available to eat and drink, as well as quality data (taste, texture, temperature), and costs.

Online Advertising

In order to distribute marketing messages and draw in clients, online advertising makes use of the Internet and the World Wide Web (Jamarnis & Susanti, 2019). One way to advertise things online is through internet advertising. Online advertising is a type of advertising that targets consumers by distributing marketing messages via the Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW). Online advertising is versatile, enables firms and sellers to easily update information about their products, and can reach a variety of consumers through online platforms (Nizam et al., 2018).

Content Marketing

In the digital age, the content of your message is very important. Content marketing itself is a marketing strategy that involves planning, distributing, and creating content that attracts the right audience and encourages them to become customers. Content marketing is about creating bonds between customers by sharing content and content creativity that is relevant, meaningful, valuable, and can inspire potential customers (Kucuk & Krishnamurthy, 2007). Karr (2016: 9) identifies aspects that companies should consider when creating content, including reader cognition, sharing motivation, persuasion, decision making.

Customer engagement

Customer engagement is one of the keys to business success in the modern marketing era. It involves positive interactions between customers and brands with the aim of creating emotional connections, creating added value, and building long-term loyalty. Wang (2022). People trust reviews from friends, family, influencers and experts before making a decision. Engaged customers actively seek up-to-date information about products and brands, so there is no need for information overload. According to Brodie (2016: 126), customer involvement is a psychological state that has a certain intensity and plays an important role in the relational exchange process. The goal is to make the brand an important part of the conversation and consumer life.

Buying Decision

A buying decision is choosing an action from two or more alternatives, for example when there is a choice between buying or not buying brand X, brand Y, or other products. In the decision-making process, consumers often go through several stages: Problem/need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, decision making, and post-buying evaluation (Alia & Uus, 2023). Electronic word-of-mouth is messages and information obtained from consumers' personal experiences and opinions about products and services, which are spread by word-of-mouth on the Internet. Advanced electronic reviews can create direct consumer engagement in the marketplace (Octavian & Sari (2021).

H1 : E-WOM affects Customer Engagement.

Advertising that evoke consumer emotions can trigger subconscious reactions that supersede logical and realistic reactions in consumers, thus creating an unbreakable bond with the brand. Positive emotional stimuli such as satisfaction, happiness, and love have a positive impact on consumer engagement (Juliana, et al., 2021).

H2 : Online advertising affects Customer Engagement.

Content marketing has two important goals, which are about attracting audiences and motivating them to become customers. Content marketing can attract consumers by creating a bond between them. (Johan and Rusa, 2017).

H3 : Content Marketing affects Customer Engagement.

According to research by Alvin Oktavianus Hermanto and Diah Dharmayanti, customers who feel involved and satisfied are more likely to make repeat buying s because they do not want to switch to another brand. This finding supports the findings of previous research, because customer involvement has a significant impact on buying decisions in this case. (Athira et al., 2018).

H4 : Customer Engagement has an influence on buying decisions.

Internet-based e-WOM communication is very important because consumer reviews have a significant impact on buying decisions. This allows users to provide feedback and ratings about their experiences, helping potential customers make decisions. (Monesta & Jeanne 2023).

H5 : E-WOM has an effect on buying decisions.

According to Mirsha and Mahalik (Syahrul & Murwanto 2022), online advertising is a form of marketing that can persuade customers to make buying decisions and provide feedback to the company. Thus, there is a positive relationship between online advertising and buying decisions.

H6 : Online Advertising affects buying decisions.

The evolution of the current digital era has an impact on the world of marketing, one way is to create great promotions such as content marketing. Thus, content marketing has a big impact on buying decisions. (Isra & Ryan, 2021).

H7 : Content marketing affects buying decisions.

E-WOM alone is not powerful enough to influence consumers' buying intentions for products. Therefore, continuous customer engagement with consumers to increase buying decisions for their products. (Kristen, 2021).

H8 : E-WOM affects buying decisions through mediation of customer engagement.

