MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH AND BRAND IMAGE IN SHAPING PURCHASE INTENTION

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian bertujuan menganalisis pengaruh Electronic Word of Mouth Effect, Brand Image, dan Email Marketing terhadap Purchase Intention dalam pembelian merchandise resmi MotoGP. Penelitian dilakukan pada responden yang merupakan anggota komunitas motor besar di Indonesia yang memiliki ketertarikan tinggi terhadap MotoGP, namun belum pernah melakukan pembelian merchandise resmi. Data penelitian dikumpulkan melalui penyebaran kuesioner menggunakan skala Likert dan dianalisis metode Partial Least Square–Structural Equation Modeling. Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Electronic Word of Mouth Effect memiliki pengaruh positif terhadap Purchase Intention, yang mengindikasikan bahwa rekomendasi, ulasan, dan komunikasi digital antar konsumen memiliki peran penting membentuk niat beli merchandise MotoGP. Email Marketing terbukti berpengaruh positif terhadap Purchase Intention, menegaskan efektivitas komunikasi pemasaran yang bersifat langsung dan personal dalam mendorong minat beli. Brand Image tidak berpengaruh terhadap Purchase Intention, yang mengindikasikan bahwa citra merek MotoGP belum menjadi faktor dominan bagi konsumen yang belum memiliki pengalaman pembelian. Temuan penelitian ini menegaskan optimalisasi strategi pemasaran digital berbasis Electronic Word of Mouth dan Email Marketing dalam meningkatkan niat beli konsumen terhadap merchandise MotoGP.

Kata kunci: citra merek, pemasaran digital, pemasaran email, efek electronic word of mouth*, niat beli*

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effects of Electronic Word of Mouth Effect, Brand Image, and Email Marketing on Purchase Intention in the context of purchasing official MotoGP merchandise. It was conducted among respondents who are members of large motorcycle communities in Indonesia with a high interest in MotoGP, but who never purchased official merchandise. Its data were collected through a questionnaire using a Likert scale and analyzed using the Partial Least Square–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method. The results indicate that the Electronic Word of Mouth Effect has a positive influence on Purchase Intention. The consumers' recommendations, reviews, and digital communication play an important role in shaping purchase intentions toward MotoGP merchandise. Email Marketing has a positive influence on Purchase Intention, confirming the effectiveness of direct and personalized marketing communication in encouraging purchase interest. Yet, brand Image does not show a significant effect on Purchase Intention. It indicated that the MotoGP brand image has not become a dominant factor for consumers who lack prior purchasing experience. These findings

emphasize the importance of optimizing digital marketing strategies based on Electronic Word of Mouth and Email Marketing to enhance consumers' purchase intentions toward MotoGP merchandise.

Key words: brand image, digital marketing, email marketing, electronic word of mouth effect, purchase intention

INTRODUCTION

The ongoing evolution of digital technology is fundamentally reshaping marketing strategies, necessitating a shift from traditional promotional methods to innovative digital platforms. Digital marketing reflects the integration of promotional activities with new forms of consumer interaction by the internet.

The transformation allows firms to build closer and more interactive relationships with consumers through various digital channels, including mobile applications, email marketing, websites, blogs, and social media platforms. These channels facilitate faster information delivery, greater personalization, and more direct twoway communication between companies and consumers (Kurniawan A. et al., 2022).

Among various digital marketing tools, email marketing remains a highly effective instrument for strengthening brand relationships (Merisavo & Raulas, 2004). They emphasize that email enables continuous communication and delivers relevant information to enhance brand loyalty. Bickart and Chatterjee, as cited by Yao (2011), highlight that online discussions constitute a major source of electronic word-of-mouth has a strong influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Consumers increasingly rely on electronic word-of-mouth for purchase decisions because it is perceived as more credible, trustworthy, and persuasive than traditional advertising. Sweeney (2012) and Jalilvand (2012) argue that electronic word-of-mouth exceeds its conventional ones. It and has become one of the most influential communication mechanisms shaping consumer behavior in digital environments.

In the context of global sports marketing, particularly MotoGP, the influence of electronic word-of-mouth is highly pronounced.

MotoGP has evolved into one of the most prestigious international motorcycle racing events, supported by a massive and highly engaged global fan base across Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Since 2022, MotoGP in Indonesia has been exceptional popularity, reinforced by the establishment of the Mandalika Circuit in Lombok. The development not only strengthens Indonesia's role in the global motorsport ecosystem, but also generates substantial commercial opportunities, especially in the merchandise and digital engagement sectors.

