

## The Influence of Content Marketing, Brand Awareness, E-WOM and Product Knowledge Towards Purchase Intention (A Case Study on Outside Customers in Medan)

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### ABSTRACT

Outside is a Singapore-owned company established in 2021 which offers variants of plant-based milk made of oats. It started being sold in Indonesia in early 2022, and it has gained popularity since then. The objective of the research is to identify the influence of content marketing, brand awareness, product knowledge and E-WOM towards the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan. In this paper, we will be using the quantitative research method to collect data which is implemented through questionnaires survey with likert scale. And for the analysis technique, we use the SEM or known as Structural Equation Modeling to process the data with Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) 22 Software. This research is conducted to see whether the influence of content marketing, brand awareness, E-WOM and product knowledge towards purchase intention on Outside customers in Medan. The research shows that there is a significant influence in product knowledge on the purchase intention while other variables have no significant impact on the purchase intention.

**Keywords:** content marketing; brand awareness; E-WOM; product knowledge

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been an increase in interest and shift of preference towards dairy-free or plant-based milk alternatives such as oat milk, soy milk, almond milk, and coconut milk. Whipp & Daneshkhu in Halme et al (2023) stated that the global sales of plant-based milk increased more than twice between 2009 and 2015. This is driven by several factors, ranging from health factors to environmental factors. People switch towards plant-based products because they are more favourable for the climate, and at the same time, businesses that partake in environmental responsibilities use it as a competitive advantage as well (Lubin & Esty in Rosenl w & Hansson, 2020).

One brand that is currently leading the oat milk market in several Southeast Asian countries is Outside, a Singaporean homegrown start-up established in 2022 with production activities located in Bandung, Indonesia. Other than being one of the first full stack oat milk brands in Asia (meaning they have full control over their manufacturing capabilities, sourcing, and production processes), Outside managed to break entry barriers into the Asian oat milk scene by focusing on taste, as stated by the brand’s founder and CEO Benedict Lim (Lifestyle Asia, 2022; Vogue Singapore, 2022).

As a brand that’s currently paving its way in the market, there have been several efforts done by Outside to increase its visibility and triggering purchase intention of customers. Amongst them, it’s observable that the factors Outside are working on include content marketing, brand awareness, product knowledge and E-WOM.

Through their social media page, such as Instagram, Outside posts contents that are subtly introducing their products through creative and interesting concepts which incorporate bright designs that will intrigue interest. Mahendra & Nugroho (2021) pointed out a survey that shows how 60% of digital marketers agreed that content marketing is amongst the strategies that have the highest chance of attracting customers' attention.

They further explain that this is because relevant contents that reflect the brand's characteristics will be able to influence customers' behaviours through relevant information wherever they are, which is later hoped to lead to purchase intention.

At the same time, the efforts of marketing through their digital platforms increase customers' brand awareness. According to Boonsiritomachai & Sud-On (2020), brand awareness helps increase a customer's capability to identify and recall the brand upon a cue. With this, given a situation where customers need to purchase something in a said industry, the brand they have higher awareness of will first pop to mind, increasing likelihood of purchase. When paired with product knowledge, according to Nurhayati & Hendar in Andita & Hermawan (2023) is related to memories or knowledge that is known by consumers concerning expertise and familiarity with products, it increases likelihood of purchase intention.

This can all be elevated not only through content marketing, but also E-WOM such as reviews by customers. As mentioned by Alsmadi in Al-Gasawneh & Al-Adamat (2020) media comments are powerful communication tools, which have greater capacities to instigate change than traditional practices. All the factors for mentioned will be the variables analysed on how they could impact purchase intention.

The objective of the research is to identify the influence of content marketing, brand awareness, product knowledge and E-WOM towards purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **A. Content Marketing**

Kotler et al in Bening & Kurniawati (2019) defines content marketing as a marketing approach that entails businesses to create, curate, distribute, and amplify content that is interesting, relevant, and useful to a specific and targeted group of audiences in order to create conversations about the content. The goal and purpose of content marketing is to create brand awareness, drive traffic growth, and generate leads for the business (Desai, 2019).

As digitalization and advanced technology continues to occur paired with the rise of smartphones and other internet-connected gadgets, businesses are subjected to the importance of communicating with their customers and the possibility of broadening their market through various digital channels.

Karr in Chandra and Sari (2021), explains that there are five dimensions of content marketing, which are reader cognition; sharing motivation; persuasion; decision making; and factors. The previous research of Mahendra and Nugroho (2021) stated content marketing has a positive influence on purchase intention; Quality content can influence consumers to stimulate them to engage in purchase intentions.

