

## The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth and Social Media Marketing on Brand Image and Purchase Intention of E-Commerce Cosmetic Products in Medan City

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### Abstract

*Electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) and Social Media Marketing are widely used by consumers to explore information about a product. Information obtained from various sources on the internet will affect consumer perceptions of brand image, risk and encourage consumer purchase intention. This study aims to examine the effect of electronic word of mouth, and social media marketing variables on purchase intention with brand image as an intervening variable. This study used a purposive sampling technique on 260 respondents. The study was conducted on all Indonesian citizens in Medan who are interested in buying and using cosmetics through e-commerce and already have income. The method used is the Structural Equation Model with AMOS 24.0 Software. The results of this study indicate that electronic word of mouth has a positive and significant effect on brand image and purchase intention, and social media marketing has a positive effect on brand image and purchase intention and is significant on brand image but not significant on purchase intention. Meanwhile, brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.*

**Keywords** | *Electronic Word of Mouth, Social Media Marketing, Brand Image, Purchase Intention.*

### INTRODUCTION

Social media websites have created huge opportunities which are used for word-of-mouth conversations through electronic media (eWOM). Social media has now become a global phenomenon. With the existence of social media, we can discuss the products and services of a brand with our friends or acquaintances through electronic media. According to (Erkan and Evans, 2016) consumers can search for various information on a product that has been posted by previous customers, so that they feel comfortable before buying a product or service. With eWOM, people can easily exchange their opinions and experiences about a product or service through social media from anywhere. Conversations on social media may affect consumer purchase intentions. According to Knoll's (2015) research, the influence of eWOM depends on information and consumers. There are several channels and platforms that businesses can use in conducting e-commerce activities, such as conventional websites, social media, online classified ads, online forums, and booking applications (Hidayat, A, Saifullah, M, and Ishak, A., 2016). Visually enriched content makes eWOM more fun and engaging.

Based on data from the APJII survey report for 2019-2020, it shows that 51.5% of internet users in Indonesia are using the internet for social media. The large number of social media users encourages advertisers to explore digital platforms. This can be seen in the trend of digital advertising which shows an increase every year. 11% of internet users use the internet for online shopping. On further surveys, data showed that 25% of internet users buy



fashion and beauty products online. The increasing number of users and digital advertising trends also indicate that the transformation and innovation of marketing communications from traditional advertising to digital and mobile-based advertising. One product that is in great demand is cosmetics. Cosmetics are in demand because they are used to clean, beautify, make more attractive or change the appearance of a person.

Maisam & Mahsa (2016) explained that the cosmetics industry is one of the most profitable industries in the world. Women who have different economic and social levels can use different cosmetics. Based on these reasons, there are applications or ecommerce platforms for buying and selling cosmetics of various brands. In 2020, there are many online buying and selling platforms in Indonesia. The platform makes it easy for buyers to buy goods online. The goods provided on the platform are various, ranging from cosmetics to airline tickets (Okssa Ami Santosa and Hari Setiaji, 2020). However, many online MSMEs are still comfortable with other platforms namely booking applications, social media, online classified ads, and online forums instead of websites (Hidayat, A, Saifullah, M, and Ishak, A., 2016).

Buying beauty products online are chosen by many women today because it is more practical, and there are many discounts for the products displayed in e-commerce and more complete. E-Commerce can be interpreted as a way to sell and buy goods (and services) through the internet network, but this of course covers various aspects. However, there are still many people who are worried about using buying and selling transactions online because the marketing transaction channel is still relatively new. Ecommerce contains more uncertainty and risk compared to conventional transactions. This then become a consideration for people to make online purchases.

This is an inequality because it is not in accordance with the development of ecommerce in Indonesia. Trust relates to the belief that the trusted party will fulfill its commitments. Public trust in e-commerce is one of the key factors in buying and selling online. On ecommerce platforms, users who want to buy products from one of the online stores on the ecommerce platform are required to create an account. In creating the account, users must include personal data in the form of full name, cellphone number, email, and so on. The necessity of registration by including personal information sometimes makes some people reluctant to do so. There is a study that become the replication of this study, which is the research of Rafif Hidayatullah and Bayu Dirgantara (2018), who conducting a study that aims to examine the influence of electronic word of mouth, celebrity endorsement, and social media marketing on purchase intention with brand image as an intervening variable. The results of this study show that electronic word of mouth, celebrity endorsement, and social media marketing have a positive effect on brand image as an intervening variable and the intervening variables have a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.

