
THE INFLUENCE OF E-WOM AND WEBSITE DESIGN ON CONSUMER ONLINE PURCHASING DECISIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) and website design on consumers' online purchasing decisions. In today's digital era, E-WOM and website design are crucial factors that influence consumer behavior in making online purchases. E-WOM is a consumer review, recommendation, or comment that is spread through digital platforms and social media, while website design includes the layout, navigation, aesthetics, and functionality of the website. The research method used is a quantitative survey by distributing questionnaires to a number of respondents who have made online purchases. Data were analyzed using linear regression techniques to identify the extent of the influence of E-WOM and website design on purchasing decisions. The results of the study show that E-WOM has a significant influence on purchasing decisions, where positive reviews increase consumer trust and interest. Website design has also been shown to have a significant impact, with an intuitive and attractive design that can improve user experience and facilitate the transaction process. This paper contributes to online business actors who need to pay attention to both aspects of electronic word of mouth and website design to increase sales and customer satisfaction.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In digital era, the internet has changed the way consumers interact with products and services. The online shopping phenomenon is becoming increasingly popular due to the ease of access and convenience it offers (Prayogi et al., 2023; Solikhah et al., 2024). In the midst of this growth, two important elements that influence consumer purchasing decisions are Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) and website design (SOLIKHAH et al., 2022). Both play an important role in shaping consumer perceptions and experiences during the online purchasing process.

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) refers to consumer reviews, recommendations, and comments spread through digital platforms such as social media, forums, and review sites (Baeshen et al., 2017). E-WOM has the power to quickly make or break the reputation of products and brands, as consumers tend to trust the experiences of others that are perceived as more honest and objective than traditional advertising. Research shows that positive reviews can increase consumer interest and trust, while negative reviews can reduce purchase intentions.

Website design is also a crucial factor in online purchasing decisions (Tseng & Lee, 2019). A well-designed website is not only visually appealing but also provides easy navigation and a satisfying user experience (Hamdan & Aldhaen, 2024). Aspects such as loading speed, intuitive layout, and ease of finding product information greatly influence consumer convenience. Poor design can cause frustration and increase the likelihood of consumers leaving the site without making a purchase.

The combination of E-WOM and effective website design can create a supportive and engaging online shopping environment (Phan & Pilik, 2018). E-WOM functions as a source of information and recommendations that can increase consumer confidence in products, while good website design ensures that their shopping experience is not disrupted by technical problems or complicated navigation. Thus, the synergy between these two elements is very important to increase conversion rates and customer loyalty.

Many studies have been conducted to understand the influence of E-WOM and website design separately, but few have studied the combined impact of the two in a comprehensive manner (Solikhah et al., 2023). This research aims to fill this gap by exploring how these two factors together influence consumer purchasing decisions. In the context of increasingly fierce business competition, a deep understanding of these dynamics can provide competitive advantages for online businesses.

The research method used in this study is a quantitative survey by distributing questionnaires to consumers who actively make online purchases. The data collected will be analyzed using linear regression techniques to identify the extent to which E-WOM and website design influence purchasing decisions. It is hoped that this research will provide deeper insight into consumer behavior and help online businesses design more effective marketing strategies.

Considering the findings of this study, online businesses can improve the quality of E-WOM through various ways such as encouraging customers to leave positive reviews and handling complaints proactively. In addition, investing in a user-friendly and responsive website design is also very important. The contribution of this paper is to provide practical guidance for businesses in optimizing these two elements to achieve success in the competitive online market.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Electronic Word-of-Mouth (E-WOM) has become one of the key factors in influencing consumers' online purchasing decisions. E-WOM refers to reviews, comments, and recommendations that consumers provide online regarding a particular product or service. According to (Ismagilova et al., 2020), positive reviews can significantly increase consumer confidence in a product, which in turn increases the likelihood of purchase. This happens because consumers tend to trust the experiences and opinions of fellow users more than advertising from companies. The study also shows that negative reviews can have a detrimental impact, drastically reducing consumers' purchase intentions. Therefore, companies need to manage online reviews well to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive impacts.

Website design also plays an important role in influencing online purchasing decisions. Good design can improve user experience, make navigation easier, and overall make a website more attractive. (Tseng & Lee, 2019) suggest that user-friendly visual and navigation aspects can increase user comfort, which contributes to purchasing decisions. They found that users were more likely to make purchases on websites that were easy to use and aesthetically pleasing. Additionally, poor design can reduce the perceived quality and trustworthiness of an e-commerce site, reducing the likelihood of purchase. Therefore, companies must focus on developing intuitive and attractive website designs to attract more consumers.

(SOLIKHAH et al., 2022) emphasize that credible and informative reviews can strengthen the

relationship between consumers and brands, increasing purchase intentions. They found that consumers who were exposed to positive reviews from fellow users tended to have greater trust in the product. This shows that E-WOM not only influences short-term purchasing decisions but can also build long-term relationships between consumers and brands. This study also shows that negative reviews, despite their negative impact, can be used as feedback to improve the quality of products and services. Thus, companies should actively monitor reviews and use the information for continuous improvement.

(Khalil et al., 2019) highlight that responsive and aesthetically appealing website design can increase user interaction with the site, increase satisfaction, and encourage purchasing decisions. They found that visual aesthetics, such as a clean layout and high-quality images, can make a website more attractive to users. Additionally, easy and fast navigation is essential to ensure that users can find the information they need without difficulty. This research confirms that good website design elements not only attract users but also increase the likelihood of purchase. Therefore, investing in responsive and aesthetic website design is an effective strategy to increase online sales.