Prominent riders such as Marc Márquez (MM93), Valentino Rossi (VR46), Fabio Quartararo, Francesco "Pecco" Bagnaia, and Jorge Martín have cultivated strong fan communities. They actively interact through digital platforms. Official MotoGP merchandise ranging from apparel, caps, and accessories to limitededition collectibles is now widely available through ecommerce platforms and official online stores. For example, VR46 Official Store and MM93 merchandise can be easily accessed by Indonesian consumers, eliminating the need to attend live races abroad. These distribution channels are frequently supported by email marketing campaigns offering exclusive previews, promotional content, and discount codes, which enhance consumer engagement and loyalty.

Empirical evidence supports the importance of these dynamics. Kwon (2013) demonstrates that sports merchandise purchasing behavior is significantly influenced by star athletes, with Valentino Rossi historically dominating global merchandise sales. The finding aligns with Gilly et al. (1998) as cited by Jalilvand (2012). They argue that both traditional word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth serve as critical reference

points for reducing consumer uncertainty during the purchase process. In the contemporary MotoGP environment, social media interactions, influencer endorsements, and digital fan communities play a decisive role in shaping purchasing behavior, reinforcing the view that electronic word-of-mouth constitutes a core driver of consumer decision making in modern sports marketing.

Despite the growing importance of digital marketing in sports merchandising, empirical studies simultaneously examine the roles of electronic word-of-mouth effect, brand image, and email marketing in shaping purchase intention remain limited, particularly within niche sports communities. Prior research focused more on general ecommerce platforms or mainstream consumer products. Relatively little attention has been given to fanbased communities whose purchasing behavior is strongly influenced by emotional attachment, social identity, and peer interaction. This research gap is evident in emerging markets such as Indonesia, where digital engagement among sports fans continues to increase. Yet, conversion into actual purchase behavior remains inconsistent.

Although MotoGP possesses a strong global brand image, brand strength alone does not necessarily translate into purchase intention. They are particularly among consumers who have never purchased official merchandise. For this segment, purchasing decisions are more likely driven by interpersonal communication, perceived authenticity, and trust derived from peer recommendations rather than brand associations alone. At the same time, the expansion of online fan communities and social media platforms has intensified the role of digital conversations, online reviews, and community generated content in shaping consumer perceptions and reducing purchase uncertainty. Email marketing, when integrated with communitybased digital engagement, offers a personalized communication channel capable of strengthening consumer relationships and stimulating purchase intention.

Therefore, this study aims to empirically examine the influence of electronic word-of-mouth brand image, and email marketing on purchase intention among members of large motorcycle communities in Indonesia who have not yet purchased official MotoGP merchandise. By focusing on this specific consumer segment, the study provides both theoretical and practical insights into how digital marketing strategies can be optimized to convert high fan engagement into concrete purchasing intentions within the sports merchandise market.

In addition, the integration of data-driven digital marketing strategies has become increasingly important in converting fan engagement into purchase intention. The use of analytics-based email marketing allows firms to tailor messages based on consumer preferences, browsing behavior, and community interactions, thereby increasing message relevance and effectiveness. Combining with electronic word-of-mouth and brand-related cues, personalized email marketing can function as a reinforcing mechanism that bridges the gap between awareness and purchase intention. The integrated approach is particularly relevant within fan-based sports communities. Their emotional attachment and peer influence are strong, yet purchasing decisions require additional reassurance and personalized incentives. Consequently, understanding how these digital marketing elements interact provides a more comprehensive explanation of purchase intention formation in the contemporary MotoGP merchandise market.

THEORETICAL REVIEW
Electronic Word of Mouth Effect

Recent studies emphasize that electronic word of mouth has become a primary information source influencing consumer decision-making in digital environments. Hennig-Thurau et al., (2004) provide foundational insights into eWOM

motivation. Moreover, Cheung and Thadani (2012), Sweeney et al. (2014), and Tran, et al., (2015) demonstrate that eWOM credibility and volume significantly reduce perceived risk and enhance purchase intention. These findings indicate that eWOM plays a critical role, particularly among consumers without prior purchasing experience.

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) refers to the dissemination of communication through online media. Schiffman L. G., (2010) define electronic word-of-mouth as communication in an online environment. Similarly, Hennig-Thurau (2024) describe electronic word-of-mouth as positive or negative statements made by potential, actual, or former consumers about a product or company that are made available to a wide audience through the internet. Based on these definitions, electronic word-of-mouth can be understood as consumer generated communication transmitted via digital platforms that plays a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions and behavioral intentions.

Compared to traditional one, electronic word-of-mouth possesses distinctive characteristics. Novak (2003) explain that EWOM occurs within an electronic context where interactions do not require facetoface communication. Consumers may actively contribute by writing reviews or comments, or passively engage by reading opinions shared by others. Unlike traditional word-of-mouth which is temporary and limited in reach, electronic word-of-mouth is archived and remains accessible over time, allowing it to serve as a longterm reference for other consumers. Furthermore, EWOM interactions are often goal oriented, as consumers intentionally seek information to reduce uncertainty and support their purchase decisions rather than engaging in casual or experimental communication.

