The Influence of Content Marketing and Online Customer Reviews on Purchase Intention: A Study of Local Fashion Consumers on TikTok in Bandung, Indonesia

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Abstract. This study aims to examine the influence of content marketing and online customer reviews on purchase intention among local fashion consumers on TikTok in Bandung, Indonesia. The research employs a quantitative approach using data collected from 150 respondenst who have interacted with fashion related content or made purchases through TikTok Shop. A purposive sampling technique was applied, targeting active TikTok users aged 18 years and above. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.The findings reveal that both content marketing and online customer reviews have a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. These variables jointly play an important role in shaping consumer decision making in social commerce environments. The results emphasize the strategic importance of delivering emotionally engaging content and maintaining credible customer reviews on Tiktok, particularly for local fashion brands aiming to enhance consumer purchase intention in digital platforms. This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence on the simultaneous effect of content marketing and online customer reviews within a local fashion context, focusing on TikTok as an emerging and influential social commerce platform in Bandung.

Keywords: Content Marketing, Online Customer Reviews, Purchase Intention, Tiktok, Social Commerce, Fashion Marketing, Indonesia

1 Introduction

Indonesia is one of the fastest growing digital markets in the world. As of early 2024, internet penetration reached 66.5%, with 185.3 million active users and 139 million social media users [1]. Among various platforms, TikTok holds a dominant position with 126.8 million adult users, accounting for 64.8% of the adult population and 68.5%

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of the total local internet users. The rise of TikTok Shop as an in app e-commerce feature has made it a key catalyst in the growth of social commerce in Indonesia, surpassing traditional marketing models that are more linear and passive [2].

In addition to being a catalyst for the growth of social e-commerce, TikTok has also emerged as a highly potential marketing arena for local fashion industry players in Indonesia. No longer merely an entertainment platform, TikTok has become a digital creative stage where local brands deliver visual narratives that evoke emotion and curiosity among consumers. Through features such as TikTok Shop, LIVE Shopping, and a behaviour based recommendation algorithm, small brands now have an equal opportunity to reach wide audiences just like large brands. The platform promotes marketing democratization, where influence is no longer determined by capital strength, but by content that is authentic, quick, and engaging.

In the context of the fashion industry, TikTok has become a symbolic space representing lifestyle, trends, and the cultural identity of the younger generation. Local brands such as Erigo, Screamous, and even niche labels like Furiex Clothing utilizes this platform to develop storytelling, fashion hauls, real-time testimonials, and behind the scenes production content. Content that successfully reaches the For Your Page (FYP) has a significant potential to go viral, resulting in spikes in engagement and even sales within hours. However, behind these opportunities lie new challenges: not all content is equally appealing, and many prospective consumers express doubts about the authenticity of information and the credibility of customer reviews.

This phenomenon highlights two key factors; content marketing and online customer reviews, as crucial elements in shaping purchase intention on platforms like TikTok. According to Pektas and Hassan, content marketing refers to the strategy of creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience [3]. In the context of social digital platforms, content that is informative and emotionally engaging is more effective than conventional advertisements [4,5,6]. Meanwhile, online customer reviews are a form of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) that significantly influence consumer perceptions and trust [4,7].

Purchase intention reflects a consumer's willingness to buy a product after being exposed to specific marketing stimuli [8,9,10,11]. Previous studies have shown that digital social interactions, such as content and customer reviews, play a significant role in purchase decisions, especially within social commerce environments like TikTok [12]. However, few studies have examined how these two variables simultaneously influence consumer behaviour in the context of Indonesia’s local fashion market on the TikTok platform.

This phenomenon is also strongly evident in Bandung, one of Indonesia's centre of creative industries and fashion. Bandung is known for its population of digitally active Gen Z and millennials and for its dynamic ecosystem of local fashion businesses. Many Bandung based fashion brands leverage TikTok to market their products directly to consumers, including through TikTok Shop features and engaging creative content. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the influence of content marketing and customer reviews on the purchase intention of local fashion consumers in Bandung via the TikTok platform.

2 Methods

This study employed a quantitative approach using a survey method as the primary data collection technique. This approach was adopted to examine the influence of two independent variables, content marketing and online customer reviews, on the dependent variable, purchase intention, within the context of using TikTok as a marketing platform for local fashion products. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS SEM) through SmartPLS version 4. This method is appropriate for estimating reflective measurement and structural models simultaneously, particularly for studies with moderate sample sizes and relatively complex model structures. The inferential analysis stages included testing Average Variance Extracted (AVE), construct reliability, R square, and hypothesis testing.

The population in this study consisted of TikTok users in Bandung, Indonesia, who had interacted with promotional content or product reviews related to local fashion via TikTok Shop. Purposive sampling was employed to determine the sample, with the following criteria: at least 17 years of age, actively using TikTok in the past three months, and having interacted with local fashion content or TikTok Shop. A total of 150 valid respondents were collected and analyzed, fulfilling the minimum statistical requirements for PLS SEM analysis.

