

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ON THE PURCHASING DECISIONS OF GENERATION Z CONSUMERS

Cindy Fatika Sari¹⁾, Rabiatal Adwiyah²⁾

¹⁻²⁾Management Study Program Faculty of Economics Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia

Corresponding author: cinday300@gmail.com

Abstract

This research aims to investigate the influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions of generation Z consumers. Generation Z, born between mid-1990 and 2010, has grown up in an environment influenced by technology and social media. Using qualitative descriptive methods to describe the impact of social media on decisions Generation Z consumer purchases. Data was collected through an online survey involving Generation Z respondents who actively use social media as a source of information and means of purchasing. The research results show that social media has a significant impact on the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers. They tend to use social media to search for information about products by following influencers they like, and reading product reviews with high ratings. Content uploaded by brands and influencers can influence Generation Z consumers' perceptions of a product. Additionally, social media can create strong connections between brands and Generation Z consumers.

Keywords: social media, purchasing decisions, generation z

Introduction

Social media is a platform used to facilitate communication between users and build personal profiles. Social media can also be used by businesses as a marketing medium and is often used to build a person's profile (Levrant & Wulansari, 2024).

The influence of Social Media Marketing on generation Z purchasing decisions is very important today. Generation Z is a generation born between the mid-1990s and 2010s and is known as a generation that grew up in an environment that was heavily influenced by technology. According to Halim et al, (2024), Generation Z spends more than 11 hours a day viewing and sharing content on various social media platforms. For a brand, this can provide a great opportunity to use social media as an effective marketing tool.

Marketing via social media can help strengthen brand relationships with consumers. Recommendations from friends and influencers on social media are the reason for making decisions for generation Z. Generation Z appreciates the existence of brands on social media and the way these brands interact with their followers (Halim et al, 2024). This means that interaction on social media can influence purchasing decisions.

Another factor is trust in brands and the interactivity of generation Z in seeking information on interesting content. Therefore, a good marketing strategy needs to pay attention to factors that aim to attract the attention and build loyalty of generation Z consumers by making good use of social media marketing, so companies can increase generation Z's buying interest and can build good relationships in the long term.

Social Media Marketing is a type of marketing that utilizes various social media platforms to interact with consumers, build a brand image, and promote products or services. According to Kotler and Keller (2020), Social Media Marketing involves the use of various platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok and YouTube to create interesting content and build closer relationships with consumers. With Social Media Marketing, companies can interact directly with consumers and receive feedback quickly.

Social Media Marketing has several components, namely: (1) Content: creating interesting content is a marketing strategy to attract consumer interest. This content can include images and videos; (2) Interaction: Consumer involvement through comments, messages and likes from various content aimed at building community; (3) Analysis: Assessing the effectiveness of content and campaigns and understanding consumer behavior on social media platforms (Kotler and Keller, 2020).

Digital Marketing is a marketing activity carried out via digital and internet platforms to achieve business goals. According to Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019), Digital Marketing is not only limited to online marketing activities, but also includes the application of digital technology in offline marketing. Digital marketing focuses on creating significant interactions between companies and consumers through digital channels.

According to Hamirul et al, (2022) social media has the following characteristics: (1) Connectedness: Social media allows users to connect with other people, be they friends, family or strangers; (2) Interactivity: Using social media allows you to interact with other people in various ways, such as comments, messages, and so on; (3) Content Uploaded by Users: The majority of content on social media is created by users themselves, not by the platform; (4) Sharing: The use of social media can produce various types of content, including text, images, videos, and audio; (5) Openness: Social media is generally open, everyone can see the information shared. 6) Speed: Information can be shared quickly and easily via social media.

Methods

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods to describe the impact of social media on the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers. Data was collected through an online survey of 15 Generation Z respondents who used social media to search for information and buy goods. The aim of qualitative methods is to understand social phenomena comprehensively and thoroughly. In this regard, the impact of social media on purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers will be studied. The aim of the descriptive method is to describe and describe in detail the phenomenon in question and whether this phenomenon exists (Sugiyono, 2021).