The concept of the electronic word-of-mouth emphasizes the extent to which EWOM influences consumer decisionmaking processes. Park, et al., (2006) argue that consumers place substantial importance on the opinions of others before and during the purchase decision process. Individuals frequently discuss their purchase intentions with family members, friends, and online communities, making them highly susceptible to interpersonal influence. In digital environments, this interpersonal influence is amplified through electronic word-of-mouth, as information spreads rapidly and reaches a broader audience compared to traditional referrals. Consequently, the electronic word-of-mouth effect reflects the persuasive power of online consumer communication in shaping attitudes, perceptions, and purchase intentions.

In the context of online purchasing, categorize electronic word-of-mouth into three key dimensions. The first dimension is the usage experience. The electronic word-of-mouth refers to which consumers rely on and utilize online reviews and recommendations when making purchasing decisions. Prior research indicates a strong relationship between internet usage intensity and online shopping behavior. The consumers who frequently use the internet are more likely to adopt and depend on electronic word-of-mouth as an information source.

The second dimension is perceived electronic word-of-mouth credibility. It plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of EWOM, as consumers are more likely to accept and act upon information they perceive as trustworthy and reliable. When product reviews or recommendations are considered credible, consumers are more inclined to learn from them and incorporate the information into their decisionmaking processes. Conversely, if electronic word-of-mouth is perceived as biased or unreliable, its influence on purchase intention is significantly reduced.

The third dimension is Customer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence (CSII). It reflects the degree to which individuals tend to seek advice or opinions from others when making purchase decisions. CSII represents an important individual characteristic, particularly in online purchasing contexts. The consumers often rely on the experiences and recommendations

of others to minimize perceived risk. Consumers with high susceptibility to interpersonal influence are more likely to be affected by electronic word-of-mouth, making this dimension critical in understanding how EWOM shapes purchase intention.

Overall, the effect of electronic word-of-mouth represents a powerful mechanism through which consumergenerated information influences purchasing behavior in digital environments. In markets characterized by strong communities and high emotional involvement, such as MotoGP merchandise, electronic word-of-mouth is expected to play a central role in shaping purchase intention by reducing uncertainty, enhancing trust, and strengthening social influence among consumers.

Brand Image

Contemporary research suggests that brand image influences purchase intention indirectly through trust and perceived value. Martínez and Pina (2003) provide a foundational framework. The recent empirical evidence indicates that the impact of brand image varies across consumer segments and product familiarity levels (Keller, 2016; Tran, et al., 2015). For new or inexperienced consumers, peer-generated information may outweigh brand associations.

Brand image represents the essence of a brand and reflects how a brand is positioned in the minds of consumers. It encompasses the overall perception formed through consumers' experiences, information exposure, and interactions with the brand over time. Essentially, brand image is the cumulative result of consumers' beliefs, impressions, and evaluations. They shape how a brand is perceived and differentiated from competitors. Consumer experiences play a critical role in forming brand image, as both positive and negative experiences can significantly alter perceptions of a product or brand.

Schiffman (2000) define brand image as a set of associations stored in the minds or memory of consumers. Susanto and Wijanarko (2004) emphasize that brand image is what is ultimately perceived by consumers rather than what is intended by the company. So, brand image is subjective in nature and depends heavily on how consumers interpret brandrelated information.

Kotler conceptualizes brand image as a perceptual process in which individuals select, organize, and interpret information to construct a meaningful understanding of a brand. This process results in a structured set of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that guide consumer attitudes and behavioral responses toward the brand. In this context, brand image functions as a cognitive shortcut that helps consumers evaluate products and reduce complexity in decision making, particularly in markets with high information availability.

Martínez & Pina (2003) further elaborate that brand image consists of three interrelated dimensions. The first dimension is value, which refers to the perceived functional and economic benefits of a brand, including the assessment of product performance relative to its price. The second dimension is personality, which reflects the symbolic and emotional meanings associated with a brand and enables consumers to express their self concept and identity through brand usage. The third dimension is organization, which relates to the overall image of the company behind the brand, encompassing trust, admiration, credibility, and positive emotional associations with the firm.

These dimensions demonstrate that brand image is not a static symbol but a dynamic construct shaped by functional benefits, emotional attachment, and organizational reputation. A strong brand image can enhance consumer confidence, foster emotional bonds, and encourage favorable attitudes toward a brand, which may ultimately lead to purchase intention and loyalty. However, the influence of brand image on purchase intention may vary depending on consumers' prior experience and level of involvement with the product category. For consumers who lack direct purchasing experience, interpersonal

communication and external information sources may play a more dominant role than brand image in shaping purchase decisions.