Despite its suitability for targeting relevant respondents, the use of purposive sampling introduces certain limitations that should be acknowledged. This sampling technique does not provide equal probability for all members of the population to be selected, which may lead to sampling bias. Consequently, the findings of this study cannot be fully generalized to the entire population of TikTok users in Bandung or other regions. The results are more appropriately interpreted within the specific context of users who meet the predefined criteria, particularly those who are actively engaged with local fashion content and social commerce features on TikTok.

Furthermore, the reliance on self reported survey data may also introduce response bias, as participants' answers depend on their perceptions and recall. Future research is recommended to apply probability sampling techniques or expand the sample size and geographic coverage to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Combining survey data with behavioral or platform based data could also strengthen the robustness of future studies.

The questionnaire was developed using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). It comprised three main constructs: Content Marketing, measured by eight indicators (CM1–CM8); Online Customer Reviews, measured by seven indicators (OCR1–OCR7); and Purchase Intention, measured by seven indicators (PI1–PI7).

The main objective of this study was to examine and analyze the influence of content marketing and online customer reviews on consumer purchase intention. Based on relevant theories and previous studies, a conceptual framework was constructed as follows

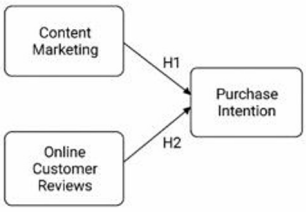

Fig. 1. Research Model

H1 : There is an influence of .Content Marketing on purchase intention

H2 : There is an influence of Online Customer review on purchase intention

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Characteristics of Responden

Based on the data collected from 150 questionnaires, 53 respondents were male and 97 were female. The respondents' ages ranged from 18 to 41 years. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents, including age, gender, and occupation.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Factor	Classification	Number of respondents
Age	18-25 years	32
	26-33 years	71
	34-41 years	47
Gender	Male	53
	Female	97
Occupation	Student	53
	Civil Servant	39
	Employee	28
	Entrepreneur	26
	Other	4

Source : Author's Work

3.2 Factor Loading Values

The outer loading estimation output measures the correlation between the indicator scores (instruments) and their respective constructs (variables). An indicator is considered valid if it has a correlation value above 0.70, although a minimum threshold of 0.60 is still acceptable. If an indicator fails to meet this requirement, it should be excluded from the model. The results of the convergent validity test are presented as follows:

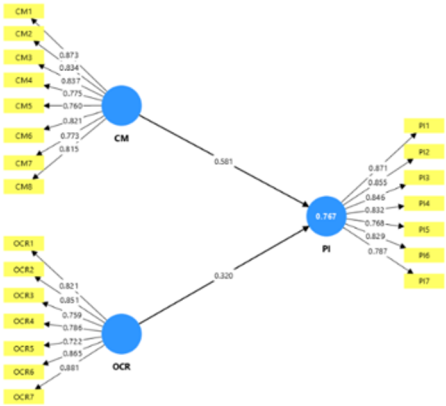

Fig. 2 Outer Model

Based on the results of the outer model analysis, it can be observed that the loading factor values for the variables Content Marketing, Online Customer Reviews, and Purchase Intention fall within the range above 0.70 for each construct. This indicates that the indicators used for each variable have a strong contribution in building the respective latent constructs.

For the Content Marketing variable, the lowest loading value was found in CM5 (0.760), while the highest loading was observed in CM1 (0.873). This suggests that local fashion brands in Bandung are highly active in utilizing TikTok as a promotional platform to attract public attention.

For the Online Customer Reviews variable, the lowest loading was OCR5 (0.722). Although this indicator has a relatively lower contribution, it still sufficiently represents the construct. On the other hand, the highest loading was observed in OCR6 (0.881), indicating that this item is the strongest contributor in shaping consumer perceptions of online customer reviews. This high value reflects the consistency and relevance of OCR6 in measuring the main construct.

Regarding Purchase Intention, the lowest factor loading was found in PI5 (0.768), while the highest was PI1 (0.871). This suggests that PI1 is the most relevant, representative, and consistent item in explaining consumer purchase intention. In other words, the statement represented by PI1 is more easily understood and strongly influences respondents' perceptions toward their intention to purchase products via TikTok.

3.3 Average Variance Extracted

The output of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) estimation is presented in the table below. A variable is considered valid if it has an AVE > 0.5.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
CM	0.659
OCR	0.663
PI	0.685

The variable with the lowest Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is content marketing, while the variable with the highest AVE value is purchase intention. Overall, all AVE values are above 0.5. It can be concluded that each variable meets the required criteria and is considered valid.

3.4 R-Square

In a structural equation model based on Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM), the R-Square (R^2) value is used to measure the explained variance of the endogenous construct by the influencing exogenous constructs. The higher the R^2 value, the greater the proportion of variance in the endogenous construct that can be explained by the model.
The following table presents the R-Square and Adjusted R-Square values of the Purchase Intention construct as the dependent variable.

