

**Ekombis Review** – **Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi dan Bisnis** Available online at : <u>https://jurnal.unived.ac.id/index.php/er/index</u> **DOI:** https://doi.org/10.37676/ekombis.v12i1

# Analysis Of The Influence Of Electronic Word Of Mouth (E-Wom) And Social Media On Purchase Intentions Mediated By Brand Image In E-Shopping

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#### How to Cite :

Romadhon, F, A. Susila, I. (2024). Analysis Of The Influence Of Electronic Word Of. EKOMBIS REVIEW: Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Dan Bisnis, 12 (1). doi: <u>https://doi.org/10.37676/ekombis.v12i1</u>

#### **ARTICLE HISTORY**

Received [07 November 2023] Revised [30 December 2023] Accepted [02 January 2023]

#### **KEYWORDS**

E-WOM, Social media, Purchase intention, Brand image, E-Shoping

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#### INTRODUCTION

# ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) and social media on consumers' purchase intention in the context of e-shopping, with the mediation of brand image. The research was conducted by collecting data from respondents actively engaged in online shopping and, through appropriate statistical analysis, identifying the relationships between these variables. This research employed a quantitative approach, using questionnaires as the data collection technique. According to Sugiyono (2022:8), quantitative research is a method with the objective of testing predetermined hypotheses, using numerical data and statistical analysis in the testing process. The study provides a profound understanding of the relationships between Social Media, E-WOM, Brand Image, and Purchase Intention in the e-shopping context. It also underscores the crucial role played by Brand Image as a mediator in the influence of E-WOM and Social Media on consumers' purchasing decisions. This research can serve as a strategic guide for e-commerce businesses to enhance consumer trust and sales through better management of social media and their brand reputation.

Social media has revolutionized the way people receive and process information (Ardhiansyah & Marlena, 2021). Social media marketing is a practice that encourages individuals to promote their websites, products, or services through online social networks and engage with others, tapping into a much larger population with greater marketing potential than conventional advertising channels (Muhammad et al., 2021).

As of early 2022, the number of social media users in Indonesia accounted for approximately 68.9% of the total population. Kepios analysis indicates that social media users in Indonesia increased by 21 million (12.6%) between 2021 and 2022 (Kemp, 2022). According to the Digital Indonesia 2020 Report, e-commerce activities in Indonesia revealed that about 93% of internet users search for products online, and 88% of internet users make online purchases (Indrawati et al., 2022). Thanks to the internet, customers can now easily access product information.

Word of mouth (WOM) is a significant source of information for consumers and can influence their purchasing decisions (Yang et al., 2015). Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) is a marketing method involving conversations through social media or the internet. However, the E-WOM concept often neglects or underestimates a crucial component of the E-WOM environment, which is a brand's ability to provide feedback. The authors define brand feedback as a written response by the company to E-WOM messages that reaffirm or fulfill the company's promises to meet consumer needs or desires.

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) is defined as "any positive or negative statement made by potential, current, or former customers about a product or company, available to various individuals and organizations through the Internet" (Wang et al., 2018). When consumers make product choices before purchasing, it is common for them to seek opinions or recommendations from others. Digital technology and the internet have created increasing opportunities for consumers. Consumers access various types of E-WOM offered by different people.

Online brand reviews posted to assist complaining customers may have posted negative E-WOM to create a positive impact on consumers who might consider negative E-WOM in their purchasing decision-making process. Negative claims made through E-WOM can indicate that the brand or product has failed to fulfill its promises to meet consumer needs or desires.

Given the reach and influence of E-WOM, it is intriguing to study how E-WOM works and what makes some opinions more influential than others. Additionally, companies are increasingly interested in expanding their understanding of E-WOM for use as a new marketing tool (Abd-Elaziz et al., 2015). Generally, E-WOM notices can be posted and shared by individuals with either close relationships or weak relationships with consumers (Wang et al., 2018). Messages generated are shared by both types, E-WOM with strong relationships and E-WOM with weak relationships. With greater similarities and more intimate information exchange, consumers are more likely to use E-WOM as their primary source of information or choice.