Email Marketing

Email marketing effectiveness has evolved through personalization, automation, and data-driven targeting. Recent studies confirm that permission-based and personalized email marketing significantly improves engagement and purchase intention (Krafft et al.,2017; Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Kumar et al., 2020). The developments position on email marketing is a strategic digital communication tool rather than merely a promotional medium.

Email marketing is a powerful tool for engaging in personal and targeted communication. As a marketing medium, it allows businesses to reach consumers directly in a measurable and cost effective manner. Consumers are already accustomed to receiving emails, which makes it a familiar and accepted channel for communication. Krafft et al., (2017) emphasizes that email marketing is a form of "permission marketing". The messages are sent to consumers who have opted in increasing the likelihood of engagement.

Beyond awareness and promotion, email marketing supports relationship building and customer retention. According to Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019), effective email campaigns leverage segmentation, personalization, and automation, allowing marketers to tailor messages to specific consumer needs and behaviors. The personalized email content significantly improves open rates, clickthrough rates, and overall campaign ROI (Doherty, 2009).

Furthermore, email marketing serves multiple functions: informing consumers about products and services, promoting special offers, enhancing brand recognition, driving traffic to websites, reminding consumers about events or purchases, and providing transactional notifications. Recent studies highlight that integrating email marketing with data analytics and artificial

intelligence (AI) allows for predictive targeting, behaviorbased messaging, and improved customer relationship management (CRM) (Kumar et al., 2020). This makes email marketing not only a communication channel but also a strategic tool for enhancing customer engagement, loyalty, and longterm profitability.

Email marketing is an essential component of digital marketing strategies that utilizes electronic mail as a medium to deliver marketing messages to existing and potential customers (Kurniawan, 2023). As a form of digital marketing, email marketing enables companies to communicate directly and personally with their target audience at relatively low cost and with broad reach. This approach aligns with the concept of digital marketing, which emphasizes the use of internet-based technologies and digital media to achieve marketing objectives effectively and efficiently.

Within the context of digital marketing, email serves as a channel for distributing promotional content, product information, special offers, notifications, and ongoing customer relationship messages. Email marketing functions not only as a promotional tool but also as a medium for building long-term relationships with consumers, increasing engagement, and fostering customer loyalty through relevant and personalized communication. This approach supports two-way communication between companies and consumers.

Furthermore, email marketing is often regarded as a form of permission marketing, a concept in which consumers consciously give consent to receive marketing messages. As a result, the level of consumer engagement tends to be higher compared to traditional, unsolicited advertising methods. Permission-based email marketing increases the likelihood that consumers will open, read, and respond to marketing messages because they are willing to receive such information.

Operationally, email marketing includes various forms of communication such as

newsletters, promotional offers, product updates, and post-purchase follow-up messages. The effectiveness of email marketing depends on several key factors, including content quality, email list segmentation, message personalization, and appropriate timing of delivery. These factors collectively aim to enhance marketing communication effectiveness and encourage purchase decisions as well as long-term customer loyalty.

Purchase Intention

With rapid development of technology and changing times, companies must adopt the best strategies to attract customers to purchase products. Today, customers are smart and critical. They can access various information before deciding to buy a product. They seek information through various means, such as the internet, asking friends, and are not easily swayed by what companies or sales representatives say in promotions.

This process begins with the emergence of a need for a product or brand, followed by Consumer Information Processing. Next, they evaluate the product or brand. The result of this evaluation leads to the emergence of a purchase intention before they actually make the purchase.

Schiffman (2010) explain that external influences, awareness of needs, product recognition, and alternative evaluation are factors that can generate consumer purchase intention. These external influences consist of social factors, marketing efforts, and sociocultural factors. Furthermore, the indicators of purchase intention are described by several components.

Consumers are interested in seeking information about the product. They stimulated by their needs to seek more information. Kotler (2007) divide this into two levels of stimulation. First is light information seeking (attention reinforcement). At this level, people are just more sensitive to product information. Second is active information seeking level by looking for

reading materials, asking friends, or visiting stores to learn about certain products.

In purchasing through information gathering, consumers learn about competing brands and the features of those brands. They evaluate the options and begin to consider purchasing the product.

Interest in trying is the consumers attempt to meet their needs, to study competing brands, and to evaluate their features. They will search for specific benefits from product solutions and evaluate those products. This evaluation considers customers' cognitive oriented process. Theirs should be consciously and rationally assessing a product, leading to interest in trying it.