*H<sub>1</sub>: Content marketing has a significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan.*

## **B. Brand Awareness**

Keller in Zhang (2020) explains that brand awareness refers to the ability of consumers in recalling or recognizing a brand, or simply whether they know about a brand. Repeated exposure towards a brand and its products can increase brand familiarity, which creates and enhances brand awareness (Pandjaitan, 2019).

According to Tenda et al. (2022), the previous research uses four indicators of brand awareness: which is brand recognition; brand recall, top of mind; and brand dominance. In the previous research, it is stated that the amount of customer knowledge with a specific brand's products, services, or image is referred to as brand awareness. Consumer purchase intentions are impacted by brand awareness; customers with higher brand awareness are more likely to make purchases.

Consumer brand preference and consumer spending intentions for brands they are familiar with are influenced by brand awareness, as is how well the brand is regarded by consumers when they are aware of it (Shahid et al, 2017 and Ahmad & Hadi, 2020). As a result, it may be inferred that the link between brand awareness and purchase intention is not as straightforward as it appears, and that a causal mechanism exists between the two. This is further supported by further research done by Khrisnanda and Dirgantara (2021), which stated that brand awareness has a positive and significant influence on purchase intention.

*H<sub>2</sub>: Brand awareness has a significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan.*

## **C. E-WOM**

According to Ismagilova et al in Innayah (2022), E-WOM is a statement accessible to the public or institutions via the internet made by consumers be it potential customers, actual customers, or previous customers about a product or business, whether a product is good. Consumers nowadays rely on E-WOM to minimize risks when making purchase decisions (Alrwashdeh et al in Ardhiansyah and Marlana, 2021).

A research by Napawut (2022) showed that there is a positive influence of E-WOM towards purchase intention. Geyyotte et al in Luthfiyatillah et al (2020) pointed out that E-WOM consists of three dimensions; including intensity of E-WOM; valence of opinion; and content. The previous research from Sosanuy et al (2021) and Hamdani and Maulani (2018), E-WOM significantly influenced purchase intention.

*H<sub>3</sub>: E-WOM has a significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan.*

## **D. Product Knowledge**

According to Fauziah and Amin (2021), product knowledge is a collection of information or data in the minds of consumers surrounding specific products that incorporates their classification, quality, or attributes. A consumer's understanding and knowledge of products that are offered to them can act as a guidance and assist them in the consideration process and determine their next actions (Ridwan et al, 2018).

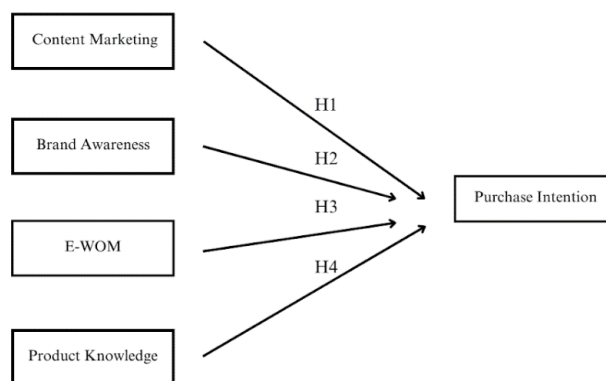
Febyana et al (2023), point out four indicators that influence product knowledge; product attribute; product benefits; product satisfaction; and value of the product. Prior research done by Ridwan et al (2018) shows that there is a strong correlation between product knowledge and purchase intention; consumers with a higher product knowledge will have a higher purchase intention, whereas low purchase intention is found in consumers with a lower product knowledge.

*H<sub>4</sub>: Product knowledge has a significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan.*

### E. Purchase Intention

Kotler in Setio and Johan (2021) pointed out that purchase intention is a consumer behaviour occurring when consumers are stimulated by external factors and come to purchase decisions based on their personal characteristics and decision-making processes. According to Hsu and Tsou in Subagio and Rachmawati (2020), purchase intention can be used to predict real buying behaviours.

According to Akhfiani (2022), the four indicators of purchase intention are transactional interest; referential interest; preferential interest; and exploratory interest.



**Figure 1. Research model**

## METHODOLOGY

### A. Data Collection

Quantitative research method will be implemented through questionnaires survey with likert scale. The population consists of respondents residing in Medan city, drinkers of dairy or dairy substitutes, including coffee or latte drinks. Exposed towards the newest trends or products from social media. The population also possesses some degree of consciousness on environmental and health issues, thus the choice of oat milk.