The research subjects were 15 Generation Z respondents who actively used social media to obtain information and carry out the process of purchasing goods. The respondent criteria are as follows:

1. Age range 15 to 25 years
2. Use social media at least 5 hours in a day
3. Actively upload content and have shopped via social media

The following is a list of questions asked to respondents

1. Criteria for Using Social Media
 - a) What social media platforms do you frequently use?
 - b) How many hours do you spend using social media every day?
 - c) What is your purpose for using social media?
2. Social Media Activities
 - a) Do you often upload content on social media?
 - b) What type of content do you upload?
 - c) Have you ever purchased goods via social media?
3. Important Criteria for Social Media Content:
 - a) Have you ever received feedback or information regarding your purchase on social media?
 - b) What type of social media content most influences your purchasing decision?
 - c) What are the significant influences that product reviews, influencer recommendations, and social media advertising have on your purchasing decision?
4. Perception and Experience Criteria:
 - a) What positive experiences have you had regarding purchasing via social media?
 - b) Have you had any negative experiences with purchasing via social media?
 - c) What are your likes and dislikes about social media related to purchasing a product?

Results and Discussions

This research uses a qualitative method to describe the impact of social media on the purchasing decisions of Gen Z consumers. Data was collected through a survey of 15 respondents who actively use social media as a source of information and purchase a product.

1. Criteria for Using Social Media

- a) What social media platforms do you frequently use?
Most respondents chose Tik Tok and Instagram, because these social media platforms display interesting and interactive visual content, both videos and photos. For example, *"I often open Instagram, because there are lots of interesting photos and videos"*.
- b) How many hours do you spend using social media every day?

On average, respondents spend around 3 to 5 hours in a day. One respondent said *"I can scroll through Tik Tok videos for hours, just to look for reviews of the product I want to buy"*. Another respondent also said, *"Usually I'm active on social media like IG and Tik Tok when I get home from work, so I only take a short time, at most 3 hours"*.

c) What is your purpose for using social media?

The majority of respondents use social media for entertainment, interacting with friends, and looking for information about a product. According to respondents, *"I often scroll videos on Instagram as entertainment, especially watching funny videos"*. Another respondent also answered *"Usually I communicate with my friends via WhatsApp"*.

2. Social Media Activities

a) Do you often upload content on social media?

Most respondents often upload content on social media, especially on WhatsApp and Instagram. Uploaded content such as photos and videos. For example, *"I rarely upload, upload stories when I have an event with friends or family"*. Another respondent also answered, *"Occasionally upload stories on Instagram, such as reposting videos from Instagram reels"*.

b) What type of content do you upload?

The types of content uploaded are very diverse, including personal photos, food photos and funny videos. *"I like making videos that are trending on Tik Tok"*, said one respondent.

c) Have you ever purchased goods via social media?

Most respondents admitted to having purchased goods or products via social media, but there were also respondents who only looked for product reviews on social media to consider purchasing directly, not via online social media. One respondent said, *"Yes, I have. I once bought clothes on Shopee with high review ratings. Because the rating is high, the product is definitely good"*. Another respondent stated, *"Never before, I just look for product reviews on Tik Tok, if the reviews are good, I usually buy them directly at the nearest shop"*.

3. Important Criteria for Social Media Content:

a) Have you ever received feedback or information regarding purchases on social media?

Most respondents stated that they had received feedback or information regarding product purchases on social media such as product reviews and comments. One respondent said, *"My friends always tell me that the product they bought is good after they try the product. So I know the product is really good"*. The most feedback comes from friends and influencers they like, *"I trust friends' recommendations more than excessive advertising"*, said one respondent.

b) What type of social media content most influences your purchasing decision?

Many respondents stated that visual content, especially videos and images attracts their attention more. Respondents said *"Before buying a product, I often look at reviews, especially unboxing videos from other customers. Because I can see the product directly"*. Another respondent stated, *"I often scroll quickly through product text reviews on Shopee, I stop if a customer includes unboxing pictures and videos"*.

c) What are the significant influences that product reviews, influencer recommendations, and social media advertising have on your decision to purchase?

Respondents admitted that product reviews and recommendations from influencers and friends greatly influenced their decision to buy a product. Respondents said *"I follow my favorite influencer accounts. If they recommend something, I would definitely be interested in buying it"*. Reviews from other users are very influential, *"I trust reviews from customers who have purchased more than advertisements"*, stated one respondent.

4. Perception and Experience Criteria:

a) What positive experiences have you had regarding purchasing via social media?