Desire to learn about the product is essential. The consumers will have a desire to learn more about the product after gaining interest in trying it. They will perceive the product as a set of attributes with varying capabilities to provide benefits to satisfy their needs.

Desire to own the product is also crucial. Consumers will pay significant attributes that provide the benefits they seek. Ultimately, they will make a decision (preference) about the product by evaluating the attributes and formulating an intention to purchase or own the product they like.

Kotler (2008) state that the stages of purchase interest in the AIDA model are a series of stages or steps that business customers go through in determining their purchase interest or the motivations of consumers in researching the products or services offered. The stages of the AIDA model include attention, interest, desire, and action. The first stage is the initial stage of assessing a product or service needed by potential customers. So, potential customers learn about the product/service being offered. The second stage refers to the interest of potential customers. Theirs arise after obtaining information and observing the product/service.

The third is desire. Potential customers think about and discuss the product, which triggers the desire and urge to buy the

product/service being offered. The potential customers must move beyond mere interest in the product. This stage is characterized by a strong desire to buy and try the product. The last is action. This is the passive decision-making stage following the offer. At this stage, potential customers who have been visited by the company will be more confident in purchasing or using the offered product.
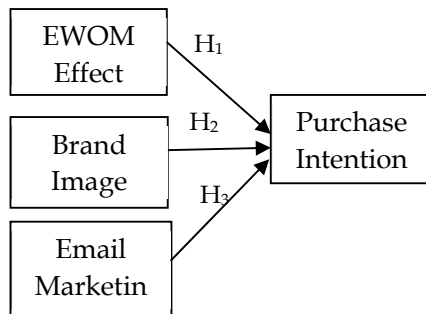

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework Model
Source: Developed by Author, 2024

The conceptual framework presented in Figure 1 illustrates the relationship among the key variables in this study. It serves as a visual representation of how the independent variables are expected to influence the dependent variable, based on theoretical foundations and prior research.
In this model:

Independent Variables represent the factors that are hypothesized to affect the outcome. These could include marketing strategies, customer engagement, personalization, or other relevant constructs depending on the study.

Mediating or Moderating Variables (if any) are included to show the mechanisms or conditions under which the independent variables exert their influence on the dependent variable. For example, consumer perception or technological adoption may act as mediators or moderators.

Dependent Variable represents the outcome or effect being studied, such as customer loyalty, purchase intention, brand awareness, or campaign effectiveness.

The arrows in the framework indicate the direction of the hypothesized relationships, suggesting causality or influence from one variable to another. This conceptual model helps to clarify the scope of the study, guides the formulation of hypotheses, and provides a foundation for data collection and analysis.

In the digital era, the consumer decision-making process is increasingly influenced by interactive communication and digital touch points that shape awareness, interest, and evaluation stages. Information through online channels, such as electronic word of mouth and personalized digital communications, plays a crucial role in reducing perceived risk and increasing consumer confidence before making a purchase decision. As consumers become more rational and information-oriented, their purchase intention is no longer formed solely through traditional promotional messages, but rather through a combination of peer influence, credible information sources, and personalized marketing experiences. This shift highlights the growing importance of integrating digital marketing strategies that align with consumer information processing behavior.

Furthermore, the conceptual framework developed in this study reflects the logical integration of consumer behavior theory and digital marketing practices. By positioning effect of electronic word of mouth, brand image, and email marketing as key antecedents of purchase intention, the framework captures how external influences and marketing efforts interact within the stages of the consumer decision-making and the AIDA model. The framework provides a systematic basis for examining how digital communication, brand perception, and personalized marketing efforts collectively shape consumer purchase intention. Consequently, the proposed model not only supports hypothesis development but also offers practical implications for marketers seeking to design effective digital strategies that convert consumer interest into actual purchasing behavior.

Hypothesis Development

Based on consumer behavior theory and prior empirical studies, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) plays a crucial role in influencing purchase intention by providing credible, experience-based information shared among consumers through digital platforms. In communities with strong social interaction, such as MotoGP enthusiasts, eWOM becomes a dominant reference in the decision-making process.

H$_1$: Electronic Word of Mouth Effect has a positive effect on Purchase Intention.

Brand image reflects consumers' perceptions and associations toward a brand formed through information exposure and prior experience. A favorable brand image can enhance consumer confidence and reduce perceived risk. However, its influence on purchase intention may vary depending on consumers' familiarity and experience with the product.

H$_2$: Brand Image has a positive effect on Purchase Intention.

Email marketing represents a form of direct and personalized digital communication that enables firms to deliver relevant marketing messages to consumers. Permission-based and personalized email marketing has been shown to increase engagement and motivate purchase behavior.

H$_3$: Email Marketing has a positive effect on Purchase Intention.