E-WOM is a critical aspect of marketing. By utilizing E-WOM, businesses can benefit from low costs and high impact. With the increasing expression of social media, consumers will increasingly be able to influence other consumers with their opinions and experiences. The influence of corporate advertising on purchasing behavior will diminish (Annisa, 2016). In light of this, companies have created Instagram social media accounts to interact with their customers. Indonesia is one of the major markets for active Instagram users, with 22 million users out of 400 million users as of September 2015 (Pradani, 2018).

Furthermore, electronic word of mouth can also motivate consumers to purchase products discussed, whether the product is good. Consumers will be interested in the product and desire to own the product previously discussed (Hamidun, 2018). This is referred to as purchase intention, which is a spiritual activity resulting from thoughts and feelings about the desired goods or services.

Research on purchase intention has been conducted extensively, but there is limited research focused on the "grace and glow body wash" product. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the impact of E-WOM and social media on purchase intention and contribute to the literature on purchase intention, specifically for the "grace and glow body wash" product.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

#### E-WOM

Traditionally, direct word-of-mouth communication about a company or product has taken the form of mouth-to-mouth marketing. However, as the internet has evolved rapidly, word-ofmouth has gone electronic and is now referred to as "Electronic Word-of-Mouth" (E-WOM). Many platforms, including social media websites, blogs, forums, community websites, review websites, news groups, and e-commerce sites, are encompassed within E-WOM (Indrawati et al., 2022). E- WOM is a dynamic and ongoing process of information exchange among potential, current, or former consumers regarding a product, service, brand, or company, accessible to many people (Verma et al., 2023). The emergence of online networking sites and the advancements in information technology have fundamentally changed how information is shared, overcoming traditional WOM constraints (Abd-Elaziz et al., 2015).

Concerning the consumption of E-WOM and the consequences of brand feedback, perceived risk may be an important factor to consider. This risk is defined as the likelihood of choosing a brand or product that does not satisfy one's desires or preferences or fails to deliver on its promises (Bhandari et al., 2021). Verma et al. (2023) suggest an integrated E-WOM communication model consisting of four components: stimuli, communicator, receiver, and response.

# Social Media/Media Sosial

Social media is content created by individuals using publishing technology, making it readily available, and aimed at enhancing connections, communication, and influence with others and the general public (Maulana.A, 2021). According to Hartawan et al. (2021), individuals or consumers can utilize social media, an internet-based platform, to share various content with others, including text, photos, audio or sound, videos, and more.

# Brand Image/Citra Merek

Brand image is how clients or consumers perceive a particular brand in their minds (Suhardi & Irmayanti, 2019). Consumer knowledge and perception of a brand shape the brand image, and customers viewing a brand positively indicate that the brand conveys an appealing message compared to its competitors (Heru et al., 2022). According to Ahmad et al. (2020), brand image dimensions include:

- 1. Brand identity, which encompasses the logo, color, marketing, company identity, slogan, and other elements, is the physical identity associated with the brand or product that allows customers to quickly recognize and differentiate it from other brands or products.
- 2. Brand personality is the distinctive qualities of a brand that adopt a specific personality suitable for humans, enabling the target audience to easily distinguish it from other brands in the same category.
- 3. Brand associations are specific things that are associated with or consistently linked to the brand. They can result from offerings, distinctive products, consistent and repeated activities such as sponsorships or social responsibilities, issues closely related to the brand, or individuals. They can also be symbols and meanings strongly attached to a brand.
- 4. Brand attitude and behavior refer to how a brand interacts and communicates with consumers to convey its advantages and the value it offers. A brand often communicates inappropriately and unethically, and provides poor service, which affects how the public perceives the brand's attitude and behavior or vice versa.
- 5. Brand benefits and competence are the unique values and benefits provided by a brand to customers that lead consumers to experience the benefits because what is offered satisfies their desires, wishes, fantasies, and obsessions.

# Purchase Intention/Minat Beli

According to Latifah Husna et al. (2021), purchase intention, or respondents' inclination to take action before making a purchase, is a component of consumer behavior within consumption attitudes. After evaluating available alternatives, consumers have an intention to purchase a product or service offered. Purchase intention generates a drive that will be remembered and develop into a strong desire. Purchase intention is the desire to select and purchase goods based on the selection and past use of the product by customers (Tungka et al., 2020).

