

The Influence of Brand Awareness and Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention through Brand Trust

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of digital technology has transformed how businesses interact with consumers, making brand awareness is an important strategy to strengthen brand presence and influence consumer behavior in online environments. In increasingly competitive digital markets, companies must build strong and credible brand images to foster consumer confidence and encourage purchasing decisions. **This study aims** to analyze the effect of brand awareness on purchase intention through brand trust as a mediating variable. **A quantitative research** approach is employed using a survey method to collect data from 135 consumers who interact with brands through digital platforms, and the data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine the relationships between brand awareness, brand trust, and purchase intention. **The results** of the study reveal that brand awareness has a significant positive effect on brand trust and purchase intention, while brand trust also significantly influences consumers' purchase intention and acts as a mediating variable between brand awareness and purchase intention. **These findings** indicate that effective brand awareness strategies not only improve brand visibility but also enhance consumer trust, which ultimately increases the likelihood of consumers making purchasing decisions. Therefore, this study provides theoretical contributions to the field of digital marketing by explaining the mediating role of brand trust in the relationship between digital branding and purchase intention, while also offering practical implications for businesses to strengthen digital branding strategies in order to build stronger consumer trust and improve market competitiveness in the digital era.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of the digital economy has significantly transformed how businesses operate and interact with consumers in the era of digital transformation [1]. Organizations increasingly rely on digital technologies to promote products, communicate brand values, and maintain competitive advantages in highly dynamic markets [2]. Digital marketing has therefore become a fundamental strategy for companies seeking

to reach wider audiences and build long-term relationships with consumers [3]. One essential element within digital marketing is brand awareness, which refers to the ability of consumers to recognize and recall a brand when considering purchasing decisions [4]. In competitive market environments where numerous brands compete for attention, strong brand awareness enables consumers to quickly identify a product and differentiate it from alternatives [5, 6]. As consumer exposure to digital information increases, companies must continuously strengthen brand awareness to maintain relevance and visibility in the marketplace [7].

Alongside brand awareness, social media marketing has emerged as one of the most influential marketing communication tools in the digital era [8]. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok enable businesses to interact directly with consumers through interactive content, promotional campaigns, and real-time communication [9]. These platforms function not only as communication channels but also as ecosystems where brands can build communities, gather consumer feedback, and enhance engagement with audiences [3]. The growing integration of digital platforms in daily life has further strengthened the importance of social media as a key marketing channel [5]. Global digital reports indicate that the number of internet users worldwide has surpassed 5 billion people, while more than 4.7 billion individuals actively use social media [10]. This massive level of digital connectivity demonstrates how online platforms have become central to marketing activities and brand consumer interactions [11].

The development of digital marketing strategies is also closely aligned with global development initiatives promoted by the United Nations through the Sustainable Development Goals [12]. In particular, digital marketing contributes to SDGs 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth by enabling businesses to expand their markets, improve productivity, and create new economic opportunities within the digital economy [13]. At the same time, the adoption of digital marketing technologies supports SDGs 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure by encouraging technological innovation and strengthening digital infrastructure across industries [14]. Within this context, building consumer trust becomes an essential factor influencing purchasing behavior [15]. Brand trust reflects consumers' confidence in a brand's reliability, credibility, and ability to deliver promised value [16]. When consumers perceive a brand as trustworthy, they are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward the brand and demonstrate stronger purchase intentions [17].

Despite the increasing emphasis on digital marketing strategies, high levels of brand awareness and active social media marketing do not always translate into strong purchase intention among consumers [18]. Many brands successfully attract consumer attention and generate engagement through digital platforms, yet these interactions do not necessarily lead to actual purchasing decisions [19]. This situation indicates the existence of a gap between marketing exposure and consumer purchasing behavior [20]. One possible explanation for this gap is the role of brand trust as a mediating factor that shapes how consumers interpret and respond to marketing messages [21]. Previous studies in digital marketing have often focused on the direct relationship between brand awareness and purchase intention or examined the influence of social media marketing on consumer engagement without considering the mediating role of brand trust [22]. Consequently, these studies may not fully explain the psychological mechanisms underlying consumer decision-making in digital environments. This limitation highlights the need for a comprehensive research framework that integrates brand awareness and social media marketing while examining brand trust as a mediating variable [23].