Advertising that arouse customer emotions are very important in advertising because customer engagement increases loyalty and empowers buying decisions. (Raikhanum and Sharifa, 2023).

H9 : Online Advertising affects buying decisions through mediation of customer engagement.

Research conducted by Dewi Oktavia shows that the more attractive a content with consumer engagement can increase online buying decisions (Dewi Octavia, et al, 2022).

H10 : Content Marketing affects buying decisions through mediation of customer engagement.

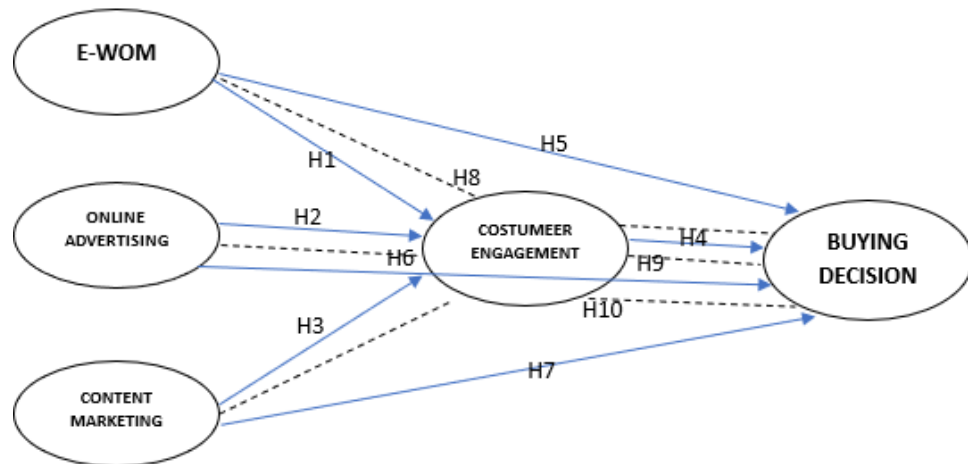


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research is a quantitative descriptive method. This style of writing describes the object as if the reader knows the author's situation or is in the author's situation. Because this research was conducted to understand consumer reactions in the marketplace, a quantitative survey of customers who buying d various cosmetic products on the Shopee marketplace was conducted. This research uses a quantitative approach using survey design techniques to obtain primary data from population samples. Primary data will be used to formulate and analyze research questions. Data collection was conducted with an online questionnaire using Google Forms and distributed through online social networks. Online surveys allow data collection without geographic restrictions, automated data collection, and cost, time, and energy efficiency (Bougie and Sekaran, 2020).

The population of this study consisted of all Shopee users in the city and district of Cirebon. The research population is a selected sample of the population, specifically users who have buying d cosmetics at Shopee. The object of this research is "Shopee", an online buying and selling platform.

This study will involve 200 respondents (Bougie and Sekaran, 2020). The measurement of variables in this study uses a 5-point Likert scale to assess the level of respondents' agreement with the statements presented in the questionnaire. The scale ranges from 1 - 5 (strongly disagree - strongly agree) (Bougie and Sekaran, 2020). This study adopted variables from previous research (Singh et al., 2020) and adjusted them to the needs and objectives of this study. Operational definitions provide information and clarify how researchers measure variables. In addition, operational definitions help ensure consistency with previous research and serve as a guide to measuring the variables under study (Singh et al., 2020).

PLS-SEM will be used as a data analysis method. The sampling technique used in this study uses Non-probability sampling. Purposive sampling was

chosen because the sample was selected based on certain criteria in the population. Due to the large number of Shopee users, purposive sampling was used to select respondents who represented the research. This is because PLS-SEM-based model estimation always relies on composite reliability, regardless of the measurement model specification (Sarstedt et al., 2017). PLS-SEM takes the composite as input and applies a series of regressions to maximize the explained variance of the endogenous constructs. And this is the most preferred technique when examining predictive models in research (Hair, Hult, Ringle, Sarstedt, Thiele, 2017; Ringdon et al., 2017).