(Phan & Pilík, 2018) found that the combination of positive E-WOM and good website design creates a strong synergy, making consumers more likely to make a purchase. They show that consumers who read positive reviews on well-designed websites tend to have higher purchase intent compared to those who read reviews on websites with less attractive designs. This research also reveals that the interaction between E-WOM and website design can strengthen consumer trust in brands. Thus, companies need to integrate E-WOM strategies with optimal website design to maximize the positive impact on purchasing decisions.

(Anubha et al., 2019) also revealed that interactive elements in website design, such as live chat features and product videos, can increase trust and confidence in purchasing decisions. They found that these interactive elements not only enrich the user experience but also provide additional information that can help consumers in the decision-making process. Additionally, features like live chat allow consumers to get immediate help when they need it, which can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. Therefore, including interactive elements in website design is an effective strategy to increase sales conversions.

Research by (Solihin & Ahyani, 2022) shows that negative E-WOM can have a detrimental impact on purchasing decisions, because consumers tend to pay more attention to negative reviews than positive reviews. They found that negative reviews were often more trusted by consumers and had a stronger impact on purchase intentions. However, good website design can help mitigate this negative impact by showcasing fast responses and effective solutions from sellers. This research shows that companies should be responsive to negative reviews and demonstrate efforts to correct problems faced by consumers. Thus, a quick and effective response can help restore consumer confidence.

(Mustafa Ayobami Raji et al., 2024) revealed that personalization in website design, such as product recommendations based on shopping history, can increase relevance and attractiveness for consumers. They found that good personalization can increase consumer loyalty and encourage repeat purchases. This study shows that consumers tend to be more interested in products that are relevant to their interests and needs, which can be identified through previous shopping data. Therefore, personalization is a powerful tool to enhance the online shopping experience and drive purchasing decisions. Companies need to use technology and data analytics to create more personalized and relevant shopping experiences for consumers.

(FAN et al., 2021) emphasizes the importance of clear information and transparency on e-commerce websites in building consumer trust. They found that consumers who felt that product information and reviews were presented honestly and clearly tended to have higher trust and were more willing to make a purchase. This study shows that information transparency is key to building long-term relationships with consumers. Therefore, companies must ensure that all information on their websites is accurate, clear and easy to access. Thus, clarity of information can increase consumer confidence and encourage purchasing decisions.

Finally, research by (Aljabari et al., 2023) concluded that the combination of positive E-WOM and good website design can create a satisfying and comprehensive online shopping experience, which is important for winning consumer trust in a competitive digital market. They found that the synergy

between positive reviews and optimal website design can increase consumer trust and loyalty, which in turn increases sales. This study emphasizes that companies need to focus on both of these aspects to create a superior shopping experience. Thus, the combination of E-WOM and good website design is an effective strategy to attract and retain consumers in an increasingly competitive e-commerce environment.

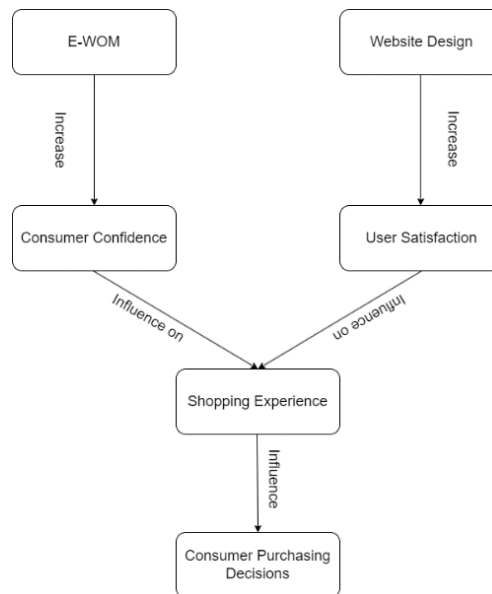


Figure 1 Mechanism for Forming Purchasing Decisions

Overall, the literature shows that both E-WOM and website design have a significant impact on consumers' online purchasing decisions. This research emphasizes the importance for companies to proactively manage online reviews and invest resources in user-friendly and attractive website design. By understanding and optimizing these two factors, companies can increase consumer satisfaction, increase sales conversions, and build long-term customer loyalty

3. METHODS

This research is a type of descriptive research using a qualitative approach. Descriptive research is a type of research that aims to describe or describe the characteristics of a particular phenomenon or population systematically and accurately. Descriptive research aims to provide a detailed description of the research focus (Yusuf, 2016). A qualitative approach is a research approach that does not use statistical procedures in data analysis but prioritizes data interpretation in the form of descriptions (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). The aim of a qualitative approach is to understand and interpret social phenomena and human behavior from the perspective of the people involved in them.

This research data is in the form of secondary data in the form of journals that are relevant to the topic studied, namely the Influence of E-WOM and Website Design on Consumer Online Purchasing Decisions.

Data was collected using library research and analyzed using qualitative analysis techniques in three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Creswell, 2014).

4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that E-WOM and website design have a significant influence on consumers' online purchasing decisions. Positive E-WOM and attractive website design can increase consumer trust and interest in making purchases. This is supported by previous research proving the significant influence of E-WOM and website design on consumers' online purchasing

decisions. However, the effectiveness of website design can vary depending on the level of competition in the online market, so further research is needed to understand these dynamics in more depth. Inconsistencies in previous research indicate that further research is needed regarding the influence of E-WOM and Website Design on consumers' online purchasing decisions.

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