

INSTAGRAM'S VISUAL CONTENT MARKETING (VCM) ANALYSIS OF PURCHASE DECISION THROUGH CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT AT HIKING COMPANY

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ABSTRACT

The role of social media content on Instagram makes marketing strategies easier to reach potential customers by showing visual content in the uploaded photos or videos. But not any visual content would deliver right into every customer pages. So that many companies are competing to create effective visual content to attract purchases. The aim of this study is to examine customer engagement in mediating the relationship between visual content marketing toward purchase decisions. This research uses quantitative methods with an associative-descriptive approach. The data was obtained by distributing a questionnaire with a purposive sampling technique to a sample of 180 people. PLS-SEM as data analysis with the SmartPLS 3 application. The findings of this study reveal that visual content marketing and customer engagement have a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions and customer engagement has a positive effect on mediating the relationship between visual content marketing and purchase decisions.

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1. Introduction

According to the survey conducted by We Are Social (2023), which obtained data in 2023, Instagram is the social media platform most frequently used by Indonesian people and is in second place after social media WhatsApp with a percentage of 86.5 percent of the Indonesian population of 276.4 million individuals. The increasing use of Instagram social media illustrates how easy it is for companies that actively market and sell on social media to reach and influence the purchasing decisions of potential customers (Ariyanis et al., 2021).

Since the digitalization 4.0 era began, a lot of research has been carried out regarding Instagram social media and its content. One of the previous studies regarding social media marketing conducted by (Santy & Andriani, 2023) investigated the beneficial effect of content marketing and its positive impact on customer purchase decisions. There is also research according to (Abdjul et al., 2022) regarding Instagram content marketing which proves that there are positive effect on Instagram content marketing toward purchase decisions and the same discovery in research by (Mubarrak et al., 2023). Previous research has extensively researched content marketing, where Instagram social media provides information packaged in content and noteworthy to consumer behaviour (du Plessis, 2022) and also can able to attract customer purchases. However, in reality, many companies are trying to increase their sales by uploading content with attractive and informative visuals such as containing product explanations, but the content created is not sufficient to attract buying interest and even purchase decisions from Instagram social media users (Mukarromah et al., 2022)

The large number of users who have Instagram accounts for selling, including companies, has resulted in strong competition which encourages entrepreneur and existing companies to be more active in influencing and attracting potential customers so that purchasing decisions can occur. Visual content created by companies certainly cannot guarantee that it will be liked or make customers interested in buying, and even the affordability of the content to potential customers may not necessarily be achieved. Research by (Ul Huda et al., 2021) and (Adilla & Hendratmoko, 2023) indicated that there was no effect of content marketing on purchasing decisions, contrary to earlier findings that claimed it had no substantial affect. This shows that visual content marketing on uploaded Instagram social media has proven to be insufficient to achieve company success in attracting Instagram users to make purchases. Beside of content that is attractive, informative and entertaining for users, the company must get attention in terms of thoughts, emotions and actions from potential customers on Instagram (Karpenka, 2021).

Customer engagement is manifest as customer involvement in the way of thoughts, emotions and behavior (Utami & Saputri, 2020). Research conducted by (Putri et al., 2022) mentions customer engagement factors that are able to influence and support content marketing with customer purchasing decisions. This research have same opinion and supported by another research (Lestari et al., 2023). So this customer engagement factor is important to implement for business actors who are active on Instagram social media to attract buyers.

This research examines hiking companies where hiking companies that use Instagram as a means of branding, sales and marketing definitely need visual content, showing nature which is not only attractive but can increase purchasing decisions. The Sukabumi Outdoor Company, a company researched and located in Sukabumi City, is a company that provides hiking services, apart from that they have various product like trekking, camping and outdoor activity equipment rental services. Since its founding in 2020, this company has been actively selling on social media by creating content in the form of feeds and video reels that show visuals, namely the natural beauty in Sukabumi, from the sales activities it has carried out and has gained 14.5 thousand followers. However, unfortunately the increase in followers is not proportional to purchases, less than 50% of the number of followers has purchased. However, this requires better strategies in marketing on Instagram. Therefore, with a strategy to attract purchases, this current research brings novelty by

adding a mediating variable called customer engagement with examining content in more depth through visuals and customer engagement which can be accessed in the form of photos or videos or what are often called feeds and reels to attract customer purchases.