RESULTS

Results of measurement of scale reliability and convergence value

This study uses a partial regression approach (Partial Least Square-PLS) to analyze the data. PLS is the most popular and effective approach in analyzing linear structural models (Garson, 2012). PLS can analyze complex models, with many latent variables measured using many different parameters simultaneously. The measurement model in this study consists of six constructs, namely E-WOM, Online Advertising, Content Marketing, Customer Engagement and Buying Decision.

Tabel 1. Results of measurement of scale reliability and convergence value

Model Constructs	Items	Load Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Elektronic Word Of Mouth/E-Wom (EW)	EW1	0.727	0.877	0.912	0.676
	EW2	0.829			
	EW3	0.913			
	EW4	0.725			
	EW5	0.897			
Online Advertising (OA)	OA1	0.725	0.834	0.890	0.670
	OA2	0.821			
	OA3	0.871			
	OA4	0.849			
Content Marketing (CM)	CM1	0.622	0.821	0.870	0.531
	CM2	0.707			
	CM3	0.589			
	CM4	0.844			
	CM5	0.814			
	CM6	0.762			
Customer Engagement (CE)	CE1	0.544	0.843	0.886	0.570
	CE2	0.872			
	CE3	0.719			
	CE4	0.748			
	CE5	0.724			
	CE6	0.872			

Buying Decision (BD)	BD1	0.526	0.887	0.911	0.566
	BD2	0.826			
	BD3	0.810			
	BD4	0.684			
	BD5	0.681			
	BD6	0.823			
	BD7	0.841			
	BD8	0.772			

The results of the factor loading value above 0.7 indicate that each indicator has a strong contribution in measuring its latent construct (Ghozali, 2014). However, in development research, the loading scale range of 0.5 can still be used, but factors with a loading value below 0.5 must be eliminated (Chin, 1988). Referring to Table 1, it is known that the indicators that reflect the measured constructs have factor loading values above 0.5. This information provides confidence that the measurement instruments in the measurement model (outer model) show adequate reliability and validity in representing the tested constructs. These results provide a strong basis for proceeding to the further stages of structural analysis.

It is important to determine reliability and convergent validity through Cronbach's alpha value ≥ 0.7 , composite reliability ≥ 0.7 and average variance extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.5 (Hair et al., 2019). The results of PLS data processing show that the data qualify the Cronbach Alpha value and composite reliability also shows a good level of reliability, each more than 0.7 (Sarstedt et al., 2017). Then the AVE value on reflective constructs, with a value of more than 0.5. These findings strengthen the methodological basis of this study and provide confidence in the validity and reliability of the measured constructs.