Research conducted by Zahra Noor Eriza (2017) states that electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) is widely used by consumers to explore information about a product. Information obtained from various sources on the internet will affect consumer perceptions of brand image, risk and encourage consumer purchase intention. The results showed that E-WOM had a positive effect on purchase intention and brand image. Mediated regression testing

concluded that brand image partially mediates the relationship between E-WOM and purchase intention. These results mean that the activity of reading product reviews on the internet will provide information about the benefits and advantages of products so that consumers will feel confident that they choose the right product and encourage consumer purchase intention.

Fahmi, Arif, Farisi, and Purnama (2020) conducted research to analyze the effect of social media marketing on brand image and repeat purchases, and to analyze the role of brand image in mediating the influence of social media marketing on repeat purchases in the Fast-Food Restaurant industry in Medan City. The results prove that social media marketing significantly affects brand image; Brand image significantly affects repeat purchases; and social media marketing significantly affects repeat purchases. In addition, social media marketing has proven to have no significant effect on repeat purchases through brand image as a mediator.

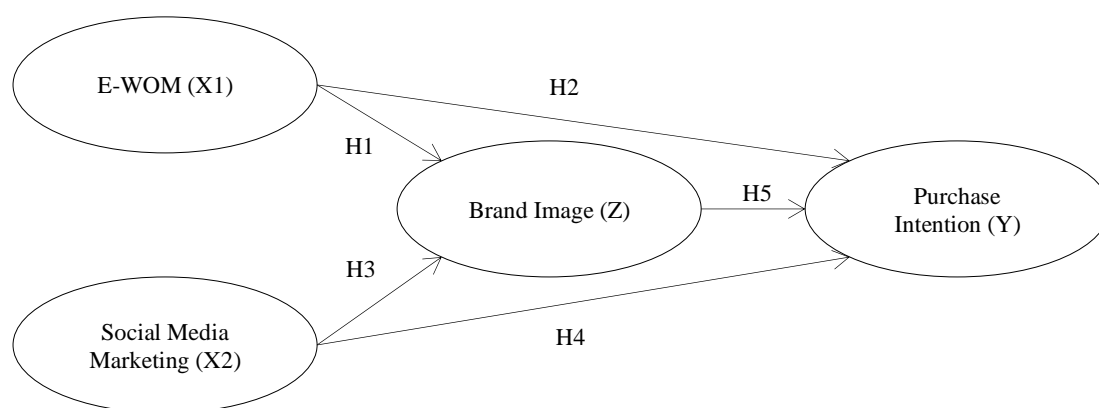
From the description above, the author conducted research on the role of brand image as mediating the effect of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and social media marketing on purchase intention of e-commerce cosmetics which is a combined replication of previous research conducted by Muhammad Rafif Hidayatullah and I Made Bayu Dirgantara (2018) and Zahra Noor Eriza (2017). In this research, the authors limit the research only to examine the effect of electronic word of mouth and social media marketing with brand image as the intervening variable on the purchase intention of e-commerce cosmetic products. With this background, researchers are interested in conducting a study entitled "The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth and Social Media Marketing on Brand Image and Purchase Intention of E-Commerce Cosmetic Products in Medan City".

Based on the background description, the formulation of the problem to be studied is as follows:

1. Is there any influence of eWOM on the brand image of ecommerce cosmetic products in Medan City?
2. Is there any influence of eWOM on the purchase intention of ecommerce cosmetic products in Medan City?
3. Is there any influence of social media marketing on the brand image of ecommerce cosmetic products in Medan City?
4. Is there any influence of social media marketing on the purchase intention of ecommerce cosmetic products in Medan City?
5. Is there any influence of brand image on the purchase intention of ecommerce cosmetic products in Medan City?