Table 3. R-Square Test

Variable	R Square	R-Square adjusted
Purchase Intention	0.767	0.762

Source : Author's Work

Based on the analysis results, the R-Square value of the dependent variable purchase intention is 0.767. This indicates that the variability in purchase intention can be explained by content marketing and online customer reviews by 76.7%, which falls into the strong category.

3.5 f-Square

The following table presents the f^2 effect size values of each construct on the Purchase Intention variable.

Table 4. R-Square Test

	CM	OCR	PI	Keterangan
CM			0.321	medium
OCR			0.097	medium
PI				

Source : Author's Work

Based on the analysis results, the effect size (f^2) indicates that content marketing has a moderate influence on purchase intention, with an f^2 value of 0.321, which falls within the mid-range of the moderate effect category (0.02–0.15). This suggests that content marketing is a factor that can explain and enhance purchase intention. Similarly, online customer review also falls into the moderate effect category, with an f^2 value of 0.097, indicating a moderate contribution within the same range (0.02–0.15).

3.6 Hypothesis Test

The following table presents the results of the hypothesis testing on the relationships between Content Marketing (CM) and Online Customer Reviews (OCR) with Purchase Intention (PI).

Table 5. Hypothesis Test

	Original sample (O)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values	Keterangan
CM -> PI	**0.581**	**4.394**	**0.000**	**Accepted**
OCR -> PI	**0.320**	**2.346**	**0.010**	**Accepted**

Source : Author's Work

Based on the analysis output, it can be concluded that content marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention, with a path coefficient of 0.581. This is evidenced by a p-value of 0.000 (which is lower than the alpha level of 0.05) and a T-statistic of 4.394 (which is greater than the T-table value of 1.96). This indicates that the better the content marketing, the higher the purchase intention.

Similarly, the variable online customer review also shows a positive and significant effect on purchase intention, with a path coefficient of 0.320, a p-value of 0.010 (less than the 0.05 alpha level), and a T-statistic of 2.346 (greater than the T-table value of 1.96). These findings suggest that better online customer reviews lead to higher purchase intention.

This study highlights the differential roles of Content Marketing (CM) and Online Customer Reviews (OCR) in shaping Purchase Intention (PI) within TikTok based social commerce in Bandung. The findings indicate that CM has a stronger influence than OCR, suggesting that firm generated content serves as the primary driver of consumer engagement and intention formation [5].

In highly visual and algorithm driven platforms such as TikTok, creative and emotionally appealing content is more effective in capturing attention and stimulating cognitive and affective responses. This supports the view that content marketing functions as an experiential mechanism that enhances consumer engagement and immersion [13]. Consequently, CM plays a critical role in the early stages of the consumer journey, particularly in attracting attention and building initial interest.

In contrast, OCR plays a reinforcing role by strengthening trust and reducing perceived risk through social proof. This indicates that OCR is more influential in the evaluation stage rather than in the initial attraction phase, as consumers rely on reviews to validate their perceptions [14].

These findings can be explained through the Stimulus Organism Response framework, where CM and OCR act as stimuli influencing internal psychological states [5,15]. CM shows a stronger effect due to its ability to trigger both emotional and cognitive engagement, while OCR primarily supports trust based evaluation.

From the Elaboration Likelihood Model perspective, CM operates through both central and peripheral routes, whereas OCR mainly relies on peripheral cues such as credibility and consensus [16].

Compared with international studies, the results confirm that both CM and OCR influence purchase intention, but CM is more dominant in this context. This suggests that platform characteristics, particularly TikTok's visual and algorithm driven nature, amplify the role of content marketing.

Practically, UMKM fashion businesses should prioritize engaging and authentic content while maintaining credible customer reviews. An integrated strategy is essential, where CM drives engagement and OCR supports evaluation and conversion. Overall, this study emphasizes the complementary roles of CM and OCR in influencing purchase intention.

4 Conclusion

This study demonstrates that content marketing and online customer reviews both play important roles in shaping purchase intention within TikTok based social commerce in Bandung. Content marketing shows a stronger influence, indicating that firm generated content is the primary driver of consumer engagement, while online customer reviews reinforce trust and support decision making.

The findings support the Stimulus Organism Response framework and the Elaboration Likelihood Model, where marketing stimuli influence cognitive and emotional processes that lead to behavioral intention. Engaging content enhances consumer involvement, while credible reviews reduce uncertainty and strengthen trust.

Practically, UMKM in the fashion sector should prioritize authentic and engaging content aligned with TikTok characteristics, while maintaining credible customer reviews. An integrated strategy combining content marketing and reviews is essential to improve competitiveness in social commerce.

This study has limitations, including the use of purposive sampling, a geographically limited sample in Bandung, and a relatively small sample size, which restrict generalizability.

Future research should expand the geographical scope, apply probability sampling, and include more diverse samples. Further studies may also explore different product categories or additional variables to better understand consumer behavior in digital commerce contexts.

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