

From Click to Purchase: Optimizing Digital Marketing to Increase Batik Purchases in Semarang

Alfin Muslikhun¹, Mukhlidin², Rowiyani³, Riyan Ihmal Maulana⁴, Amalia Rofika Dewi⁵, Rosiana Ramadhon⁶

¹ Institut Teknologi Statistika dan Bisnis Muhammadiyah Semarang; alfin.muslikhun@itesa.ac.id

² Institut Teknologi Statistika dan Bisnis Muhammadiyah Semarang; mukhlidin@itesa.ac.id

³ Institut Teknologi Statistika dan Bisnis Muhammadiyah Semarang; rowiyani@itesa.ac.id

⁴ Institut Teknologi Statistika dan Bisnis Muhammadiyah Semarang; maxryan842@gmail.com

⁵ Institut Teknologi Statistika dan Bisnis Muhammadiyah Semarang; ad2072375@gmail.com

⁶ Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Dharma Putra Semarang; rosiana.stiedp@gmail.com

* Corresponding Author : Alfin Muslikhun, alfin.muslikhun@itesa.ac.id

Abstract: This study aims to analyze the effects of Social Media Marketing, Content Marketing, and Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) on batik purchasing decisions in Semarang City amid the rapid growth of digital technology and changing consumer behavior. A quantitative approach was employed using a survey method, with data collected through questionnaires distributed to 100 batik consumers in Semarang City and analyzed using SEM-PLS. The results indicate that Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions, as does Content Marketing by providing relevant and valuable information to consumers. In addition, e-WOM positively and significantly influences purchasing decisions, demonstrating that online reviews and recommendations increase consumer trust. Simultaneously, all three variables significantly affect batik purchasing decisions. Practically, these findings suggest that batik business owners should optimize social media engagement, create high-quality content, and encourage positive online reviews to enhance purchasing decisions and competitiveness. Furthermore, this study contributes to digital marketing literature by examining the combined effects of Social Media Marketing, Content Marketing, and e-WOM on batik purchasing decisions in Semarang City.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing; Content Marketing; Electronic Word of Mouth; Purchasing Decision; Batik; PLS-SEM.

1. Introduction

The development of information and communication technology has brought about major changes in various aspects of life, including marketing activities (Grandi et al., 2026). The internet has grown rapidly over the past few decades, forcing companies and small and medium-sized enterprises to adapt to an increasingly digital business environment (Chen et al., 2026). According to the latest data from the BPS Indonesia, nearly three-quarters of Indonesia's population—specifically 72.78%—use mobile phones. Of this number, 35% access the internet via their mobile devices. This trend is driving a shift from conventional marketing strategies toward digital marketing, which is more interactive, efficient, and capable of reaching target markets in real time (Naayif et al., 2025; Spilotro et al., 2025).

This shift is also influencing how consumers make purchasing decisions. Modern consumers no longer rely solely on information from physical stores or traditional advertisements; they also search for information online before making a purchase (Hazzam et al., 2026). They tend to compare various product alternatives, read reviews from other consumers, and seek recommendations through social media (Manu et al., 2026). This change in behavior indicates that digital media has become the primary source of information influencing consumer purchasing decisions (Nugraheni et al., 2026).

The development of technology has made digital marketing a widely adopted strategy among businesses to enhance their competitiveness. According to data from the Indonesian Ministry of Trade, by 2025, approximately 80.66% of Indonesia's population will be using the

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internet. E-commerce platforms such as Shopee (53.22%) and TikTok Shop (27.37%) are the most popular for online shopping. Digital marketing offers several advantages, such as relatively low costs, a wide market reach, and the ability to measure the effectiveness of promotions more accurately (Fafurida et al., 2026). Therefore, leveraging digital marketing tools has become a critical necessity for companies and SMEs seeking to survive and thrive in the digital age (Juliana et al., 2026; Wahdiniwaty et al., 2025).