## METHOD

The following is the conceptual framework in this study regarding the influence of electronic word of mouth and social media marketing on brand image and purchase intention is as follows:



**Figure 1.** Conceptual Framework

Information:

X<sub>1</sub> : E-WOM

X<sub>2</sub> : Social Media Marketing

Z : Brand Image

Y : Purchase Intention

Based on the research analysis model above, the following research hypotheses can be formulated:

H1: Ewom Affects the Brand Image of E-Commerce Cosmetic Products

H2: Ewom Affects the Purchase Intention of E-Commerce Cosmetic Products

H3: Social Media Marketing Affects the Brand Image of E-Commerce Cosmetic Products

H4: Social Media Marketing Affects the Purchase Intention of E-Commerce Cosmetic Products

H5: Brand Image Affects the Purchase Intention of E-Commerce Cosmetic Products

The identification and operational definition of research variables are as follows:

1. E-WOM (X1). Social E-WOM or communication among consumers through social networking sites has become one of the most frequently used digital media of the existing E-WOM formats. The indicators used according to (Ellison and Boyd, 2015) are recommendations from friends on social media, consultations from friends on social media, and experiences from friends on social media. Then the measurement scale used is the Likert scale.
2. Social Media Marketing (X2). Social media marketing is a form of direct or indirect marketing to build awareness of, and action for a brand, business, person, or other entity and is conducted by using tools from the social web, such as blogging, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, and content. The indicators used according to (Fahmi, 2020) are active, be interesting, be humble, be unprofessional, and be honest. Then the measurement scale used is the Likert scale.
3. Brand Image (Z). Brand image is a set of associations about a brand that are stored in the minds or memories of consumers. The indicators used according to (Fahmi, 2020) are attributes, benefits, and attitudes. Then the measurement scale used is the Likert scale.

4. Purchase Intention (Y). Purchase intention is the desire to have a product, purchase intention will arise if a consumer has been affected by the quality of a product, information about the product such as: price, how to buy and weaknesses and advantages of the product compared to other brands. The indicators used according to (Coyle & Thorson in Fahmi, 2020) are that there is a tendency for someone to buy ecommerce cosmetic products, there is a tendency for someone to buy ecommerce cosmetic products when they need to, there is a tendency for someone to try ecommerce cosmetic products, and there is a tendency for someone to reference ecommerce cosmetic products to others. Then the measurement scale used is the Likert scale.

The type of this research is quantitative causality research. The approach used is a quantitative approach. The quantitative approach is used to determine the effect of electronic word of mouth and social media marketing with brand image as an intervening variable on the purchase intention of cosmetic products. The population of this study is all Indonesian citizens who are interested in buying and using cosmetics through ecommerce and already have income. The sampling technique in this study is *the non-probability sampling* method. Researchers chose to use this method because they did not know the identity and number of members of the study population. The type of sample used is *purposive sampling* which selects respondents for certain relevant characteristics that describe the dimensions (proportions) of the population. The number of samples required when using *the Structural Equation Model* (SEM) is 100 – 200 or at least 5 times the number of indicators (Hair (2019). Ghozali (2017) also explained that SEM usually uses the *Maximum Likelihood* (ML) *Estimation* method which is effectively used in sample numbers of 150-400. This research is using quantitative methods with descriptive methods through questionnaire media as the main research tool in data collection. The distribution of this questionnaire is carried out *online*, namely through *Google Form*. This research uses structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis tools which are processed using the AMOS program. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a combination of two separate statistical methods, namely factor analysis developed in psychology and psychometrics and simultaneous equation modeling developed in econometrics (Ghozali, 2017).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Characteristics of Respondents

The characteristics of respondents in this study can be grouped into several aspects, namely gender, age, education level, and job. The description of each respondent's characteristics can be described as follows:

#### 1. By gender

Based on gender, respondents to this study can be described as follows:

**Table 1. Characteristics of respondents by gender**

Gender	Sum	Presentase
Man	8	3.1





Woman	252	96.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Processed primary data, 2023

From the table above, it is known that male respondents in this study were 8 respondents or 3.1% while female respondents were 252 or 96.9% of the total respondents (260), so there were more female respondents than men in this study.

## 2. By age

Based on age, respondents of this study can be described as follows:

**Table 2. Characteristics of respondents by age**

Age	Number of Respondents	Presentase
< 25 year	122	46.9
26 – 35 year	95	36.5
36 – 46 year	23	8.8
46- 55 year	13	5.0
> 55 year	7	2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Processed primary data, 2023

From the table above, it can be seen that the respondents in this study were mostly aged < 25 years with a total of 122 respondents or 46.9% of the total respondents.

## 3. Based on the level of education

Based on the level of education, the respondents of this study can be described as follows:

**Table 3. Characteristics of respondents based on education level.**

Education Level	Sum	Presentase
High School	117	45.0
Diploma	10	3.8
Bachelor (S1)	101	38.8
Master (S2)	31	11.9
Doctor (S3)	1	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Processed primary data, 2023

From the table below, it is known that most of respondents in this study had high school education with a percentage of 45%, while the least were respondents with the S3 (doctoral) education, which is 0.4% of the total respondents.

