

An Analysis of the Influence of Digital Marketing Strategies on Consumer Purchasing Decisions in the Fashion Retail Business in the Post-Pandemic Era

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study aims to analyze the influence of digital marketing strategies on consumer purchasing decisions in fashion retail businesses in the post-pandemic era. The primary focus is on identifying which elements of digital strategies significantly influence consumers' purchasing decision-making processes.

Subjects and Methods: This study used a quantitative approach with an explanatory method. The sample consisted of 150 respondents who were consumers who had purchased fashion products online in the past year. Data collection was conducted through a Google Form-based questionnaire. The research instrument included six digital marketing strategy variables: social media content, online advertising, influencer marketing, interactive websites, email marketing, and digital promotions. The data analysis technique used was multiple linear regression, supported by instrument validity and reliability tests.

Results: The results of the study showed that simultaneously, digital marketing strategies significantly influenced consumer purchasing decisions ($p < 0.01$). Partially, digital promotion, social media content, influencer marketing, and online advertising variables significantly influenced purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, interactive websites and email marketing did not have a significant influence. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.661 indicates that 66.1% of the variation in purchasing decisions can be explained by the digital marketing strategies used.

Conclusions: Digital marketing strategies have proven to play a crucial role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions in fashion retail businesses post-pandemic. Therefore, companies need to focus their marketing efforts on social media, digital promotions, and collaborations with influencers to effectively and efficiently increase purchase conversions.

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has fundamentally changed the marketing landscape over the past two decades (Dutta, 2024; Faruk et al., 2021). Digital marketing is now a key strategy for reaching consumers quickly, precisely, and personally. This is increasingly relevant in the context of the fashion retail business, which relies heavily on trends, brand perception, and the speed of information and product distribution. The implementation of digital strategies such as social media, influencer marketing, interactive websites, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), and paid advertising allows businesses to build direct interactions with consumers and increase the effectiveness of marketing communications (Bala & Verma, 2018; Pashiera & Sardjono, 2024).

According to Ratten (2023), this situation has become even more significant in the post-COVID-19 pandemic era. The pandemic has not only changed consumption patterns but also accelerated digitalization in the retail sector (Mardosaite et al., 2024). Consumer behavior shifts from previously favoring in-person shopping in brick-and-mortar stores to digital platforms (Lipka et al., 2024). Consumers demand convenience, speed, and security in the purchasing process, driving fashion retailers to adapt through various digital channels. Traditional marketing strategies are becoming less relevant, replaced by data-driven approaches, content, and personalized digital experiences (Adeniran et al., 2024; Shah & Murthi, 2021; Olayinka, 2021).

Amidst increasingly fierce competition, fashion retailers are not only required to maintain a digital presence but also to develop effective digital marketing strategies to drive consumer purchasing decisions (Drzewiecka & Guinnane, 2024). This strategy is not limited to promotions alone, but also encompasses how to build trust, loyalty, and a satisfying customer experience through digital media. Therefore, a deep understanding of how digital marketing strategies influence purchasing decisions is crucial, especially in the context of post-pandemic economic recovery (Paningrum et al., 2023; Zahara et al., 2023).

Align with research from Alghizzawi (2019), previous studies have shown that digital marketing strategies play a significant role in consumer behavior. Factors such as content quality, social media interactions, online brand presence, and speed of response to customers have been shown to influence purchasing decisions (Ansari et al., 2019). However, in the post-pandemic context, new, under-researched dynamics have emerged, such as changing consumer preferences for local brands, increased attention to value and sustainability, and increased reliance on e-commerce platforms.

Based on this background, this study was conducted to analyze the influence of digital marketing strategies on consumer purchasing decisions in fashion retail businesses in the post-pandemic era. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the digital marketing literature and provide practical recommendations for fashion retail businesses to develop more effective and adaptive strategies to changing consumer behavior.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory research type, namely research that aims to explain the influence of independent variables (digital marketing strategies) on dependent variables (consumer purchasing decisions). This approach was chosen because this study aims to empirically and measurably test the causal relationship between digital marketing strategies implemented by fashion retail business actors and consumer behavior in making purchasing decisions, especially in the post-COVID-19 pandemic era. The population in this study is all consumers who have purchased fashion products through digital platforms (e-commerce, official brand websites, or social media) after the pandemic, especially in Indonesia. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, with the following criteria for respondents: (1) Having purchased fashion products online in the past year; (2) Being at least 17 years old; and (3) Having experience interacting with digital marketing content such as social media advertisements, influencers, or email marketing. The sample size used is a minimum of 100–150 respondents, taking into account the feasibility of data analysis using SEM or multiple linear regression. Primary data was obtained through distributing online questionnaires using Google Forms or similar platforms. The questionnaire was designed using a 5-point Likert scale, measuring consumer perceptions of digital marketing strategies (e.g., social media content, online promotions, influencer endorsements, email marketing, and online shopping experiences) and purchasing decisions (need recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior).