Based on the phenomena and problems described above, the researcher formulated a problem to determine (1) how visual content marketing influences purchase decisions, (2) how customer engagement influence purchase decisions and this research expects to examine (3) the influence of customer engagement in mediating relationships between visual content marketing on purchase decisions at one of the hiking companies, namely Sukabumi Outdoor.

2. Literature Review

Purchase decision, customer engagement, and visual content marketing are the variables that were used in this study.

2.1. Purchase Decision

Purchase decision is explained by Kotler and Keller (2017: 177) as an element of customer behavior regarding how customer decide on a purchase that will be used to provide satisfaction or fulfill their needs. Purchasing decisions are closely related to customers daily lives, so they need a lot of information to be sustainable (Afriansyah et al., 2021) therefore purchasing decisions take time because they are influenced by several factors such as the influence of environment, cognitive, affective processes and the existence of behavioral actions with reciprocal flow (Rivaldo et al., 2022). The theory of purchase decision that is used in this research is the opinion of Kotler and Keller (2017: 177) who explain purchase decisions as decisions to satisfy or fulfill needs. The dimensions used in this research were taken according to Kotler and Armstrong (2016: 188) which consist of five dimensions, namely (1) product choice, (2) brand choice, (3) dealer choice, (4) time and amount of purchase, and (5) payment method.

2.2. Customer Engagement

Customer engagement or customer involvement as a mediating variable, customer engagement is the most important thing in a company that involves customers cognitively, emotionally and behaviorally (Utami & Saputri, 2020). Meanwhile (Ng et al., 2020) according to customer engagement defined as process with behavioural and psychological manifestation. Customer engagement as a company effort has several processes such as developing trust, involvement or participation to creating effective commitment (Anggraeni & Sabrina, 2021). The theory by (Utami & Saputri, 2020) is used in this research because the fit definitions of customer engagement. There are three dimensions of customer engagement used in this research, namely (1) cognitive involvement, (2) emotional involvement, and (3) behavioral involvement. This dimension is used by (Karpenka, 2021).

2.3. Visual Content Marketing

Visual content marketing is an image that tells a story using visual elements that are based on an event through reasoning, emotions and judgment (Fox et al., 2019). There are three form of visual content types, such as interactive, entertainment and informative (Kujur & Singh, 2020). Stephen Gamble (2016) explains that visual content marketing is infographics, videos and interactive media that connect and engage customers so that it is the most effective solution for confronting business challenges and this theory will be used in this research. According to (Pangestu

& Tranggono, 2022) there are five dimensions of visual content marketing, namely (1) Reader Cognition, (2) Sharing Motivation, (3) Persuasion, (4) Decision Making, (5) Factors.

3. Method, Data, and Analysis

3.1. Method

Quantitative methods are the foundation on this research with an associative descriptive approach where this method examines the relationship between variables by presenting numbers that are measurable and objective. Purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique, was employed in this quantitative method such that the sample with certain criteria, including (1) age 17 or being over 17 years old (2) having purchased services or rented equipment at @sukabumioutdoor (3) are Instagram followers of @sukabumioutdoor. There is a small sample data so using the Hair et al (2019) method, which involves multiplying variable indicators of 36 by an observation value of 5 so that the sample in this study is 180 people.

3.2. Data Collection and Research Instrument

The use of quantitative methods in this research involves the questionnaires to collect data. The questionnaire was created on a Google form in a link so that respondents who click on it will be immediately directed to questions and statements which consist of four parts such as the respondent's profile and characteristics, namely Instagram account, age, and products the respondent has purchased. Then there is a statement section for the visual content marketing variable, the customer engagement variable, and the purchase decision variable section. Questionnaire questions use a semantic differential interval, a scale with a value of 1-10 (Strongly disagree - strongly agree).