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Brand Awareness

Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers are able to recognize and recall a brand under different conditions [24, 25]. It represents the initial stage in the consumer decision-making process, where familiarity with a brand increases the likelihood of consideration and selection [26]. Brand awareness consists of two main dimensions, namely brand recognition and brand recall, which reflect the strength of a brand in the consumer's memory [27]. Previous studies indicate that higher brand awareness can positively influence consumer perceptions and reduce uncertainty when evaluating products or services [28]. In the context of digital marketing, brand awareness is often enhanced through consistent online presence, content marketing, and search engine visibility [29]. However, brand awareness alone may not be sufficient to drive purchase intention without the presence of trust, as consumers may recognize a brand but still hesitate to engage in transactions if credibility is lacking [30]. Therefore, integrating brand trust as a complementary factor is essential to strengthen the effect of brand awareness on purchase intention, implying that companies should focus not only on increasing visibility but also on building credibility and positive brand associations [31].

2.2. Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing refers to the use of social media platforms to promote products, services, and brand values while enabling real-time interaction with consumers, making it a key component of digital marketing strategies [32]. It includes elements such as content quality, interactivity, entertainment value, and customization, which contribute to consumer engagement and can enhance brand image and influence purchasing decisions [33]. Additionally, social media allows two-way communication, helping brands build closer relationships with consumers [34]. However, its effectiveness depends on content authenticity and credibility, as excessive or misleading promotions may reduce trust and negatively impact purchase intention [35].

2.3. Brand Trust

Brand trust is defined as consumers' willingness to rely on a brand based on the belief that it will deliver its promised value, making it a crucial factor in building long-term relationships, especially in digital environments with limited physical interaction [36]. It is associated with reliability, honesty, and credibility, and often serves as a mediating variable that explains how marketing activities influence consumer behavior [37]. Empirical studies show that brand trust significantly affects purchase intention and reduces perceived risk in online transactions; without it, consumers may hesitate to engage despite high awareness or exposure, highlighting its importance in converting marketing efforts into actual purchase intention [38].

2.4. Purchase Intention

Purchase intention refers to the likelihood that a consumer is willing to buy a product or service and is a key predictor of actual purchasing behavior [39]. It is influenced by factors such as brand perception, marketing communication, and psychological aspects like trust and perceived value [40]. In digital contexts, purchase intention is shaped by online reviews, social media interactions, and brand credibility [41]. Previous studies show that brand awareness and social media marketing can affect purchase intention both directly and indirectly through mediators like brand trust; however, inconsistent findings indicate the need for further investigation, particularly regarding the mediating role of trust in digital marketing contexts [42].

2.5. Research Gap and Framework

Previous studies have examined brand awareness and social media marketing as key factors influencing purchase intention, but most focus on direct relationships and overlook the role of brand trust as an underlying mechanism [43]. In many cases, high exposure to digital marketing does not necessarily lead to purchasing decisions, indicating a gap between marketing activities and consumer behavior [44]. This suggests that brand trust may play a crucial role in explaining how marketing efforts are translated into consumer intention [45].

To address this gap, this study proposes an integrated framework where Brand Awareness and Social Media Marketing influence Brand Trust, which in turn affects Purchase Intention. By positioning brand trust as a mediating variable, this model provides a clearer understanding of the relationship between digital marketing and consumer behavior, offering both theoretical and practical contributions in explaining how trust drives purchasing decisions.

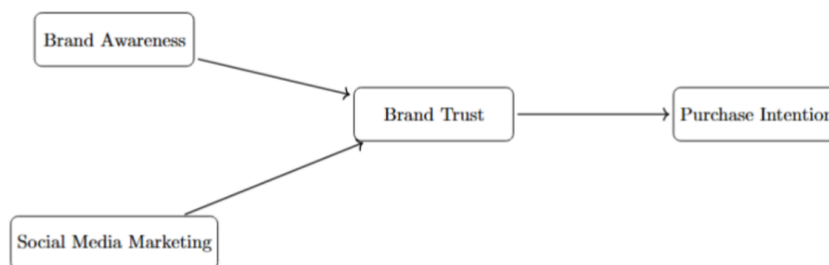


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Model

Figure 1 presents the proposed research framework, which suggests that Brand Awareness and Social Media Marketing positively influence Brand Trust, which in turn affects Purchase Intention. Each variable is hypothesized to contribute directly and indirectly to consumer decision-making, particularly in shaping trust

and encouraging purchasing behavior in the digital marketing context. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are formulated:

- H1: Brand Awareness has a positive and significant effect on Brand Trust.
- H2: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Brand Trust.
- H3: Brand Trust has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention.