# **METHODS**

This research employs a quantitative approach using a questionnaire as the data collection technique. Quantitative research, as defined by Sugiyono (2022:8), is a research method aimed at testing predetermined hypotheses, where the testing involves numerical data and statistical analysis. Research with a quantitative technique aims to quantify data and often uses various types of statistics. The process of simplification results in a more straightforward form for reading, understanding, and analysis, which leads to the quantitative approach. In this conducted research, data collection is done through a survey using a questionnaire. This questionnaire is distributed to provide support or refute the formulated hypotheses.

# RESULTS

# **Analisis Outer Model**

This testing aims to determine the specifications of the relationship between latent variables and their indicators. An outer model test is conducted, which includes validity, reliability, and multicollinearity.



# 1. Reliability Test

Reliability testing is carried out by examining the values of Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability.

# a. Cronbach's Alpha

The test at this stage can be considered valid or acceptable if the Cronbach's Alpha value is > 0.7. Below are the values of Cronbach's Alpha obtained through the analysis that has been conducted.

	Cronbach's Alpha
X1	0,796
X2	0,770
Y	0,674
Z	0,738

Data source processed in 2023.

From the results obtained as indicated in Table 4.8, it can be explained that variable x1 obtained a value of 0.796, variable x2 obtained a value of 0.770, variable y obtained a value of

0.674, and variable z obtained a value of 0.738. Although a value of 0.6 is still acceptable (Abdillah, 2015)

# b. *Composite Reliability*

A variable is considered valid and reliable if it has a composite reliability value > 0.7. The following are the results of the analysis of the composite reliability values that have been analyzed in this study.

# Table 2. The composite reliability value

	Composite Reliability
X1	0,860
X2	0,853
Y	0,792
Z	0,835

Data source processed in 2023.

From the analysis results, the composite reliability values for each variable are all greater than 0.70. Variable X1 obtained a value of 0.860, variable X2 obtained a value of 0.853, variable Y obtained a value of 0.792, and variable Z obtained a value of 0.835. Based on the analysis results, it can be concluded that each variable is suitable or valid for further testing because the values obtained are > 0.7.

# 2. Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity test by looking at the value of the variance inflation factor (VIF), the value of the average VIF should be > 0 and < 5. Here are the results of the VIF analysis in this study.

# Table 3. The variance inflation factor Value (VIF)

	X1	X2	Y	Z
X1			2,602	1,873
X2			2,564	1,873
Y				
Z			3,388	

Data source processed in 2023.

From the analysis conducted, it was found that the VIF values for each variable fall within the range of > 0.1 and < 5, indicating that there is no multicollinearity present.

# **Analisis Inner Model**



In this subsection, the inner model analysis is conducted by performing a goodness-of-fit test and hypothesis testing through direct and indirect effects.

1. Model Feasibility Test (Goodness of fit)

## a. R-square (R<sup>2</sup>)

R-square is used to explain how much the model influences the variation in the dependent variable. Here are the R-square values in this study.

#### Table 3. R-square Value

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Υ	0,281	0,263
Z	0,705	0,700

Data source processed in 2023.

From the analysis results, variable Y obtained a value of 0.281. This means that variables X1 and X2 influence Y by 28.1%, while the remaining 71.9% is explained by other variables outside the scope of this study. Variable Z obtained a value of 0.705, meaning that variables X1 and X2 influence Z by 70.5%, and the remaining 29.5% is explained by other variables outside the scope of this study.

### b. Q-square

The value is said to be predictive relevance if the Q-square value is > 0, on the other hand, it shows that the model lacks predictive relevance if the Q-Square value is  $\leq$  0, following the Q2 value in this study.

	SSO	SSE	Q <sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO)
X1	625,000	625,000	
X2	500,000	500,000	
Y	625,000	562,002	0,101
Z	500,000	311,670	0,377

#### Table 4. Q-square Value

Data source processed in 2023.

From the analysis results obtained, it can be explained that the values obtained in this research are 0.101 and 0.377. This means that the model in the research can be said to be predictive relevance.

# 2. Test the Hypotesis

Hypothesis testing in this research was conducted by examining the values of t-statistic and p-value in the analysis that has been performed. Hypothesis testing was carried out using two methods: the direct effect method and the indirect effect method.

# a. Test Direct Influnce

In this test, it was conducted by observing the t-statistic value greater than > 1.960 and the p-value less than < 0.05. If the results in this research are less than the specified values, the hypothesis is rejected. Here are the results of the direct effect analysis in this study.