3.3. Data Analysis

The SEM (Structure Equation Modeling) is used in this study's data analysis with the SmartPLS 3 application. Researchers used the SEM-PLS method because the sample was small. According to Ghazali (2017), this analysis method is efficient for calculating small number of samples with complex models. The SEM-PLS analysis method consists of several stages, including validity and reliability tests, coefficient of determination tests, predictive relevance tests, F tests, Goodness of Fit tests, hypothesis tests, and mediation tests.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Outer Model

Convergent validity and discriminant validity are the two validity tests included in the outer model. This test is occurs to ensure that the quality of the instrument is good and appropriate so that it is suitable for measurement by determining the relationship between the construct and the indicators. The following is the measurement model for the outer model test can be tracked down in figure 1 and figure 2 below.

Figure 1. Outer Loading

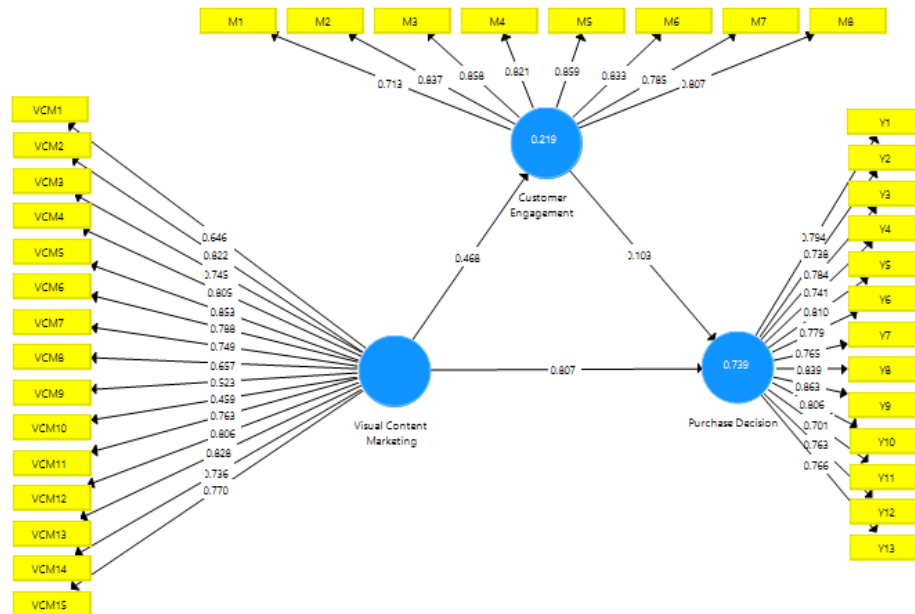
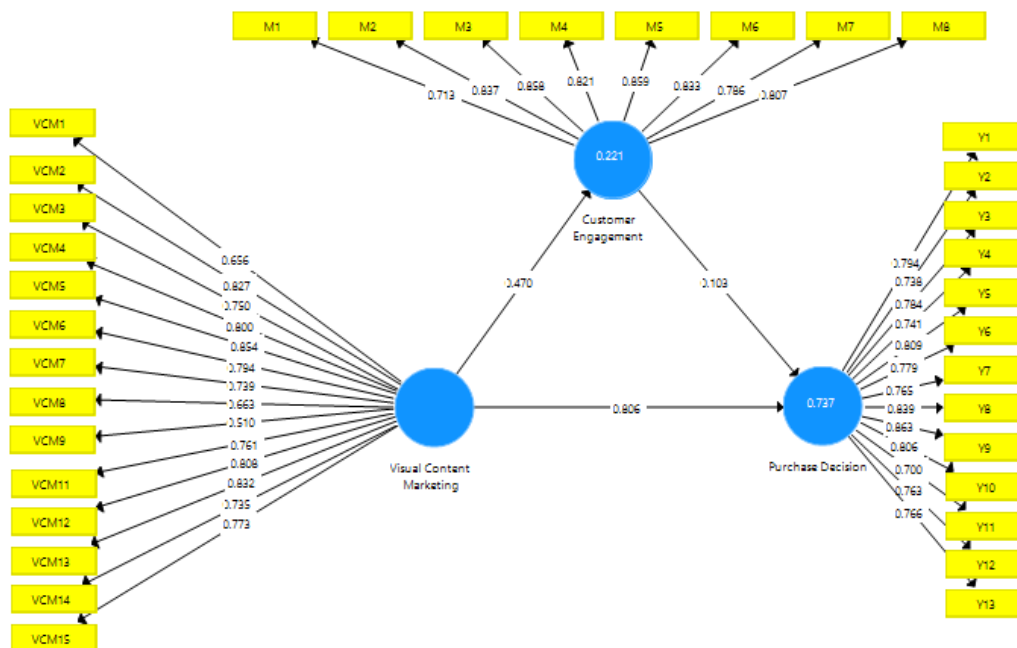