Based on the theoretical framework and previous studies discussed above, this research proposes a conceptual model that examines the relationships between Brand Awareness, social media marketing, brand trust, and purchase intention. The literature indicates that these variables are interconnected and play a significant role in influencing consumer behavior in digital environments. Therefore, to empirically test these relationships, a structured research methodology is required, which is described in the following section.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Approach

Building upon the conceptual framework derived from the literature review, this study adopts a quantitative research approach to examine the proposed relationships between variables. The methodology is designed to ensure that the theoretical assumptions can be empirically tested using reliable and valid data collected from relevant respondents.

3.2. Sample Characteristics

This study employs a quantitative research approach to examine the relationships among Brand Awareness, Social Media Marketing, Brand Trust, and Purchase Intention within the context of digital marketing. A quantitative method is appropriate because it enables the measurement of consumer perceptions and the statistical analysis of relationships among variables. Data were collected using a survey-based method through a structured questionnaire distributed to consumers who actively use social media platforms and are exposed to brand-related digital marketing activities.

The sample consisted of 200 respondents who met the criteria of actively using social media and having prior exposure to brand-related digital marketing content. The sample size is considered adequate for analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), as this method is suitable for relatively small to medium sample sizes. Following the rule of thumb in PLS-SEM, the minimum sample size should be 5 to 10 times the number of indicators used in the model. Therefore, the number of respondents in this study exceeds the minimum requirement and provides sufficient statistical power for model estimation.

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1, which includes gender, age, education level, and social media usage behavior.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	78	39%
	Female	122	61%
Age	18–25 years	110	55%
	26–35 years	65	32.5%
	>35 years	25	12.5%
Education Level	High School	60	30%
	Bachelor's Degree	120	60%
	Postgraduate	20	10%
Social Media Usage	<2 hours/day	30	15%
	2–4 hours/day	110	55%
	>4 hours/day	60	30%

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents are female, with 122 respondents or 61% of the total sample, while male respondents account for 78 respondents or 39%. Based on age, most respondents are in the 18–25 years category, representing 55% of the sample. This indicates that younger consumers dominate

the respondent profile and are highly relevant to the context of digital marketing and social media-based brand interaction.

In terms of education level, most respondents hold a bachelor's degree, accounting for 60% of the total sample. This suggests that the respondents have sufficient educational background to understand and evaluate digital marketing activities. Regarding social media usage, the majority of respondents spend 2–4 hours per day on social media, followed by those who spend more than 4 hours per day. These findings indicate that the respondents are active digital users and are therefore suitable for analyzing the effects of brand awareness and social media marketing on consumer behavior.

This study employed a structured questionnaire developed based on established constructs from prior literature on digital marketing and consumer behavior. Each variable, including Brand Awareness, Social Media Marketing, Brand Trust, and Purchase Intention, was operationalized into multiple indicators adapted from validated previous studies. Prior to full data collection, a pilot test was conducted on a small group of respondents to ensure the clarity, reliability, and validity of the instrument. The results of the pilot test indicated that all measurement items met the reliability threshold, with Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.7, confirming internal consistency.

To analyze the relationships among variables, this study utilizes Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the PLS-SEM approach. This method is suitable for analyzing complex models involving multiple variables and mediating relationships. It allows for the simultaneous evaluation of both the measurement model and the structural model, ensuring robust and reliable results in explaining consumer behavior.

3.3. Variables and Indicators

The target population of this study consists of consumers who actively use social media platforms and are frequently exposed to digital marketing content. These individuals are considered relevant because they interact with brands through online channels and are able to evaluate digital marketing activities. The sampling technique used in this research is purposive sampling, which allows the selection of respondents based on specific criteria, such as active social media usage and prior interaction with brand-related content. This approach ensures that the collected data are relevant to the research objectives.