## 4. By job

Based on job, the respondents of this study can be described as follows:

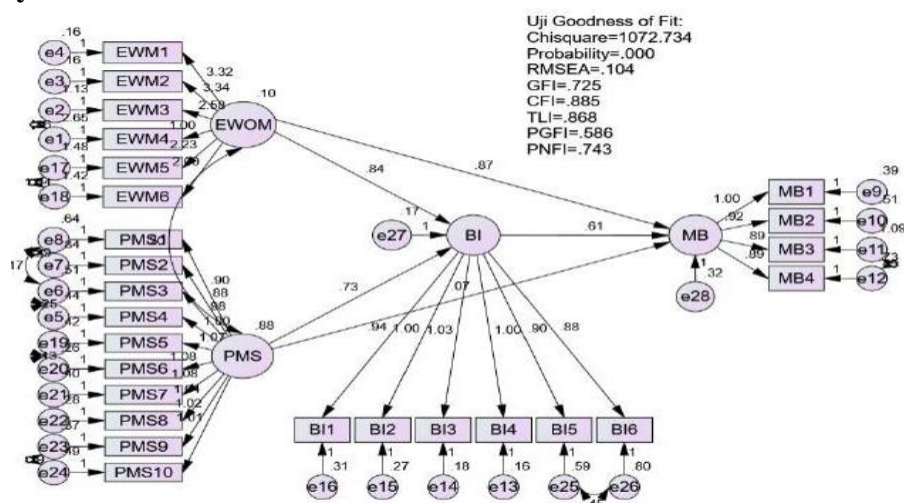
**Table 4**  
**Characteristics of respondents by occupation**

Work	Amount	Percentage
SOE	7	2.7
Dentist	3	1.2
Lecturer	1	.4
Freelancer	7	2.7
Honorary Employee of Province Government	1	.4
Housewife	31	11.9
Undergraduate/Graduate Student	116	44.6
Employee of Government/PNS/ASN	23	8.8
Private Employee	50	19.2
Entrepreneur	19	7.3
Professionals	1	.4
Unemployed	1	.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Processed primary data, 2023

From the table above, it is known that most of respondents in this study were undergraduate/graduate students with a percentage of 44.6%, or as many as 116 respondents out of a total of 260 respondents.

## Data Analysis



**Figure 2**  
**Initial Model**



## 1. Test data normality

**Table 5**  
**Data Normality Test Results**

Variabel	kurtosis	c.r
Multivariate	16.624	1.770

Source: AMOS, 2023

The table above shows that the multivariate CR value is 1.770 which means it is between + 2.58 and -2.58. So that the data in this study can be said to be normally distributed.

## 2. Value of Loading Factor

**Table 6**  
**Value of Loading Factor**

	Estimate
EWM4 <--- EWOM	.279
EWM3 <--- EWOM	.649
EWM2 <--- EWOM	.911
EWM1 <--- EWOM	.901
PMS4 <--- PMS	.840
PMS3 <--- PMS	.818
PMS2 <--- PMS	.697
PMS1 <--- PMS	.741
MB1 <--- MB	.876
MB2 <--- MB	.739
MB3 <--- MB	.757
MB4 <--- MB	.806
BI4 <--- BI	.914
BI3 <--- BI	.912
BI2 <--- BI	.883
BI1 <--- BI	.860
EWM5 <--- EWOM	.578
EWM6 <--- EWOM	.549
PMS5 <--- PMS	.847
PMS6 <--- PMS	.891
PMS7 <--- PMS	.838
PMS8 <--- PMS	.866
PMS10 <--- PMS	.850
BI5 <--- BI	.809
BI6 <--- BI	.780

Source: AMOS, 2023



From the table above, it can be seen that all indicators in this study already have a loading factor value of more than 0.5 except EWM4 which must be dropped from the analysis. After the invalid indicator was dropped from the study, the analysis was run again. The processes were repeated until all indicators had loading factor value more than 0.5.