Email marketing represents a form of direct and personalized digital communication that enables firms to deliver relevant information and promotional messages to consumers. Through permission-based communication, email marketing increases message relevance, consumer engagement, and trust. Previous studies indicate that personalized and targeted email marketing enhances consumer responses and motivates purchase behavior, particularly in niche and interest-based communities.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research approach using a survey method. Its population consists of members of large motorcycle communities in Indonesia who have a strong interest in MotoGP but never purchased official MotoGP merchandise.

The sampling technique used in this study is purposive sampling, with the following criteria: (1) active membership in a large motorcycle community, (2) interest in MotoGP events and riders, and (3) no prior purchase of official MotoGP merchandise. As these criteria, a total of 150 respondents were selected as the research sample. It meets the minimum requirement for Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The data analysis technique in this study is PLS-SEM with SmartPLS software. It is suitable for predictive models and complex relationships among latent variables. The method determines the effect of independent variables on the dependent (bound) variable based on changes in each increase or decrease of the independent variable, which can affect the dependent variable.

In processing the data, this study uses data from the research instrument. Its questionnaire uses the Likert scale as the scoring system for each answered question. Addressing Sugiyono (2017), the Likert scale is designed to assess how strongly a subject agrees or disagrees with a statement on a 5-point scale. For Sekaran (2006), responses to a set of items related to a particular concept or variable are presented to each respondent. This is an interval scale, and the difference between responses on two points of the scale remains constant. The interval scales allow to perform certain arithmetic operations on the data collected from respondents. An interval scale is not only for groups of individuals for certain categories. They determine the order of these groups, and measures the magnitude

of differences in preferences between individuals.

Following Sugiyono (2017), this study uses valid and reliable research instruments in data collection. Valid and reliable instruments are an absolute requirement for research results. However, this research must be tested for validity and reliability. The valid and reliable instruments do not automatically guarantee valid and reliable research results. The good instrument must be valid and reliable. Validity test is used to determine how accurately an item measures an object. An item is said to be valid if there is a correlation with the total score. This indicates support for the item in uncovering what is intended to be revealed. Items are usually in the form of questions or statements presented to respondents using a questionnaire. The test is conducted with the criteria that if the calculated r value is greater than or equal to the table r value, the item can be considered valid, and vice versa (Sugiyono, 2017; Ghozali, 2012). Then, the validity in research should be > 0.7.

Reliability test is used to determine the consistency of a measuring instrument, usually a questionnaire, to see if the instrument will provide consistent measurements if repeated. A common method in research to measure the range scale is Cronbach's alpha. The reliability test is a continuation of the validity test, where only valid items are tested. A threshold of > 0.6 can be used to determine whether the instrument is reliable (Ghozali, 2012). The reliability in research can be considered reliable if > 0.70. This indicates that the Cronbach's Alpha value generated for all constructs is reliable.

A hypothesis is a temporary answer to a research problem, the truth of which must be tested empirically. A hypothesis states the influence we are looking for or want to study. It is a temporary explanation of the relationship between complex phenomena.

Moreover, Ghozali (2012) define three stages in the model for testing the mediation effect in PLS:

First model: Tests the influence of the exogenous variable (X) on the endogenous variable (Y), which must be significant with a T-Statistics > 1.96.

Second model: Tests the influence of the exogenous variable (X) on the mediating variable (M), which must be significant with a T-Statistics > 1.96.

Third model: Simultaneously tests the influence of the exogenous variable (X) and the mediating variable (M) on the endogenous variable (Y). In the final test, the influence of the exogenous variable (X) on the endogenous variable (Y) should not be significant. While the influence of the mediating variable (M) on the endogenous variable (Y) should be significant with a T-Statistics > 1.96.

The AVE and communality values must be > 0.50, fulfilling the requirements for convergent validity. The Cronbach's Alpha value must be > 0.70, ensuring that all reflective construct indicators are reliable and meet reliability testing.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

The respondents in this study are members of a large motorcycle club who are MotoGP enthusiasts but have not yet purchased MotoGP merchandise. The sample size in this study is 150 samples. The data processing technique uses the SEM method based on Partial Least Squares (PLS).

In this study, CFA First Order Model Analysis is conducted to test the validity of each reflective construct indicator. If the factor loading value of each reflective construct indicator is greater than 0.70, it is considered valid.