### B. Population and Sample

The sampling method used will be non-probability sampling; and that would be snowball sampling. In this method, researchers start with a small number of initial contacts, those who fit the research criteria and are invited (Parker et al, 2019). To determine the sample number, Hair et al in Erika (2022) stated that by multiplying the number of variables' indicators by minimum 5 and maximum 10, we can determine the number of required samples.

$$\text{Sample} = \text{number of indicator} \times (5 \text{ to } 10)$$

$$20 \times 5 = 100 \text{ samples} \quad (1)$$

$$20 \times 10 = 200 \text{ samples} \quad (2)$$

Therefore, this research will be obtaining data from at least 200 respondents.

### C. Analysis Technique

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) used to process the data with Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) 22 Software. Structural Equation Model (SEM) is a highly cross-sectional modeling technique with linear and general (Amalia et al, 2019). According to Dapas et al (2019), three kind of analysis techniques are conducted in this research, which are:

- 1) Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), which is a model that connects the observed latent variable to determine whether data can be represented with loading factors greater than 0.50 ( $\geq 0.50$ ).
- 2) Goodness of Fit, used to determine the accuracy of the model used. The measures include Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), Significant Probability, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit (AGFI), Tucker- Lewis Index (TLI), Discrepancy Divided by Degree of Freedom (CMIN/DF) dan Comparative Fit Index (CFI).

**Table 1. Goodness of Fit Criteria**

Goodness of Fit Index	Cut off Value
Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ )	P-value $\geq 0,05$
Significant Probability	$\leq 0,05$
RMSEA	$\geq 0,90$
GFI	$\leq 0,08$
AGFI	$\geq 0,90$
CMIN/DF	$\leq 2,00$
TLI	$\geq 0,95$
CFI	$\geq 0,90$

- 3) Regression weight shows the influence of each variable and tests the hypothesis in a direct manner. To determine the hypothesis accepted, the P-value must be less than ( $\leq 0.05$ ) and the CR value is greater than 1.96 ( $\geq 1.96$ ).

## RESULTS

### A. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) tests the ability of the indicators or questionnaire statements used in this research. According to Ghozali in Suryani and Batu (2021), the indicator will be considered valid if the loading factor magnitude is greater than 0.50 ( $\geq 0.50$ ) Based on the result of Standardized Regression Weights (Table 2), the indicator of each variable which are Content Marketing (CM), Brand Awareness (BA), Product Knowledge (PK), and Purchase Intention has a loading factor  $\geq 0.50$  that determine the exogen and endogen indicator variables are valid to use in the research.

**Table 2. Standardized Regression Weights**

			Estimate
CM5	<---	CM	0.630
CM4	<---	CM	0.660
CM3	<---	CM	0.739
CM2	<---	CM	0.570

CM1	<---	CM	0.498
BA4	<---	BA	0.561
BA3	<---	BA	0.693
BA2	<---	BA	0.699
BA1	<---	BA	0.468
EWOM3	<---	EWOM	0.607
EWOM2	<---	EWOM	0.557
EWOM1	<---	EWOM	0.780
PK4	<---	PK	0.627
PK3	<---	PK	0.689
PK2	<---	PK	0,649
PK1	<---	PK	0.667
PI1	<---	PI	0.723
PI2	<---	PI	0.743
PI3	<---	PI	0.758
PI4	<---	PI	0.473