# Table 5. Test direct influence

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
bi -> nb	-0,335	-0,365	0,135	2,476	0,014
X2 -> Z	0,638	0,652	0,081	7,835	0,000
ewom -> nb	0,836	0,876	0,169	4,949	0,000
X1 -> Z	0,253	0,242	0,084	3,003	0,003
sm -> nb	0,099	0,098	0,141	0,702	0,483

Data source processed in 2023.

The analysis results above can be explained as follows:

- The first hypothesis tests whether social media has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. From the analysis data above, it can be explained that the T-statistic value is 3.003, and the p-value is 0.003. It can be concluded that the T-statistic value is > 1.960 and the p-value is < 0.05. Therefore, the first hypothesis is accepted, indicating a positive and significant influence of social media on Brand Image.
- 2. The second hypothesis tests whether E-WOM has a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. From the analysis table provided, it is found that the T-statistic value is 7.835, and the p-value is 0.000. It can be concluded that the T-statistic value is > 1.960 and the p-value is < 0.05. Therefore, the second hypothesis is accepted, indicating a positive and significant influence of E-WOM on Brand Image.</p>
- 3. The third hypothesis tests whether Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention. From the analysis table provided, it is found that the T-statistic value is 2.476, and the p-value is 0.014. It can be concluded that the T-statistic value is > 1.960 and the p-value is < 0.05. Therefore, the third hypothesis is accepted, indicating a positive and significant influence of Brand Image on Purchase Intention.
- 4. The fourth hypothesis tests whether social media has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. From the analysis data above, it can be explained that the T-statistic value is 0.702, and the p-value is 0.483. It can be concluded that the T-statistic value is < 1.960 and the p-value is > 0.05. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is rejected, indicating no positive and significant influence of social media on purchase intention.
- 5. The fifth hypothesis tests whether E-WOM has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. From the analysis table provided, it is found that the T-statistic value is 4.949, and the p-value is 0.000. It can be concluded that the T-statistic value is > 1.960 and the p-value is < 0.05. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis is accepted, indicating a positive and significant influence of E-WOM on purchase intention.
- b. Indirect Effect Test

In this test, the results are based on the analysis of specific indirect effects. A hypothesis can be accepted if the t-statistic value is > T-table, where the T-table value is > 1.960, and the p-value is < 0.05. Here are the results of the analysis of specific indirect effects.

# Table 6. Indirect Effect Test

		Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
ewom bi nb	-> ->	-0,214	-0,241	0,106	2,024	0,044
sm -> b nb	i ->	-0,085	-0,085	0,039	2,173	0,030

Data source processed in 2023.

From the results of the analysis above it can be explained as follows:

- Hypothesis six tests whether Brand Image mediates the influence of social media on Purchase Intention. From the analysis table provided, it can be concluded that the T-statistic value is 2.173, and the p-value is 0.030. This suggests that the T-statistic value > 1.960 and the p-value < 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that hypothesis six is accepted, meaning that Brand Image mediates the influence of social media on Purchase Intention.
- 2. Hypothesis seven tests whether Brand Image mediates the influence of E-WOM on Purchase Intention. From the analysis table provided, it can be seen that the T-statistic value is 2.024, and the p-value is 0.044. This implies that the T-statistic value > 1.960, and the p-value < 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that hypothesis seven is accepted, indicating that Brand Image mediates the influence of E-WOM on Purchase Intention.</p>

# Discussion

This research employed a quantitative approach using questionnaires as the data collection technique. Quantitative research, as defined by Sugiyono (2022:8), is a research method aimed at testing predefined hypotheses using numerical data and statistical analysis. Quantitative research aims to quantify data and often employs various statistical techniques. The data for this study was collected through a survey using questionnaires distributed to 125 respondents who had engaged in e-shopping. The data was analyzed using Smart Partial Least Squares (Smart PLS).