The batik industry has also been impacted by digitalization. Batik is an Indonesian cultural heritage with high artistic, cultural, and economic value. As public awareness of using local products grows, demand for batik continues to rise (Ayu Kusumawardani et al., 2024). However, business competition has intensified due to the increasing number of batik entrepreneurs. The city of Semarang holds significant potential for the development of the batik industry. Semarang batik is known for its distinctive motifs and continuous innovation in line with market trends. Many batik SMEs in Semarang utilize digital technology for product promotion and sales (Afrianty et al., 2026). However, not all business owners are able to achieve optimal results from digital marketing. Therefore, a deeper understanding of the digital marketing factors influencing consumers' purchasing decisions regarding batik is essential. Consequently, batik business owners can enhance their competitiveness and grow their businesses in the digital age (Noerchoidah et al., 2025).

Nowadays, many businesses are using digital marketing strategies such as social media marketing. Social media marketing is a marketing activity that uses social media platforms to build relationships with consumers, increase brand awareness, and promote products and services (Rashid & Abdullah, 2026). Through social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and WhatsApp Business, businesses can interact directly with consumers and establish more personal communication compared to conventional promotional media (Tatik & Setiawan, 2025). Through Social Media Marketing, business owners can visually showcase products, convey promotional information, and foster consumer engagement via various interactive features. The higher the level of interaction and engagement on social media, the greater the likelihood that consumers will become familiar with, trust, and purchase the products offered (Achmad et al., 2026; Aryati Dewi et al., 2025). Therefore, Social Media Marketing plays a crucial role in influencing consumers' purchasing decisions regarding batik products. Numerous studies have proven that Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. By promoting through social media, businesses can increase consumer interest and confidence in making a purchase. Thus, Social Media Marketing has become one of the most effective marketing strategies for boosting sales and building brand awareness (Hasnawati et al., 2026; Cenizo, 2025).

In addition to social media marketing, content marketing is also crucial in digital marketing. Content marketing is a marketing approach that focuses on creating and sharing useful, engaging, and consistent content to capture the attention of our target audience (Wei, 2025). Good content serves not only for promotion but also to educate consumers about the benefits and advantages of the products we offer (Gupta & Dutt, 2024). In the batik industry, content marketing can be implemented by sharing information about the meanings of batik motifs, how to make them, the quality of materials, and tips on using and caring for the products (Wahdiniwaty et al., 2025). Engaging and valuable content can build consumer trust in our products and enhance the positive image of batik. However, irrelevant content that offers no added value can diminish the effectiveness of our marketing efforts (Tsai et al., 2025). Research on content marketing also shows that relevant, useful, and engaging content can make consumers more interested in purchasing. High-quality content marketing can build consumer trust in our products, making them more likely to buy them (Tsai et al., 2025; Wei, 2025).

Advances in digital technology have brought about many changes in our daily lives. One area that has grown rapidly is ****Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)****. e-WOM refers to how consumers interact through electronic media, such as sharing experiences, reviews, or recommendations about the products or services they use (Nurjaya et al., 2025). When we want to buy something, we usually seek information from others who have already had experience with that product. This information from other consumers is considered more objective and trustworthy because it is based on real-life experiences (Liao et al., 2025). For

example, when we want to buy batik, we might read reviews on marketplaces, comments on social media, or testimonials from customers who have previously purchased that batik.

e-WOM is crucial for consumers to assess a product's quality and credibility before making a purchase. If we read positive reviews from other consumers, we are usually more confident and inclined to buy the product. On the other hand, negative reviews can create doubt and reduce our interest in buying (Roy et al., 2025; Handoyo, 2024). Previous research shows that online communication among consumers has a significant influence on purchasing behavior. Online reviews and recommendations also have a positive effect on purchasing decisions because they increase consumer trust in the product. Thus, e-WOM is expected to have a significant influence on purchasing decisions for batik products in the city of Semarang (Juliana et al., 2026; Mathur et al., 2026; Le et al., 2025).