Table 1
Analisis CFA *First* Model *Order* Construck

Indicator	Initial Model	Final Model
EFW01	0, 825	0,825
EFW02	0, 898	0,899
EFW03	0,032	0,033
BI01	0,785	0, 785

Indicator	Initial Model	Final Model
BI02	0,774	0, 774
BI03	0, 981	0, 918
BI04	0, 786	0,786
BI05	0, 819	0, 819
BI06	0, 904	0, 904
EM01	0, 819	0, 819
EM02	0,900	0,900
EM03	0, 907	0,907
MP01	0, 901	0, 901
MP02	0, 854	0, 854
MP03	0, 778	0, 778
MP04	0, 897	0, 897
MP05	0,852	0,852

Source: Author's data analysis using PLS-SEM, 2024

As presented in Table 1, most of the reflective indicators have loading factor values above 0.70, indicating that they are valid and contribute significantly to their respective constructs. However, the indicator EFW03 has a loading factor of 0.032 in the initial model and 0.033 in the final model. It is below the acceptable threshold of 0.70. This suggests that EFW03 does not adequately represent the electronic word of mouth (eWOM) construct and should be removed from the model to improve construct validity.

Other indicators, including EFW01 and EFW02 for eWOM, BI01 to BI06 for Brand Image, EM01 to EM03 for Email Marketing, and MP01 to MP05 for Purchase Intent, all have loading factor values above 0.70, demonstrating strong correlations with their respective constructs.

Moreover, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Communality values are used to assess convergent validity. All constructs in the model show AVE and Communality values greater than 0.50, indicating that they meet the requirements for convergent validity. By removing the invalid indicator EFW03, the measurement model becomes more valid and reliable, ensuring that the constructs of eWOM, Brand Image, Email Marketing, and Purchase Intent are measured accurately and consistently. This provides a

solid basis for further hypothesis testing and structural analysis.

Table 2
AVE dan *Communality*

VARIABLE	AVE	Communality
BI	0,694516	0,694515
EFW	0,743824	0,743823
EM	0,768217	0,768217
MP	0,735599	0,735599

Source: Author's data analysis using PLS-SEM, 2024

Based on the data processing results in Table 2, all reflective constructs produce AVE and Communality values above 0.5. This indicates that all constructs meet the requirements for convergent validity, meaning that the indicators collectively explain the variance of the measured constructs.

In addition, Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values are used to test the reliability of each reflective construct indicator. If the values for each construct generated by Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability exceed 0.70, all reflective indicators are considered reliable. However, Cronbach's Alpha values produced by PLS are slightly underestimated, so using Composite Reliability is recommended as a more accurate measure of reliability. Therefore, the constructs of Brand Image (BI), electronic word of mouth (EFW), Email Marketing (EM), and Purchase Intent (MP) can be considered both valid and reliable for further analysis.

Table 3
Cronbachs Alpha **dan** *Composite Realibility*

Variable	Cronbachs Alpha	Composite Realibility
EFW	0,660393	0,852864
BI	0,917930	0,931385
EM	0,849433	0,908447
MP	0,909776	0,932768

Source: Author's data analysis using PLS-SEM, 2024

Table 3 shows that the Cronbach's Alpha values indicate only BI, EFW, EM, and MP have values above > 0.70. So, they meet the reliability test. However, EFW has a Cronbach's Alpha value below 0.70, indicating it does not pass the reliability test. Nevertheless, the Composite Reliability table shows that all reflective constructs have values above > 0.70. Therefore, all reflective constructs, including EFW, meet the reliability test.

The T-Statistics values in the outer loading table are to test the validity of each reflective construct indicator. If the T-Statistics values for each reflective construct indicator in the table are above > 1.96, all reflective construct indicators are valid. The significance of the estimated parameters provides very useful information regarding the relationships between the research variables. The basis for hypothesis testing is the value in the output results of the Path Coefficients. If the T-Statistics value of a variable produced by the Path Coefficients is greater than >1.96, the variable has a significant influence. Table 4 provides the T-Statistics output for testing the research model hypotheses.

Table 4
T-Statistics

VARIABLE	T-Statistics
BI > MP	0,105601
EFW > MP	30,096611
EM > MP	2,514434

Source: Author's data analysis using PLS-SEM, 2024.

Based on the T-Statistics results in Table 4, the influence of Brand Image (BI), Electronic Word of Mouth (EFW), and Email Marketing (EM) on Purchase Intention (MP).

Electronic Word of Mouth (EFW) has a Tstatistic value of 30.10, which is far above the significance threshold of 1.96. This indicates a strong and significant positive effect on Purchase Intention, supporting Hypothesis 1 (Ha1). This finding aligns with previous research suggesting that electronic communication among consumers, especially through peer reviews and online recommendations, plays a key role in shaping purchase decisions (Hennig-Thurau T., 2024).

Brand Image (BI) shows a Tstatistic of only 0.11, which is below the significance threshold. So, Brand Image does not significantly influence Purchase Intention, meaning Hypothesis 2 (Ha2) is not supported. This suggests that for respondents who have not previously purchased the product, brand perception alone is insufficient to drive purchasing decisions, consistent with findings by (Martínez & Pina, 2003).