## Hypothesis Testing

The next analysis is the *Structural Equation Model* (SEM) analysis of full model to test the hypotheses developed in this study. The results of the *regression weight test* in this study are as follows:

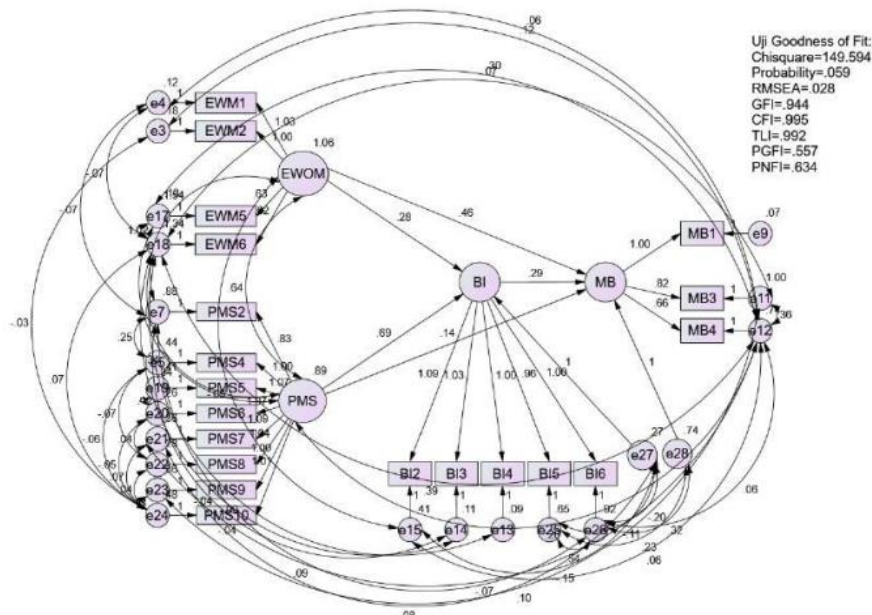


Figure 3. Final Model After Modification

Table 7  
Regression Weight Test Results

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Information
BI <--- EWOM	.281	.046	6.119	0,000	Positive and significant
MB <--- EWOM	.460	.081	5.708	0,000	Positive and significant
BI <--- PMS	.694	.060	11.633	0,000	Positive and significant
MB <--- PMS	.138	.116	1.198	0,231	Positive and not significant
MB <--- BI	.293	.118	2.483	0,013	Positive and significant

Source: AMOS, 2023



The results of hypothesis testing can be seen by looking at the *Critical Ratio* (CR) value and *probability* (P) value of the data processing results. The direction of the relationship between variables can be seen from the estimate value, if the estimate value is positive then the relationship between variables is positive, while if the estimate value is negative then the relationship is negative. Furthermore, if the test results show a CR value above 1.96 and a probability value (P) below 0.05/5%, the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables is significant. In detail, testing the research hypotheses will be discussed gradually according to the hypotheses that have been proposed. The results of the analysis in the table above show that:

1. EWOM has a positive and significant effect on brand image (BI). These results are evidenced by a positive estimate value, t-statistic value above 1.96 and P-Value below 0.05. So that H1 in this study is supported.
2. EWOM has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention (MB). These results are evidenced by a positive estimate value, t-statistic value above 1.96 and P-Value below 0.05. So that H2 in this study is supported.
3. Social media marketing (PMS) has a positive and significant effect on brand image (BI). These results are evidenced by a positive estimate value, t-statistic value above 1.96 and P-Value below 0.05. So that H3 in this study is supported.
4. Social media marketing (PMS) has a positive but not significant effect on purchase intention (MB). These results are evidenced by a positive estimate value, a t-statistic value below 1.96 and a P-Value value above 0.05. So H4 in this study is not supported.
5. Brand Image (BI) has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention (MB). These results are evidenced by a positive estimate value, statistical value above 1.96 and P-Value below 0.05. So that H5 in this study is supported.

### **The Influence of EWOM on Brand Image**

The first hypothesis in this study is that EWOM has a positive and significant effect on brand image. The results of the analysis in this study support the first hypothesis so that it is empirically proven that with the increase in EWOM, the brand image will increase significantly. These results are also supported by several previous studies by Torlak et al. (2014), Hidayatullah and Dirgantara (2018), Balakrishnan et al. (2014), Janah and Suswardji (2021), and Eriza (2017). The result of the first hypothesis analysis shows that the better the EWOM implemented in cosmetic e-commerce marketing, the company's brand image will increase.