Figure 2. Convergen Validity Re-Estimate



Based on figure 1. There are values that are less than the loading factor of >0.50 so they are not included in the analysis because they do not meet these requirements. In figure 2, the outer loading value has been re-estimated so that the value shows >0.50 and can be declared valid and suitable for further analysis.

4.1.1 Convergent Validity

AVE Values and loading factor are used to assess convergent validity. Convergent validity test is to calculate and figure the correlation between indicators and latent variables.

a. Validity test

The validity test can be spotted in the outer loading value that has an parameter of > 0.7 . However, according to Ghozali (2015), if outer loading value of 0.5-0.6 is still tolerable and acceptable so declared acceptable to satisfy the criteria for convergent validity. The following is the data on the loading factor results. The data from figure 2 presented shows that there are no values below 0.5 in the conclusion, that all variables are meet the requirements for convergent validity and considered valid.

b. Average Variance Extracted

If the result of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is more than 0.5, it is regarded as legitimate. Visual content marketing have AVE value 0.570, customer engagement 0.665, and purchase decision 0.611. This succeed processing data with a value showing more than 0.5, and that implies one latent variable is capable to represent fifty percent the variance of the indicator (Ghozali, 2016), the biggest AVE value is in the customer engagement variable with 0.665 so it can be assume that there is no problem in convergent validity and includes fulfilling the requirements.

4.1.2 Discriminant Validity

Reliability tests, cross loading values, and correlation values between latent constructs and Fornell-Larcker can all be used to demonstrate discriminant validity.

a. Reability test

The reliability test can be supposed to be reliable from the Cronbach's Alpha value and the composite reliability value, if both Cronbach's Alpha values and the composite dependability value are more than 0.70 (Ghozali, 2021).

Table 1. Reability Test Result

| Variable | Cronbach's Alpha | Rho_A | Composite Reability | AVE |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|
| Visual Content Marketing | 0.940 | 0.946 | 0.948 | 0.570 |
| Customer Engagement | 0.928 | 0.930 | 0.941 | 0.665 |
| Purchase Decision | 0.947 | 0.950 | 0.953 | 0.611 |

Source: Processed by researcher, 2024

According to Table 1. Since all of the composite reliability and Cronbach alpha values are more than 0.70, it is reasonable to assume that all of the factors are reliable.

b. Fornell-Larcker

The latent variable value must be smaller than the square root value of AVE so it can be said to have good discriminant validity.

Table 2. Correlation Loading Value between Latent Construct

| Variable | Customer Engagement | Purchase Decision | Visual Content Marketing |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Customer Engagement | 0.815 | | |
| Purchase Decision | 0.481 | 0.782 | |
| Visual Content Marketing | 0.470 | 0.854 | 0.755 |

Source: Processed by researcher, 2024

By examining the value across the diagonal axis, one can get the square root (AVE) of any latent variable value. Table 2 shows that the discriminant validity is satisfied because the variable value is less than the square root value of AVE.

c. Cross Loading

Every indicator that has the highest cross loading value can be sorted as having great discriminant validity. Here are the table of cross loading values.