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data will be analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis or Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with statistical software such as SPSS or SmartPLS, depending on the number of indicators and model complexity. Validity and reliability tests will be conducted first

to ensure the quality of the instrument. Next, classical assumption tests (if using regression) or outer and inner model evaluations (if using SEM-PLS) will be conducted to ensure model feasibility.

Hypothesis testing is conducted by examining the significance value ($p < 0.05$) and regression coefficients to determine the direction and strength of each digital marketing strategy indicator's influence on consumer purchasing decisions. The results of this analysis are expected to provide empirical insight into which digital marketing elements contribute most to purchase conversions and changes in consumer behavior post-pandemic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Description

Before conducting further analysis, a demographic profile of the respondents is presented to understand the characteristics of the research sample.

Table 1. Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	45	30%
	Female	105	70%
Age	< 20 years	10	6.7%
	20–30 years	82	54.7%
	31–40 years	42	28%
	> 40 years	16	10.6%
Frequency of Online Shopping	1–2 times/month	40	26.7%
	3–4 times/month	58	38.7%
	>4 times/month	52	34.6%

The majority of respondents were female (70%), with the dominant age group being between 20 and 30 years old (54.7%). This aligns with the consumer segmentation of digital fashion retail businesses, where the younger generation is more familiar with and actively uses digital media for shopping. Most respondents also reported a habit of shopping online more than twice per month, indicating a high level of interaction with digital marketing content.

Validity and Reliability Testing

The research instrument was tested for validity and reliability before conducting regression analysis. Validity was tested by examining the item-total correlation value, while reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Testing

Variables	Total	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Digital Marketing Strategy	6	0.872	Reliable
Purchase Decision	5	0.881	Reliable

The Cronbach's Alpha value for each variable was greater than 0.70, indicating that all indicators in the questionnaire were reliable. All items also had an item-total correlation > 0.3 , making them valid and suitable for further analysis.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to determine the effect of digital marketing strategies (X), consisting of social media content, online advertising, influencers, interactive websites, email marketing, and digital promotions, on consumer purchasing decisions (Y).

Table 3. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	Beta Coefficient (β)	t-count	Sig. (p-value)
Social Media Content	0.243	3.212	0.002**
Influencer Marketing	0.198	2.885	0.005**

Online Advertising	0.146	2.214	0.029*
Interactive Websites	0.104	1.758	0.082
Email Marketing	0.087	1.532	0.127
Digital Promotion	0.265	3.854	0.000**
R ²	0.683		
Adjusted R ²	0.661		
F-count	30.228		0.000

Note:

* significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

** significant at $\alpha = 0.01$

The regression analysis results show that digital marketing strategies simultaneously have a significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions ($F = 30.228$; $p < 0.01$). The Adjusted R² value of 0.661 indicates that 66.1% of the variability in consumer purchasing decisions can be explained by variations in digital marketing strategies.

Partially, the variables digital promotion, social media content, influencer marketing, and online advertising significantly influence purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, interactive websites and email marketing do not. This suggests that in the post-pandemic fashion retail context, attractive promotions (discounts, vouchers), engaging visual content on social media, and the presence of influencers are the dominant factors in encouraging consumers to purchase.

Discussion

The results of this study reinforce previous studies that digital marketing strategies play a significant role in influencing consumer behavior, particularly in the fashion industry, which is heavily influenced by perceptions and lifestyles. The findings indicate that digital promotions (discounts, flash sales, and seasonal campaigns) are the primary drivers of purchasing decisions, in line with price-sensitive consumer behavior. Furthermore, social media content also demonstrated a significant influence, demonstrating the importance of compelling product visualization and two-way engagement between brands and audiences. The success of this strategy hinges not only on presence but also on the quality of the visual narratives displayed on platforms like Instagram and TikTok. Influencer marketing also proved effective, supporting the literature that post-pandemic consumers tend to trust recommendations from public figures or micro-influencers perceived as authentic. Online advertising, on the other hand, had a moderate influence but remained relevant as brand reminders. Meanwhile, interactive websites and email marketing have not shown a significant impact. This could be attributed to consumer habits that are more reactive to fast-paced content (social media) than traditional marketing channels like email, especially among the younger generation. Overall, these results indicate that digital marketing strategies need to be designed in an integrated and contextual manner, with an emphasis on engaging, interactive experiences that are tailored to the characteristics of the target audience.