Many respondents had positive experiences in purchasing on social media, such as easy access to search for and purchase a product, fast delivery and affordable prices compared to offline markets. Respondents stated, *"The purchasing process is very easy and you don't have to wait a long time for the product to arrive at your home"*. Several respondents felt the benefits of shopping via social media, *"I often shop at Shopee, there are lots of discounts or promos offered"*, stated one respondent.

b) Have you had any negative experiences with purchasing via social media?

There were respondents who had negative experiences related to purchasing via social media, such as product quality and delivery time. The respondent said, *"I once bought clothes on*

Facebook Marketplace, I was disappointed because the item that arrived did not match the photo". Several respondents also complained about slow delivery, "I once waited almost 2 weeks for an item to arrive, even though the delivery estimate stated it would take 2 days to arrive", said one respondent.

- c) What do you like and dislike about social media related to purchasing a product?
- There are many respondents who like the ability of social media to display a product with attractive visuals. Respondents said, *"I like seeing product photos and videos, especially other customer reviews"*. On the other hand, there are things that respondents don't like, such as annoying advertising and product quality. *"Sometimes advertisements appear suddenly, I am very annoyed with that"*, stated the respondent. Respondents also stated about product quality, *"I once bought Skincare, because the advertisement said the quality was good. And after I tried it, it turned out to be normal, the advertising was too excessive"*.

Based on the results of this research, social media shows a significant influence on the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers. This influence can be categorized into several aspects, as follows:

1. Social media functions as the main source of information for Generation Z in looking for product-related information before making a purchase. They utilize various social media platforms, such as TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram, to find product reviews. Apart from that, they also utilize marketplace platforms such as Shopee, TikTok and Shop.
2. Social media is an effective promotional tool in attracting the attention of Gen Z consumers. Sellers use various digital marketing strategies, such as advertising, content from influencers, discounts and promos to attract their interest in buying the products on offer.
3. Social media provides a personal and interactive experience for GenZ consumers. They are comfortable shopping with the easy access provided by social media platforms such as Shopee, Instagram and TikTok Shop.
4. Purchasing decisions are highly influenced by social media for Gen Z consumers. Gen Z consumers are more likely to buy products recommended by their friends and favorite influencers. And they buy a product considering the high review rating and positive reviews.

The results of the research show that social media has a significant impact on the purchasing decisions of Generation IZ consumers. Social media influences Gen IZ consumers at several stages of the purchasing process, from searching for product information, influencing their choices, and creating purchasing opinions.

1. Information search: Social media is the main source of information for Gen Z consumers when they search for information about a product. They use social media to find out product descriptions, watch product videos, and follow influencers they like.
2. Choice considerations: social media plays a role in helping Gen Z consumers understand the various product options available. Gen Z consumers can compare prices, quality and usability of products. They can read comments and product reviews from other users to help them make purchasing decisions.
3. Purchasing decisions: Social media can influence the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers. Recommendations from friends and trusted influencers have the potential to influence their purchasing decisions, especially products that attract their attention.

Social media plays an important role in helping Generation Z consumers find interesting products. Social media is not just a platform for socializing, but also has a significant influence on the purchasing decisions of Gen Z consumers. Social media is the main source of information for Gen Z consumers when they search for product information, make choices, and form opinions regarding purchasing decisions.

The following are some of the impacts of this research:

1. The impact of social media on purchasing considerations, having influencers on social media who are followed can be a very useful source of information for Gen Z in choosing products. Product reviews, recommendations from influencers, and reviews from other users are also important sources of information when making purchasing decisions.
2. Social media as a platform for interaction and discussion. A company or brand can use social media to communicate with Gen Z consumers and share useful knowledge about products.

3. The importance of interesting content. Based on the results of this research, using interesting content on social media platforms is an effective way to attract the attention of Generation Z consumers. Visual content such as images and videos are more attractive to attract the attention and interest of Generation Z.
4. The development of technology and social media continues to change. To remain competitive in the Generation Z market, a brand or company must adapt to these changes and always follow the latest trends. We must continue to innovate and explore new social media platforms to engage Generation Z consumers more effectively.
5. Utilization of social media for customer service, social media can be used as a platform to provide responsive services to customers. Gen Z consumers appreciate easy access to services. We need to ensure the necessary skills are available to handle questions from Gen Z consumers via social media.