Table 3. Cross Loading Value

| Variable | Customer Engagement (M) | Purchase Decision (Y) | Visual Content Marketing (VCM) |
|----------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| M1 | 0.713 | 0.434 | 0.428 |
| M2 | 0.837 | 0.321 | 0.348 |
| M3 | 0.858 | 0.350 | 0.337 |
| M4 | 0.821 | 0.318 | 0.314 |
| M5 | 0.859 | 0.415 | 0.415 |
| M6 | 0.833 | 0.434 | 0.439 |
| M7 | 0.786 | 0.403 | 0.369 |
| M8 | 0.807 | 0.412 | 0.366 |
| VCM1 | 0.262 | 0.527 | 0.656 |
| VCM2 | 0.385 | 0.608 | 0.827 |
| VCM3 | 0.349 | 0.601 | 0.750 |
| VCM4 | 0.446 | 0.680 | 0.800 |
| VCM5 | 0.389 | 0.696 | 0.854 |
| VCM6 | 0.342 | 0.717 | 0.794 |
| VCM7 | 0.329 | 0.681 | 0.739 |
| VCM8 | 0.267 | 0.595 | 0.663 |
| VCM9 | 0.134 | 0.482 | 0.510 |
| VCM11 | 0.325 | 0.612 | 0.761 |
| VCM12 | 0.362 | 0.642 | 0.808 |
| VCM13 | 0.402 | 0.672 | 0.832 |
| VCM14 | 0.422 | 0.694 | 0.735 |
| VCM15 | 0.442 | 0.746 | 0.773 |
| Y1 | 0.460 | 0.794 | 0.725 |
| Y2 | 0.324 | 0.738 | 0.594 |
| Y3 | 0.384 | 0.784 | 0.666 |
| Y4 | 0.408 | 0.741 | 0.739 |
| Variable | Customer Engagement (M) | Purchase Decision (Y) | Visual Content Marketing (VCM) |
| Y5 | 0.463 | 0.809 | 0.707 |
| Y6 | 0.291 | 0.779 | 0.557 |
| Y7 | 0.319 | 0.765 | 0.574 |
| Y8 | 0.381 | 0.839 | 0.694 |
| Y9 | 0.438 | 0.863 | 0.714 |
| Y10 | 0.360 | 0.806 | 0.718 |
| Y11 | 0.273 | 0.700 | 0.523 |
| Y12 | 0.348 | 0.763 | 0.659 |
| Y13 | 0.373 | 0.766 | 0.722 |

Source: Processed by researcher, 2024

Table 3 shows that the cross loading value, which is higher than the cross loading result, implies good discriminant validity. Blocks that colored green indicate a value that is greater than other blocks.

4.2. Inner Model

The structural model is used to explain the relationships among causal effect and also direct influences between latent variables. Prove it through tests carried out with determinant coefficients to hypothesis testing.

4.2.1 Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Coefficient of determination can be use to calculate the percentage about how big the relationship between variables.

Table 4. R Square Test Result

| Variable | R Square | R Square Adjusted |
|---------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Customer Engagement | 0.221 | 0.216 |
| Purchase Decision | 0.737 | 0.734 |

Source: Processed by researcher, 2024

Table 4. Shows the R Square figures of 0.221 and 0.737. This indicates that a 22.1 percent measurement of the impact of visual content marketing on customer engagement because of 0.221 multiplied by 100 percent and the 77.9 percent is other factors that were not researched. Meanwhile, The percentage of purchase decisions affected by visual content marketing was 73.7% and 26.3 percent of other factors were not considered. Based on Ghozali and Latan (2015) The research model with the value of customer engagement belong in weak category because more than 0.19 but not surpass 0.33 and the purchase decision is strong, more than 0,67 means the contributing is high and strong.