- 1. The Influence of Social Media on Brand Image In this study, it was found that social media has a positive and significant influence on Brand Image. This implies that the more actively a company uses social media, the more positively the public perceives the brand. This is consistent with previous research findings by Suwarsih et al. (2021) that showed a significant relationship between increased social media activity and an improved brand image. Similarly, Usman Wibowo & Yulianto (2022) found that social media has a significant impact on brand image, and Arini Rizki Udayani & Tatik Suryani (2022) established that social media activity significantly influences brand awareness and brand image.
- 2. The Influence of E-WOM on Brand Image The study revealed that E-WOM has a positive and significant influence on Brand Image. This means that the more positive reviews a brand receives on social media, the more positive the consumer perception of the brand becomes. This finding is consistent with previous research conducted by Kadek et al. (n.d.), which showed that E-WOM significantly influences brand image, and Saraswati & Giantari (2022) stated that E-WOM quality has a positive and significant impact on brand image.
- 3. The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Intention The research findings indicated that Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on Purchase Intention. This suggests that the more positive a consumer's perception of a brand, the higher the likelihood that the consumer will purchase products or services from that brand. This aligns with previous research by Tariq et al. (2017), which found that Brand Image positively impacts consumer purchase intention, and Kadek et al. (n.d.) suggested that Brand Image can mediate the relationship between E-WOM and purchase intention.

- 4. The Influence of Social Media on Purchase Intention The study found that social media has a positive and significant influence on purchase intention. This means that the more actively consumers use social media to interact with a brand, the greater the likelihood that consumers will purchase products or services from that brand. This finding is not in line with previous research by Sin et al. (2012), Nasir et al. (2021), and McClure & Seock (2020), which found different results regarding the influence of social media on purchase intention.
- 5. The Influence of E-WOM on Purchase Intention The research results showed that E-WOM has a positive and significant influence on purchase intention. This implies that the more positive reviews a brand receives from social media, the higher the likelihood that consumers will purchase products or services from that brand. This finding is consistent with previous research by Wang et al. (2018), Kautish et al. (2023), Bhandari et al. (2021), and Hamidun (n.d.) that found a positive impact of E-WOM on purchase intention.
- 6. The Mediating Role of Brand Image in the Influence of Social Media on Purchase Intention The indirect testing in the study found that Brand Image mediates the influence of social media on Purchase Intention. This means that social media affects Purchase Intention through Brand Image. In other words, social media can enhance Purchase Intention by improving Brand Image. This finding aligns with previous research by Agus Ardana & Rastini (2018), which stated that E-WOM has a positive impact on Purchase Intention with Brand Image as a mediating variable. Similarly, Siswanto (2017) found the same result, suggesting that E-WOM positively influences Purchase Intention with Brand Image as a mediating variable.
- 7. The Mediating Role of Brand Image in the Influence of E-WOM on Purchase Intention The indirect testing in the study also revealed that Brand Image mediates the influence of E-WOM on Purchase Intention. This implies that E-WOM influences Purchase Intention through Brand Image. In other words, E-WOM can enhance Purchase Intention by improving Brand Image. This finding is in line with the research by Narayana & Rahanatha (2020), which found that Brand Image mediates the influence of social media marketing on purchase decisions among consumers of Denara Bali. The study involved 120 respondents who had purchased products from Denara Bali and had engaged with the brand's Instagram admin.

# CONCLUSION

In the research titled "Analysis of the Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) and Social Media on Purchase Intention Mediated by Brand Image in E-Shopping," the following conclusions can be drawn:

- 1. Social Media has a positive and significant influence on Brand Image.
- 2. E-WOM has a positive and significant influence on Brand Image.
- 3. Brand Image has a positive and significant influence on Purchase Intention.
- 4. Social Media does not have a positive and significant influence on Purchase Intention.
- 5. E-WOM has a positive and significant influence on Purchase Intention.
- 6. Brand Image mediates the influence of E-WOM on Purchase Intention.
- 7. Brand Image mediates the influence of Social Media on Purchase Intention.

# SUGGESTION

- This research utilized a sample of e-shopping consumers in Solo Raya. Subsequent researchers can conduct similar studies using e-shopping consumer samples in different regions or more specific geographic areas to assess whether there are differences or similarities in research outcomes.
- 2. This research employed e-WOM and social media as independent variables, brand image as a mediating variable, and purchase intention as a dependent variable. Future researchers can

add or replace these variables with others relevant to the e-shopping context, such as trust, service quality, pricing, or customer satisfaction.

3. This research employed a quantitative method with an online survey approach. Subsequent researchers can use qualitative methods with a case study approach, in-depth interviews, or participatory observation to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena of e-WOM, social media, brand image, and purchase intention in the context of e-shopping.

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