Conclusion

This research shows that social media has a significant influence on the purchasing decisions of Generation Z consumers. Social media influences Generation Z consumers at various stages of the purchasing process, starting from product search information, the influence of influencers and friends' recommendations on their choices, to the formation of purchasing decisions.

Follow popular trends, in order to compete in the Generation Z market. Marketers can use social media to upload interesting content, and collaborate with influencers, as well as provide relevant content and insights for Generation Z consumers.

There are several conclusions that can be drawn from this research, namely: social media has an influence in influencing Generation Z consumer purchasing decisions; medial social platforms provide interaction and discussion; social media plays an important role in influencing changes in purchasing behavior of Generation Z consumers; and social media provides responsive services to consumers.

References

- Chaffey, D., & Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2019). *Digital Marketing*. Pearson Education Limited.
- Dewi, N. N. A. S., Aristawati, N. P. W., Sriani, N. M., Astini, N. P. T., & Mitariyani, N. W. E. (2023). Increasing Digital Literacy for Generation Z to Create a Golden Generation. *Proceedings of Student Scientific Week*, 1–11.
- Halim, RE, & Safira, A. (2024). The influence of social media marketing activities on the brand equity of Indonesian retail companies among generation z and millennials. *Journal of Entrepreneurial Economics*, 1(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.61511/jane.v1i1.2024.707>
- Hamirul, Zulkifli, Alhidayat, N., & Elsyra, N. (2022). Viral First, Investigate Later (Study of Social Control Through Social Media). *JPDSH : Journal of Basic Education and Social Humanities*, 1(3), 521–526. <https://doi.org/10.53625/jpdsh.v1i3.1178>
- Khairunnisa, I., & Heriyadi. (2023). Generation Z, Social Media Marketing, and Their Impulsive Buying Behavior in Fashion Products. *Prosiding Management Business Innovation Conference*, 17–29.
- Kotler, P., & Keller, L. (2020). *Marketing Management*. Pearson Education Limited.
- Levrant, K. D., & Wulansari, N. (2024). The Influence of Instagram Content Marketing on Customer Engagement at Khas Ombilin Hotel. *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 2(1), 23–37. <https://doi.org/10.59581/jmpp-widyakarya.v2i1.1719>
- Nisaa, A. F. L. (2018). Factors that Influence Consumer Decisions to Buy Products at Waroeng Special Sambal "SS" East Condongcatur. *Journal of Culinary Education and Technology*, 7(5), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jcet.v7i5.13404>
- Nurhalim, A. D. (2022). Factors that Influence Purchasing Decisions of Generation Z and Millennial Generation in Indonesia Regarding Zara. *Journal of Management Development*, 10(2), 26–41. <https://doi.org/10.52859/jbm.v10i2.204>
- Putriana, R., & Kholil, S. (2024). Analysis of Generation Z Marketing Tricks and Techniques in Promoting Somethinc Products on Instagram. *Indonesian Journal: Information and Communication Management (JIMIK)*, 5(2), 1676–1684. <https://doi.org/10.35870/jimik.v5i2.744>

- Santoso, G., & Triwijayati, A. (2018). Online Clothing Purchasing Decision Making Styles in Generation Z Indonesia. *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences*, 11(3), 231–242. <https://doi.org/10.24156/jikk.2018.11.3.231>
- Sugiyono. (2021). *Quantitative, Qualitative and R&D Research Methods*, Third Printing. Bandung : Alfabeta.
- Yusuf, A. (2021). The Influence of Product Innovation and Brand Image on Customer Purchase Decision on Oppo Smartphone Products in South Tangerang City. *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)*, 2(1), 472–481.

Authors' Bibliography

Cindy Fatika Sari was born in Ngawi, Indonesia, on June 23, 2002. Currently, she is studying as a Bachelor of Economics student at the Surakarta Open University, Indonesia. Cindy has an interest in the influence of digital marketing, especially through social media, on consumer behavior, especially among the younger generation.

In her research, she focuses on the influence of social media marketing on purchasing decisions among Generation Z consumers.

Through her work, Cindy hopes to be able to provides useful insights to help businesses better connect with Gen Z and improve their social media marketing strategies. He has a passion for understanding the ways in which brands can leverage digital platforms to create more meaningful and effective relationships.