The data are collected using an online questionnaire, which enables efficient and wide distribution among respondents. In quantitative studies using PLS-SEM, determining an adequate sample size is essential. Therefore, this study follows the general guideline of using at least 100–200 respondents to ensure reliable statistical analysis and accurate model estimation. The variables and measurement indicators used in this study are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Variables and Measurement Indicators

Variable	Indicators	Description
Brand Awareness	BA1	Consumers recognize the brand easily
	BA2	Consumers can recall the brand when thinking about similar products
	BA3	The brand is familiar among consumers
Social Media Marketing	SMM1	Social media content is attractive
	SMM2	Social media provides useful information about the brand
	SMM3	The brand actively interacts with consumers on social media
	SMM4	Social media marketing content is entertaining
Brand Trust	BT1	Consumers believe the brand is reliable
	BT2	Consumers feel confident about the brand
	BT3	The brand delivers its promised value
Purchase Intention	PI1	Consumers intend to purchase the product
	PI2	Consumers are likely to purchase the product in the future

Table 2 presents the operationalization of variables used in this study along with their respective measurement indicators. Each variable is measured using multiple indicators to ensure comprehensive repre-

sentation of the construct. Brand Awareness is measured through recognition and recall aspects, while Social Media Marketing is evaluated through content quality, interaction, and informativeness. Brand Trust is measured based on reliability and credibility perceptions, and Purchase Intention reflects consumers' willingness to buy and recommend the product. The use of multiple indicators enhances the validity and reliability of the measurement model. All measurement items are assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This scale allows respondents to express their level of agreement with each statement and enables the quantification of subjective perceptions for statistical analysis.

3.4. Analytical Techniques

The data analysis begins with preliminary analysis to ensure data quality. Data screening is conducted to identify incomplete responses, missing values, and outliers that may affect the analysis results. After screening, descriptive statistics are used to summarize respondent characteristics and provide an overview of the data distribution. Measures such as mean and standard deviation are calculated to understand general trends in respondents' perceptions. The evaluation of the research model is conducted using several statistical criteria to ensure validity and reliability, including indicator reliability through factor loadings (> 0.70), convergent validity using Average Variance Extracted ($AVE > 0.50$), and internal consistency measured by Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha (> 0.70). Multicollinearity is assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor ($VIF < 5$), while the model's explanatory power is evaluated through the R-square ($R^2 \geq 0.25$), indicating adequate ability to explain the dependent variable. Additionally, mediation analysis is performed to examine the role of Brand Trust in mediating the relationships between Brand Awareness and Purchase Intention as well as Social Media Marketing and Purchase Intention, to determine the significance of indirect effects in influencing consumer behavior.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Outer Model Measurement

The outer model evaluation aims to assess the validity and reliability of the measurement indicators used in this study. Convergent validity is examined through factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while reliability is evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. All indicators are expected to meet the recommended thresholds, where factor loadings should be > 0.70 , $AVE > 0.50$, and both reliability measures > 0.70 .

Table 3. Outer Model Evaluation Results

Variable	Indicators	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Brand Awareness	BA1	0.812	0.892	0.920	0.658
	BA2	0.845	-	-	-
	BA3	0.798	-	-	-
Social Media Marketing	SMM1	0.831	0.901	0.926	0.676
	SMM2	0.867	-	-	-
	SMM3	0.809	-	-	-
Brand Trust	BT1	0.854	0.915	0.940	0.723
	BT2	0.879	-	-	-
	BT3	0.833	-	-	-
Purchase Intention	PI1	0.868	0.907	0.933	0.699
	PI2	0.842	-	-	-
	PI3	0.821	-	-	-

Table 3 shows that all indicators have factor loadings greater than 0.70, indicating good indicator reliability. Additionally, the AVE values for all variables exceed 0.50, confirming that the constructs have achieved convergent validity. The Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values are also above 0.70, demonstrating strong internal consistency. These results indicate that the measurement model is valid and reliable, and therefore suitable for further analysis in the structural model.

4.2. Inner Model Measurement

The inner model evaluation focuses on examining the relationships between variables and the predictive power of the research model. This includes assessing the coefficient of determination (R^2) and testing the hypotheses using path coefficients, T-statistics, and P-values obtained through bootstrapping.

Table 4. R-Square Values

Variable	R^2
Brand Trust	0.640
Purchase Intention	0.680

Table 4 indicates that Brand Trust has an R^2 value of 0.64, meaning that 64% of its variance is explained by Brand Awareness and Social Media Marketing. Meanwhile, Purchase Intention has an R^2 value of 0.68, indicating that 68% of its variance is explained by Brand Trust. These values suggest that the model has strong explanatory power and is considered substantial in explaining consumer behavior.