Email Marketing (EM) has a Tstatistic of 2.51, exceeding the significance threshold of 1.96. This supports Hypothesis 3 (Ha3) that personalized and targeted email campaigns have a significant positive effect on Purchase Intention. This result confirms that Email Marketing, as a direct communication tool, effectively engages consumers and motivates purchase responses (Chaffey, 2019). Overall, these results highlight the importance of strategies emphasizing usertouser communication and personalization in digital marketing to enhance Purchase Intention, while the impact of Brand Image appears to be contextdependent, particularly on consumer experience and familiarity with the product.

The results of the hypothesis testing based on the T-Statistics values in the Path Coefficients table from the Smart PLS analysis are as follows:

As the analysis results, Hypothesis 1 (Ha1) that the Electronic Word of Mouth Effect influences Purchase Intention is accepted with a Tstatistic value of 30.09. It is above the significance threshold of 1.96. This finding aligns with theory stating that electronic communication among consumers through electronic word of mouth has a strong influence in shaping purchase intentions. According to Hennig-Thurau T. G., (2004), electronic word of mouth increases consumer trust because the information comes from the subjective experiences of other consumers. Theirs are considered more credible than

official advertisements. Cheung (2012) also supports that electronic word of mouth has a significant impact within communities of product enthusiasts, such as MotoGP fans.

Hypothesis 2 (Ha2) that Brand Image influences Purchase Intention shows a Tstatistic value of only 0.10. In other words, it is not significant. So the hypothesis is accepted in the sense that Brand Image does not have a significant effect. This suggests that for respondents who have never purchased MotoGP merchandise, brand image alone is not enough to drive purchase intention. This is consistent with Martínez and Pina (2003) that the effect of brand image varies depending on the level of consumers' emotional attachment to the product. Consumers who are new to this segment are likely more influenced by interpersonal communication factors rather than by the overall brand image.

Hypothesis 3 (Ha3) regarding the effect of email marketing on purchase intention is also accepted with a Tstatistic value of 2.51, above the significant threshold of 1.96. This confirms that personalized and targeted digital marketing strategies via email effectively influence purchase decisions. Chaffey (2019) argue that email marketing, as a direct communication channel, plays a significant role in enhancing engagement and motivating purchase responses, especially for communities with special interests like MotoGP fans.

Overall, the results indicate the importance of a digital marketing approach that emphasizes usertouser communication and personalization in building purchase intention. While brand image needs to be reconsidered in the context of market segmentation and consumer experience.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the results of data analysis and hypothesis testing, this study draws some conclusions. Firstly, the hypothesis test results show that the electronic word of mouth has a significant positive influence on purchase intention, with a Tstatistic value of 30.09. It exceeds the critical value of 1.96. This finding aligns with theory that electronic word of mouth is consumer to consumer communication that plays a vital role in influencing purchase decisions because it is considered more credible and able to build consumer trust (Hennig-Thurau, 2004). The electronic word of mouth is effective in increasing purchase interest, especially within interest communities, such as MotoGP fans (Cheung, 2012).

Secondly, brand image does not show a significant influence on purchase intention, with a Tstatistic value of only 0.10, below the significance threshold. This indicates that the perception of the MotoGP brand image has not yet become a dominant factor in stimulating purchase interest among members of large motorcycle communities who never purchased official merchandise. This finding is consistent with Martínez & Pina, (2003) that the influence of brand image on purchase intention can vary depending on consumers' emotional attachment level and market context. Consumers without direct experience or emotional bonds are usually less influenced directly by brand image.

Thirdly, email marketing is proven to have a significant positive effect on purchase intention, with a Tstatistic of 2.51 above the 1.96 significance level. This supports digital marketing theory that email marketing strategies that are relevant and personalized can increase consumer interaction and responses, thus encouraging purchase interest. Previous studies also mention that Email Marketing is effective in building longterm relationships and influencing purchase decisions (Srinivasan, 2002).

The validity and reliability of the research model have also been assured through CFA, AVE, and Composite Reliability analysis, although the EFW03 indicator had to be removed due to substandard validity. Overall, these results emphasize that focusing on digital communication that strengthens trust through electronic word of mouth and a personalized approach through Email Marketing are effective strategies to increase purchase intention, especially in niche product

enthusiast community segments such as MotoGP merchandise.

In summary, this study highlights the importance of electronic word of mouth and email marketing as effective strategies for influencing purchase intention. Whereas brand image was found to have an insignificant role in this specific context. Businesses targeting MotoGP merchandise enthusiasts should prioritize strengthening Electronic Word of Mouthand leveraging email marketing campaigns to boost sales.

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