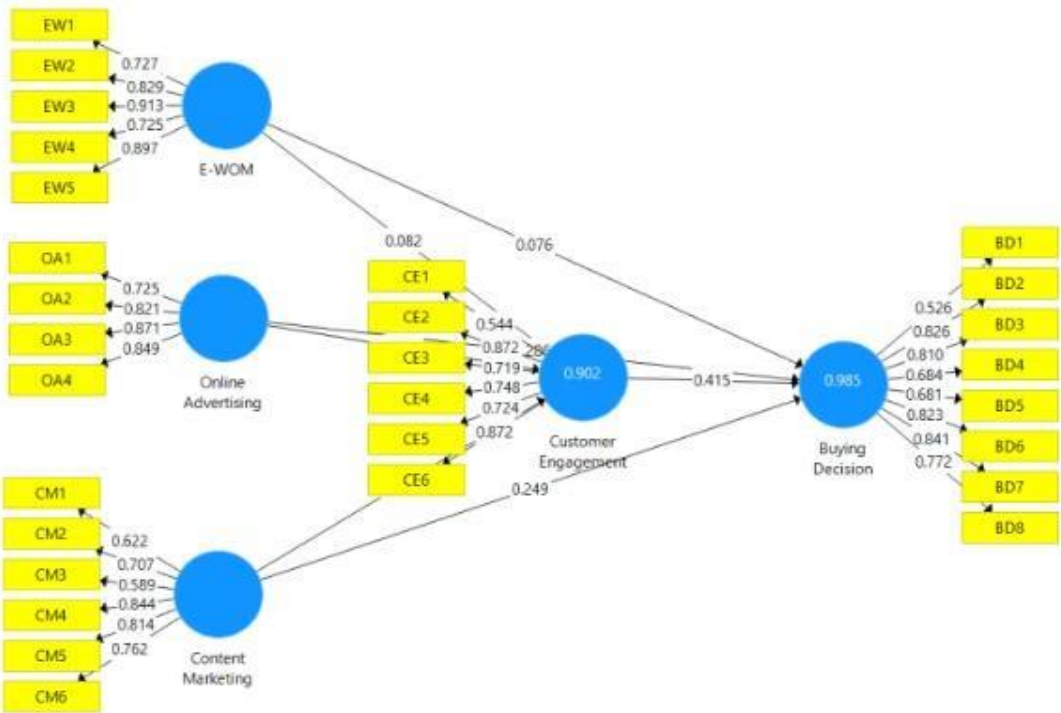


Figure 2. Path Coefficient

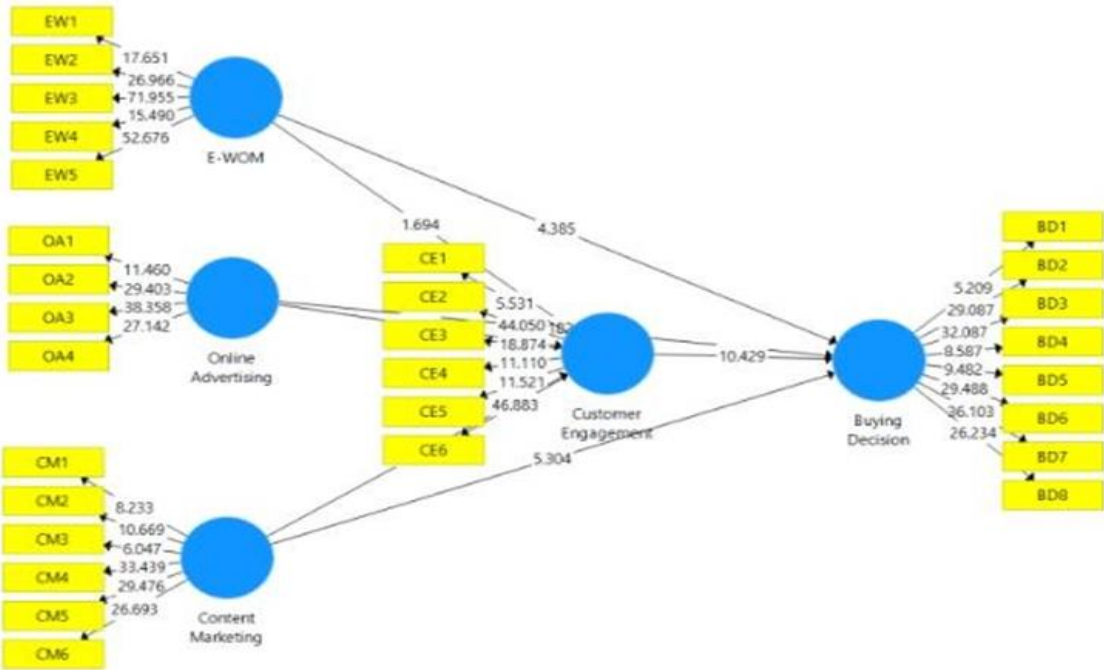


Figure 3. Values in the hypothesized model

The figure above illustrates how to calculate the t-statistic value, which is used to test the significance of the variables in this study.

Direct and Indirect Effect Test Results.