Digital Promotion ($\beta = 0.265$, $p < 0.01$)

Digital promotion has proven to be the most dominant variable influencing purchasing decisions. Discounts, flash sales, cashback, free shipping, and bundling are highly effective forms of promotion in attracting consumer interest, especially post-pandemic when people's purchasing power is still recovering. Consumers in this category tend to be price-sensitive and reactive to offers of immediate economic value. This strategy can also create a sense of urgency and FOMO (fear of missing out) through limited time or promotional quotas. The effectiveness of digital promotion is also strengthened by e-commerce and social media platform algorithms that automatically adjust offers based on user behavior, making them more personalized and relevant. This creates impulse buying, especially among millennials and Gen Z, who dominate the online fashion market.

Social Media Content ($\beta = 0.243$, $p < 0.01$)

Social media content significantly influences purchasing decisions because it is the primary channel for building awareness, engagement, and brand trust. Today's consumers aren't just buying products; they're also buying stories and lifestyles communicated through compelling visuals and brand narratives. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok allow businesses to showcase product visuals in the form of high-quality photos, tutorial videos, style guides (OOTDs), and user reviews. Two-way interactions through comment sections and live features also create an emotional connection between consumers and brands. This is particularly important in the fashion category, where purchasing decisions are often emotional and identity-based.

Influencer Marketing ($\beta = 0.198$, $p < 0.01$)

The influence of influencer marketing is significant in shaping consumer perceptions and trust. In the post-pandemic era, there has been a shift in trust from brands to individuals who are perceived as authentic, relatable, and consistent. Influencers, especially micro-influencers (1,000–10,000 followers), are considered more honest and credible than official advertisements because they create organic content showcasing products in everyday life. The most effective forms of collaboration include unboxings, honest reviews, and the use of exclusive promo codes. This strategy utilizes the principle of social proof, where purchasing decisions are driven by the social influence of figures consumers admire or trust.

Online Advertising ($\beta = 0.146$, $p < 0.05$)

Online advertising has a significant but moderate influence. Advertisements in the form of Google Ads, sponsored Instagram posts, and display ads on e-commerce platforms serve as visual reminders (brand recall) that reinforce product presence. However, their effectiveness depends on the relevance and frequency of impressions. While online advertising can seem intrusive if not personalized, when tailored to user browsing behavior (through appropriate retargeting and segmentation), it can trigger click-throughs and purchases. Advertising also plays a crucial role in the consideration phase when consumers compare several fashion products before making a decision.

Interactive Websites ($\beta = 0.104$, $p = 0.082$)

Although interactive websites are considered an important channel in e-commerce, the results of this study indicate that this variable does not significantly influence purchasing decisions. This is thought to be because consumers are increasingly browsing and purchasing directly through mobile apps or marketplaces, rather than from official websites. Furthermore, websites are now primarily used for viewing catalogs or additional information, rather than for transactions. When the user experience on a website is not optimally designed (slow loading times, complicated navigation, or not mobile-friendly), it reduces the website's effectiveness as a purchase conversion channel.

Email Marketing ($\beta = 0.087$, $p = 0.127$)

Email marketing does not show a significant influence in driving purchase decisions, especially among younger consumers who tend to ignore promotional email messages. Email is considered a one-way channel and less interactive. Furthermore, the high volume of spam and promotions from various brands makes email marketing less effective as a primary channel in fashion marketing strategies. However, email can still play a role in the retention phase, such as reminding cart abandonment, providing order updates, and loyalty programs – but it is not the primary driver of initial purchases.

CONCLUSION

Digital marketing strategies simultaneously have a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions in fashion retail businesses in the post-pandemic era. This demonstrates that digital approaches are a crucial element in influencing consumer behavior, particularly in the context of post-COVID-19 recovery. Partially, the components of digital marketing strategies that have the most significant influence on purchasing decisions are digital promotions, social media content, influencer marketing, and online advertising. These four components can encourage consumers to make purchases by forming positive perceptions of the brand, increasing interest, and creating the

urge to act quickly during the transaction process. Meanwhile, interactive websites and email marketing did not show a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions in this study. This indicates a shift in consumer communication channel preferences, where they are more responsive to visual, instant, and social media than traditional channels like email. These findings reinforce the importance of a digital-based marketing approach that is adaptive, creative, and responsive to changing consumer behavior, especially among the younger generation, who are the dominant segment in the online fashion business. Active consumer engagement with brands through social media and attractive promotions has been shown to effectively increase purchase conversions.

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