### B. Overall SEM Model Test (Goodness of Fit)

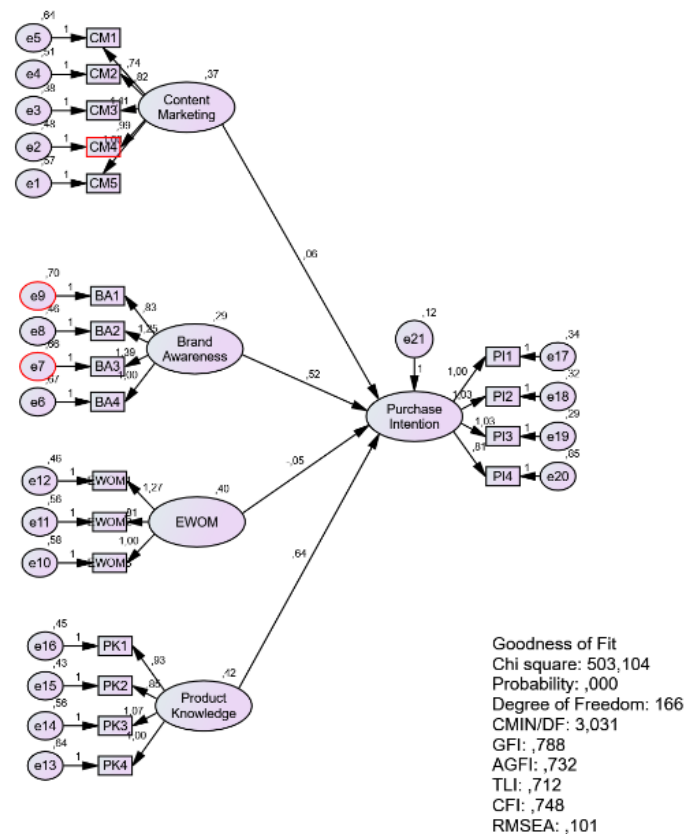


Figure 2. Path Diagram of SEM (Before Modification)

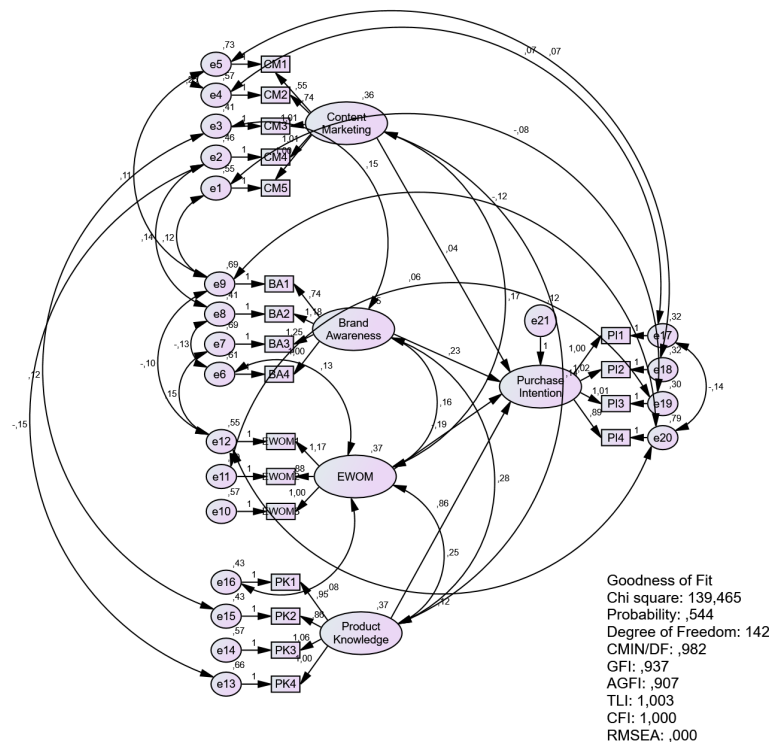
Fig. 2. shows the arrangement of the SEM model through the path diagram used in the research in order to help the researchers see the correlation between the variables and the

indicators used. Based on the results obtained (Table 3), almost all did not meet the cut-off value that had been set. The Chi-square value ( $\chi^2$ ) shows "Good fit". While the values of the other indices, show "Not good fit" results. Therefore, modification conducted based on the modification indices.

**Table 3. Result of Goodness of Fit (Before Modification)**

Goodness of Fit Index	Cut-off Value	Result	Evaluation Model
Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ )	> 0,05	503.104	Good Fit
Significant Probability	$\geq 0,05$	0.000	Not good fit
RMSEA	$\leq 0,08$	0.101	Not good fit
GFI	$\geq 0,90$	0.788	Not good fit
AGFI	$\geq 0,90$	0.732	Not good fit
CMIN/DF	$\leq 2,00$	3.031	Not good fit
TLI	$\geq 0,95$	0.712	Not good fit
CFI	$\geq 0,90$	0.748	Not good fit

After modified to the model path diagram (Fig. 3.), the results obtained meet the cut-off value that has been set. Values in Table 4, all the Goodness of Fit criteria “Good Fit”.