4.2.2. Hypotesis Test

In smartPLS, hypothesis testing is guided by examining the original sample value, T statistic and P Value. Apart from that, as a condition for fulfilling the hypothesis, there is a T statistic value > 1.96 and a P value < 0.05. This test uses a bootstrapping process with the following results.

Table 5. Hypotesis Test

| Variable | Original Sample (O) | Sample mean (M) | Standard deviation (STDEV) | T Statistic | P Value |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------|---------|
| Visual Content Marketing -> Purchase Decision | 0.807 | 0.806 | 0.035 | 22.997 | 0.000 |
| Visual Content Marketing -> Customer Engagement | 0.468 | 0.473 | 0.067 | 6.978 | 0.000 |
| Customer Engagement -> Purchase Decision | 0.103 | 0.106 | 0.041 | 2.502 | 0.013 |

Source: Processed by researcher, 2024

H1: Visual Content Marketing have an positive and significant effect on purchase decision

Based on table 5. Visual content marketing as an exogenous construct has a positive influence from the original sample value of 0.807 on purchase decisions. The T statistic value is 22.997 > 1.96 and the P value is 0.000 < 0.05, so the H1 or first hypothesis can be accepted. This implies visual Content Marketing have an positive and significant effect on purchase decision have proven to be true.

H2: Visual Content Marketing have an positive and significant effect on customer engagement

Customer engagement is positively impacted by visual content marketing by 0.468. The second hypothesis is classified as accepted because the T statistic value is 6.978 > 1.96 and the P value is 0.000 < 0.05. It has been established that visual content marketing significantly and favorably affects client engagement.

H3: Customer Engagement have an positive and significant effect on purchase decision

Purchasing decisions are positively impacted by customer engagement by a factor of 0.103. Given that the P value is 0.013 > 0.05 and the T statistic value is 2.502 > 1.96, the third hypothesis is accepted and shown to be true. This suggests that customer engagement has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions.

4.2.3. Indirect Effect Test

The indirect effect test to prove part of the mediation variable was carried out to prove the point of this examination, so it is important to know the influence of the mediation role. The value of the indirect effect test is presented in this following table.

Table 6. Indirect effect test

| Variable | Original Sample (O) | Sample mean (M) | Standard deviation (STDEV) | T Statistic | P Value |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------|---------|
| Visual content marketing -> Customer Engagement -> Purchase Decision | 0.048 | 0.051 | 0.023 | 2.099 | 0.036 |

Source: Processed by researcher, 2024

H4: Customer Engagement mediating the relationship between visual content marketing and purchase decision

Based on table 6. Proves that the original sample customer engagement value is 0.048, meaning that there is customer influence as a mediating variable. Acceptance of hypothesis four is based on the T statistic value of 2.099 with a significance level > 1.96 and the P value of 0.036 with a standard value < 0.05. It is established that Customer engagement contributes as an indirect mediator in the interaction between purchase decisions and visual content marketing.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

The conclusion of results show that visual content marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. This indicates that the visual content uploaded and marketed through

Sukabumi Outdoor has been successful in influencing customer purchasing decisions. Instagram as a tool for promoting and a place to upload visual content has proven beneficial. Furthermore, This study demonstrates the beneficial and noteworthy influence of customer engagement on purchasing decisions. This indicates that a factor in the rise in purchase decisions is customer engagement. Customer engagement has a weak influence on mediating the relationship between visual content marketing and purchase decisions. However, customer engagement, such as paying attention through likes, comments, or sharing Sukabumi outdoor content can encourage customers to make purchase. Customer engagement is a beneficial strategy and an effective way to attract purchases with Instagram's visual content marketing. This result of this research is expected to increase purchase decision at Sukabumi Outdoor as a hiking company by increasing strategy and company performance. Also, this research could be applied for any other hiking company.

However, this research is limited to hiking companies only. For future researchers, it is suggested to add more variables, use other locus or study any social media platform such as TikTok.

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