Tabel 2. Direct Effect Test Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Value s	Information
Direct Effect				
H1	E-WOM -> Customer Engagement_	1.660	0.098	Unsupported
H2	Online Advertising -> Customer Engagement_	2.845	0.005	Supported
H3	Content Marketing -> Customer Engagement_	11.946	0.000	Supported
H4	Customer Engagement_ -> Buying Decision	11.439	0.000	Supported
H5	E-WOM -> Buying Decision	4.634	0.000	Supported
H6	Online Advertising_ -> Buying Decision	9.288	0.000	Supported
H7	Content Marketing -> Buying Decision	5.441	0.000	Supported
Indirect Effect				
H8	E-WOM -> Customer Engagement_ -> Buying Decision	1.695	0.091	Unsupported
H9	Online Advertising_ -> Customer Engagement_ -> Buying Decision	2.711	0.007	Supported
H10	Content Marketing -> Customer Engagement_ -> Buying Decision	8.321	0.000	Supported

Structural model coefficient analysis is carried out to analyze a hypothesis by analyzing which relationships between variables have a significant relationship. Hypothesis testing in this study was carried out by looking at the T-Statistics and P-Values values. The hypothesis is considered accepted if the T-Statistics value is greater than 1.96 and the P-Values are smaller than 0.05. The table above shows the results obtained through statistical analysis show that 8 out of 10 hypotheses are supported / accepted, but there are two hypotheses that are not supported, namely E-WOM> Customer Engagement and Content Marketing> Customer Engagement> Buying Decision.

DISCUSSION

E-WOM affects Customer Engagement (H1)

The results of testing the first hypothesis between E-WOM and customer engagement have a T-statistic value of 1.660 <T-table 1.96. The P-value is 0.098 > 0.05, and the regression results show that the first hypothesis is rejected. In previous research, it was stated that, on the contrary, the lower the e-WOM, the lower the customer engagement and the higher the e-WOM, the customer engagement of a company increases. (Vendy & Wulan, 2021).

Online advertising affects Customer Engagement (H2)

The results of testing the second hypothesis between online advertising and customer engagement have a T-statistic value of 2.845 > T-table 1.96. The P-value is 0.005 < 0.05, and the regression results show that the second hypothesis is accepted. It is also supported in previous research conducted by Raihanum & Syarifah (2023) that online advertising has an effect on increasing customer engagement. The magnitude of the effect of advertising on customer engagement is 0.596 or 59.6%. This value indicates that the better the advertisement can have a positive and real influence on the increase in advertising.

Content marketing affects customer engagement (H3)

The results of testing the third hypothesis between content marketing and customer engagement have a T-statistic value of 11.946 > T-table 1.96. The P-value of 0.000 < 0.05, and the regression results show that the third hypothesis is accepted. It is also supported in research conducted previously which states that Content Marketing itself has a significant influence on Customer Engagement, in accordance with research (Johan, al 2017).

Customer engagement has an influence on buying decisions (H4)

The results of testing the fourth hypothesis between customer engagement and buying decisions have a T-statistic value of 11.439 > T-table 1.96. The P-value of 0.000 < 0.05, and the regression results show that the fourth hypothesis is accepted. It is also supported by previous research which concludes that by creating high customer engagement, it indirectly has an impact on increasing buying decisions. (Dewi, alt, 2022).

E-WOM has an effect on buying decisions (H5)

The results of testing the fifth hypothesis between E-WOM and buying decisions have a T-statistic value of 4.634 > T-table 1.96. The P-value of 0.000 < 0.05, and the regression results show that the fifth hypothesis is accepted. The results of this study are also supported by previous research regarding the analysis of the influence of electronic word of mouth on the buying decision process and show that electronic word of mouth has a significant influence on buying decisions. (Fitria, 2016).

Online advertising affects buying decisions (H6)

The results of testing the sixth hypothesis between online advertising and buying decisions have a T-statistic value of 9.288 > T-table 1.96. The P-value is 0.000 < 0.05, and the regression results show that the sixth hypothesis is accepted. This finding is in accordance with the results of previous research by Saodin & Nyoman (2021), in their research showing the influence of advertising on buying decisions.