Table 5. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path	Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Value	Result
H1	BA → BT	0.350	4.120	0.000	Supported
H2	SMM → BT	0.480	5.670	0.000	Supported
H3	BT → PI	0.720	8.450	0.000	Supported

Based on Table 5, all hypothesized relationships are statistically significant, as indicated by T-statistics greater than 1.96 and P-values less than 0.05. Brand Awareness and Social Media Marketing both have a positive and significant effect on Brand Trust, while Brand Trust strongly influences Purchase Intention. Furthermore, the mediation analysis shows that Brand Trust significantly mediates the relationship between both independent variables and Purchase Intention, indicating a partial mediation effect.

4.3. Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that Brand Awareness plays a significant role in building Brand Trust. Consumers who are more familiar with a brand tend to perceive it as more credible and reliable. This aligns with previous studies suggesting that brand recognition is a fundamental step in establishing trust in digital environments. In addition, Social Media Marketing demonstrates a stronger influence on Brand Trust, indicating that interactive and engaging content on social media platforms can effectively strengthen consumer confidence.

Furthermore, Brand Trust is found to have a substantial impact on Purchase Intention, highlighting its critical role as a determinant of consumer behavior. This result suggests that even when consumers are aware of a brand and exposed to marketing efforts, trust remains the key factor that drives their final purchasing decisions. The mediation analysis reinforces this finding, showing that Brand Trust acts as a bridge that connects marketing activities with consumer intentions.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the digital marketing literature by integrating Brand Awareness and Social Media Marketing within a single framework while emphasizing the mediating role of Brand Trust. Practically, the findings suggest that businesses should not only focus on increasing visibility and engagement but also prioritize strategies that enhance trust, such as transparency, consistency, and credibility in digital communication.

In relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDGs 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), this study highlights how effective digital marketing strategies can drive business growth and innovation. By leveraging social media and building consumer trust, companies can enhance their competitiveness and contribute to sustainable economic development in the digital era.

5. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study provide important managerial insights for businesses seeking to enhance consumer purchase intention through digital strategies. Companies should prioritize building strong brand trust as a central objective, as it has been proven to significantly influence purchase intention. This can be achieved

by consistently delivering transparent, reliable, and high-quality digital content across social media platforms. In addition, strengthening brand awareness through targeted and engaging social media marketing campaigns is essential, as both variables significantly contribute to the formation of brand trust. Managers are encouraged to leverage data-driven marketing strategies, such as personalized content, influencer collaborations, and interactive campaigns, to increase consumer engagement and credibility. By integrating these approaches, businesses can not only improve their competitive advantage in the digital marketplace but also support sustainable growth aligned with digital transformation trends.

6. CONCLUSION

This study aims to examine the influence of Brand Awareness and Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention through Brand Trust as a mediating variable in the context of digital marketing. The results reveal that both Brand Awareness and Social Media Marketing have a positive and significant effect on Brand Trust, while Brand Trust significantly influences Purchase Intention. Furthermore, the mediation analysis confirms that Brand Trust plays an important role in bridging the relationship between marketing activities and consumer purchasing decisions, indicating a partial mediation effect. These findings highlight that trust is a key factor in transforming marketing exposure into actual purchase intention.


From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the digital marketing literature by proposing an integrated model that emphasizes the mediating role of Brand Trust in explaining consumer behavior. Practically, the findings suggest that businesses should not only focus on increasing brand visibility and social media engagement but also prioritize building trust through consistent, transparent, and credible communication strategies. Strengthening brand trust can enhance consumer confidence and ultimately improve purchasing decisions in competitive digital markets.

In relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDGs 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), this study demonstrates how effective digital marketing strategies can support business growth and innovation. Future research is recommended to incorporate additional variables, such as perceived value or customer satisfaction, and to expand the scope across different industries or regions to improve the generalizability of the findings.

7. DECLARATIONS


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7.2. Author Contributions

Conceptualization: MH, QA, and FP; Methodology: SA; Software: RA; Validation: MH; Formal Analysis: QA and FP; Investigation: SA and RA; Resources: MH; Data Curation: QA and FP; Writing Original Draft Preparation: SA and RA; Writing Review and Editing: MH; Visualization: QA; All authors, MH, QA, FP, SA and RA, have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

7.3. Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

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The authors declare that no financial support was received for the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

7.5. Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest, known competing financial interests, or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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