### **The Effect of EWOM on Purchase Intention**

The second hypothesis in this study is that EWOM has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. The results of the analysis in this study support the second hypothesis so that it is proven that purchase intention can be significantly increased with EWOM. The results of this analysis are supported by several previous studies by Hidayatullah and Dirgantara (2018), Balakrishnan et al. (2014), Janah and Suswardji (2021), and Eriza (2017). The result of the second hypothesis analysis in this study shows that if cosmetic e-commerce

managers want to increase consumer purchase intention, it can be done through increasing EWOM.

### **The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Brand Image**

The third hypothesis in this study is that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand image. The results of the analysis in this study show that the third hypothesis in this study is supported so that it is proven that with the improvement of social media marketing, the brand image will increase significantly. The result of the third hypothesis analysis is supported by several previous studies by Hidayatullah and Dirgantara (2018), Balakrishnan et al. (2014), and Fahmi et al. (2020). This result can be explained that marketing through social media by providing services by answering questions from consumers patiently and using polite language can increase the brand image of fast-food restaurants or fast-food restaurants (Fahmi et al., 2020).

### **The Effect of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Intention**

The fourth hypothesis in this study is that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. The results of the analysis in this study do not support the fourth hypothesis because social media marketing has a positive but not significant effect on purchase intention. This result contradicts several previous studies by Hidayatullah and Dirgantara (2018), Balakrishnan et al. (2014), and Fahmi et al. (2020), however, there are also several studies that support the results of this study, namely Ahmed and Zahid (2014), and Lim et al. (2017) who also found that social media marketing had an insignificant effect on purchase intention. The research emphasizes that the most influential in purchase intention is customer relationship management including caring for consumers and building emotional connections with consumers. As for Lim et al. (2017) analyzed several aspects in social media marketing and found that not all aspects of social media marketing affect purchase intention, credibility which is part of social media marketing proved not to have a significant effect on consumer purchase intention.

### **The Influence of Brand Image on Purchase Intention**

The fifth hypothesis in this study is that brand image has a positive and significant effect on the purchase intention of cosmetic e-commerce consumers. The results of the analysis in this study support the fifth hypothesis and prove that increasing brand image can have a significant influence on increasing purchase intention in cosmetic e-commerce consumers. These results are supported by several previous studies by Fahmi et al. (2020), Janah and Suswardji (2021), and Eriza (2017). The results of the fifth hypothesis analysis show that e-commerce managers must pay attention to brand image in increasing consumer purchase intention. Brand image is what consumers perceive about a brand. For this reason, it is important to develop a brand image, especially a positive image.



## **CLOSING**

### **Conclusion**

This study analyzes four variables related to the influence of EWOM and the role of social media (PMS) on brand image (BI) and purchase intention, this study also discusses brand image (BI) analysis of purchase intention (MB) in consumers of e-commerce cosmetic products. The analysis in this study was carried out using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method using AMOS 24 software. This study analyzed 5 hypotheses and from the 5 hypotheses analyzed, H1, H2, H3 and H5 were supported while H4 was not supported, in detail it was found that:

1. EWOM has a positive and significant effect on brand image (BI). So that H1 in this study is supported. This shows that if the better EWOM is implemented in cosmetic e-commerce marketing, the company's brand image will increase, and become an important factor in forming and developing brand image.
2. EWOM has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention (MB). So that H2 in this study is supported. This shows that if cosmetic e-commerce managers want to increase consumer purchase intention, it can be done through increasing EWOM, because consumers are more easily influenced by reviews from previous users.
3. Social media marketing (PMS) has a positive and significant effect on brand image (BI). So that H3 in this study is supported. Social media is the right place for companies to expand market share and strengthen relationships between companies and consumers.
4. Social media marketing (PMS) has an insignificant effect on purchase intention (MB). So H4 in this study is not supported. This is because cosmetic consumers trust reviews and experiences from others more than advertisements on social media.
5. Brand Image (BI) has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention (MB). So that H5 in this study is supported. This shows that when a brand has a good image, it will be easier for consumers to buy the products in future and by utilizing this visual information can increase the overall understanding of product benefits.

### **Suggestion**

For further research, it is recommended to expand the scope of research by adding other variables in an effort to improve the company's brand image and increase public purchase intention in e-commerce cosmetics and carried out in several regions in Indonesia with a wider reach.

Future research is also expected to be able to combine analytical methods, namely using mixed methods by completing quantitative findings with qualitative findings.

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