The resulting regression coefficient is positive, which states that there is an influence of advertising on buying decisions. By looking at the significance of the advertising variable, it can be concluded that advertising has a significant influence on buying decisions.

Content marketing affects buying decisions (H7)

The results of testing the seventh hypothesis between content marketing and buying decisions have a T-statistic value of $5.441 > T\text{-table } 1.96$. The P-value is $0.000 < 0.05$, and the regression results show that the seventh hypothesis is accepted. The results of this study are also supported by previous research which shows a positive relationship between online advertising and buying decisions. (Al-azzam & Al-mizeed 2021).

E-WOM affects buying decisions through mediation of customer engagement (H8)

The results of testing the eighth hypothesis between E-WOM and buying decisions through customer engagement mediation have a T-statistic value of $1.695 < T\text{-table } 1.96$. The P-value is $0.091 > 0.05$, and the regression results show that the eighth hypothesis is rejected. The results of this study are also supported by previous research which states that eWOM has a direct but insignificant positive effect on buying intention. In this study, it can be seen that the value of the direct effect between eWOM on buying intention is not significant, but directly between eWOM and the intention to buy used goods has a positive relationship. (Kristia, 2021).

Online advertising affects buying decisions through mediation of customer engagement (H9)

The results of testing the ninth hypothesis between online advertising and buying decisions through mediation of customer engagement have a T-statistic value of $2.711 > T\text{-table } 1.96$. The P-value of $0.007 < 0.05$, and the regression results show that the ninth hypothesis is accepted. The results in this study are supported by previous research Vera & Murwanto, (2022) that advertising makes customer emotions give birth to subconscious customer reactions in forming customer involvement can increase loyalty and determine buying decisions. (Raihanum & Syarifah, 2023).

Content marketing affects buying decisions through mediation of customer engagement (H10)

The results of testing the tenth hypothesis between content marketing and buying decisions through mediation of customer engagement have a T-statistic value of $8.321 > T\text{-table } 1.96$. The P-value of $0.000 < 0.05$, and the regression results show that the tenth hypothesis is accepted. The results in this study are supported by previous research, as conducted which proves that engagement is able to mediate the influence of content marketing on buying decisions. (Ulfah & Siregar, 2019).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study identifies key variables that directly influence buying decisions, including electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM), online advertising, content marketing, and customer engagement. It also highlights that online advertising, content marketing, and buying decisions directly impact customer engagement, while E-WOM does not. Online advertising and content marketing indirectly affect buying decisions through customer engagement, whereas E-WOM does not have this indirect influence.

Based on these findings, Shopee should optimize its digital marketing strategies, focusing on online advertising, content marketing, and customer engagement. Additionally, integrating influencer marketing, enhancing direct promotions, and developing innovative platform features are recommended to better attract and engage consumers. Future research should broaden the scope of variables and expand to various geographical areas to improve the generalizability of the findings. By doing so, both Shopee and researchers can gain deeper insights into consumer behavior, ultimately optimizing digital marketing strategies to enhance consumer experience and satisfaction.

FURTHER STUDY

All research has limitations, and future studies should address this by including more variables in digital marketing strategies. Key variables to consider are influencer marketing, direct promotions, and innovative features on the Shopee platform. Expanding research to different geographical areas will enhance the generalizability of the findings. This comprehensive approach will help Shopee and researchers better understand consumer behavior and optimize digital marketing strategies to improve consumer experience and satisfaction.

Future research is recommended to broaden the scope of variables in digital marketing strategies, such as the impact of influencer marketing, direct promotions, and innovative features on Shopee. Increasing the diversity of research locations will ensure that the findings are more widely applicable. Including respondents from various geographical areas will provide a more thorough understanding of online consumer buying behavior. By doing so, Shopee and researchers can gain deeper insights into the factors influencing consumer buying decisions on online platforms and refine digital marketing strategies to enhance consumer experience and satisfaction.

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