**Figure 3. Path Diagram of SEM (After Modification)**

**Table 4. Result of Goodness of (After Modification)**

Goodness of Fit Index	Cut-off Value	Result	Evaluation Model
Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ )	> 0,05	139.465	Good Fit
Significant Probability	$\geq$ 0,05	0.544	Good Fit
RMSEA	$\leq$ 0,08	0.000	Good Fit
GFI	$\geq$ 0,90	0.937	Good Fit
AGFI	$\geq$ 0,90	0.907	Good Fit
CMIN/DF	$\leq$ 2,00	0.982	Good Fit
TLI	$\geq$ 0,95	1.003	Good Fit
CFI	$\geq$ 0,90	1.000	Good Fit

## DISCUSSION

The hypothesis testing is done by looking at the value of the Critical Ratio (CR) and Probability (P). The determination is determined by the P-value must be less than ( $\leq 0.05$ ) and the CR value is greater than 1.96 ( $\geq 1.96$ ).

**Table 5. Hypothesis Testing Result (Regression Weight)**

			C.R.	P	Label
Purchase Intention	←	Brand Awareness	1.390	0.164	par_16
Purchase Intention	←	EWOM	-1.235	0.217	par_17
Purchase Intention	←	Content Marketing	0.356	0.722	par_18
Purchase Intention	←	Product knowledge	3.831	***	par_19

1)  $H_1$ : Content marketing has a significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan

The results of Table 5 show that the Critical Ratio (CR) value is  $0.356 < 1.96$  and the Probability (P) value is  $0.722 > 0.05$ .  $H_1$  in the study was not accepted. Concluded that content marketing has no significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan. The results are not in line with the previous research of Mahendra and Nugroho (2021) stating content marketing has a positive influence on purchase intention. According to Ananda dan Wandebori in Purwanto and Sahetapy (2022), content marketing can have a high influence on purchase intention. But as for customers who are not fully interested in or believe in content marketing issued by a brand that makes customers have no interest in making transactions on that product.

2)  $H_2$ : Brand awareness has a significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan



The results of Table 5 show that the Critical Ratio (CR) value is  $1.390 < 1.96$  and the Probability (P) value is  $0.164 > 0.05$ .  $H_2$  in the study is not accepted and the conclusion is brand awareness have no significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan. The results are not in line with previous research from Khrisnanda and Dirgantara (2021), stating that brand awareness has a positive and significant influence on purchase intention. According to Azzari and Pelisari (2020), the impact of brand awareness on purchase intention is indirect, as it is mediated by variables such as perceived quality, brand associations, and brand loyalty. When a consumer begins to recognize and become aware of a brand, they develop brand associations, perceived quality, and loyalty towards the brand which pushes purchase intent.

3) *H<sub>3</sub>: E-WOM has a significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan*

The results of Table 5 show that the Critical Ratio (CR) value is  $-1.235 < 1.96$  and the Probability (P) value is  $0.217 > 0.05$ .  $H_3$  in the study is not accepted. Concluded that E-WOM have no significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan. According to Putri (2021), it is possible that when consumers are already well-informed about a certain product, the intention to purchase stems from the inherent knowledge they have much more significantly instead of the influence from E-WOM. The results are not in line with research by Napawut (2022) showing that there is a positive influence of E-WOM towards purchase intention.

4) *H<sub>4</sub>: Product knowledge has a significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan*

The results from Table 5 show that the Critical Ratio (CR) value is  $3.831 > 1.96$  and the Probability (P) value is  $*** < 0.05$ .  $H_4$  in the study is accepted. Concluded that product knowledge has a significant impact on the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan. The results of this hypothesis test are also in line with the research done by Ridwan et al (2018) showing that there is a strong correlation between product knowledge and purchase intention. If the customers lack knowledge of the product, customers will not fully understand the attributes, benefits, satisfaction that is given by the product, and value of the product. Gharnaditya et al (2020) stated an increase in product knowledge will make consumers aware of the need for the product and affect interest in making transactions.

## CONCLUSION

At the end of this paper, after using qualitative research methods to collect data and using Structural Equation Modeling to process the data. It is concluded that of all the variables proposed, only the Product Knowledge variable significantly impacts the purchase intention of Outside customers in Medan and is in line with the previous research. Meanwhile, the other variables are not in line with the previous study conducted. The results of this research would give Outside an insight into what they should put the highest priority on in terms of increasing their customers' purchase intention, which is increasing target customers' product knowledge.

Outside should focus on attempts to increase how much customers know about the products; including their attributes, benefits, value and satisfaction. When customers know fully what benefits they could get from purchasing and consuming Outside, that is when they're most likely to be interested and intend to buy. This research can be used as a reference towards

future research in the same field, and it is recommended that other factors or variables that might influence purchase intention be used for further research.

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