Although previous studies have shown that social media marketing, content marketing, and E-WOM influence purchasing decisions, the results remain inconsistent and have rarely examined batik products in Semarang (Hasnawati et al., 2026; Juliana et al., 2026; Wahdiniwati et al., 2025; Ayu Kusumawardani et al., 2024). Therefore, this study was conducted to analyze the individual and simultaneous effects of these three digital marketing strategies on batik purchasing decisions in Semarang. By addressing these academic gaps, the findings are expected to provide concrete empirical evidence as well as practical recommendations for local MSMEs to develop more effective digital marketing strategies to boost sales volume.

2. Literature Review

Social media marketing is a marketing strategy that uses social media platforms to engage with consumers, build brand awareness, and promote products and services (Nandi & Subrahmanyam, 2026). Through social media, businesses can share product information in a fast, interactive, and engaging way, thereby increasing consumer engagement with a brand. (Mubiru & Goyal, 2026) Social media enables two-way communication that strengthens the relationship between companies and consumers. The more effective social media marketing is, the greater the chance that consumers will obtain product information, build trust, and ultimately make a purchase (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

In the context of the batik industry, social media can help businesses introduce products, showcase diverse batik patterns, provide information about product quality, and interact with consumers (Juliana et al., 2026). Some previous research has examined the impact of Social Media Marketing on purchasing decisions, finding that social media marketing has a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions (Cenizo, 2025; Huo & Filieri, 2025; Mubiru & Goyal, 2026). Social media marketing activities can enhance consumer purchasing behavior. Based on these theories and previous research findings, the proposed hypothesis is: H1: Social Media Marketing has a positive and significant influence on batik purchasing decisions in the city of Semarang.

Content Marketing is a marketing strategy that focuses on creating and distributing highly valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain customers (Huo & Filieri, 2025). With high-quality content, customers can obtain the information they need about a product, enabling them to better understand it, trust it, and become interested in making a purchase (Gupta & Dutt, 2024). Content Marketing aims to build long-term relationships with customers by providing information that is useful and tailored to their needs (Suparwo & Shalsabila, 2026; Tsai et al., 2025).

In batik product marketing, Content Marketing can take the form of information about the philosophy behind batik motifs, the production process, material quality, batik fashion trends, or education related to batik culture (Li et al., 2024). Engaging and informative content can enhance consumers' positive perception of the product, thereby encouraging purchasing decisions (Suparwo & Shalsabila, 2026). Research discussing the positive influence of Content Marketing on purchasing decisions has been widely conducted and has found that high-quality content can increase consumer interest and influence purchasing decisions (Ramadani et al., 2025; Safina et al., 2025; Sari et al., 2025). Based on these theories and previous research findings, the proposed hypothesis is:

H2: Content Marketing has a positive and significant influence on batik purchasing decisions in the city of Semarang.

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) refers to communication among consumers via electronic media that includes experiences, opinions, recommendations, and reviews regarding a product or service (Suparwo & Shalsabila, 2026). Information from other consumers is often considered more objective and credible than information provided directly by the company (Le et al., 2025; Roy et al., 2025). E-WOM serves as a key source of information that consumers use to evaluate products before making a purchase (Aryati Dewi et al., 2025).

When purchasing batik products, consumers typically look for reviews and testimonials from previous buyers to ensure product quality (Sudaryanto et al., 2025). Positive reviews can boost consumer trust and confidence, while negative reviews can reduce purchase interest (Kartawinata et al., 2025). Therefore, e-WOM plays a crucial role in influencing purchasing decisions. Research discussing the positive influence of e-WOM on purchasing decisions has frequently found that information from e-WOM has a significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions (Achmad et al., 2026; Kartawinata et al., 2025; Roy et al., 2025; Sudaryanto et al., 2025). Based on theory and previous research findings, the proposed hypothesis is: H3: Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) has a positive and significant influence on batik purchasing decisions in the city of Semarang.

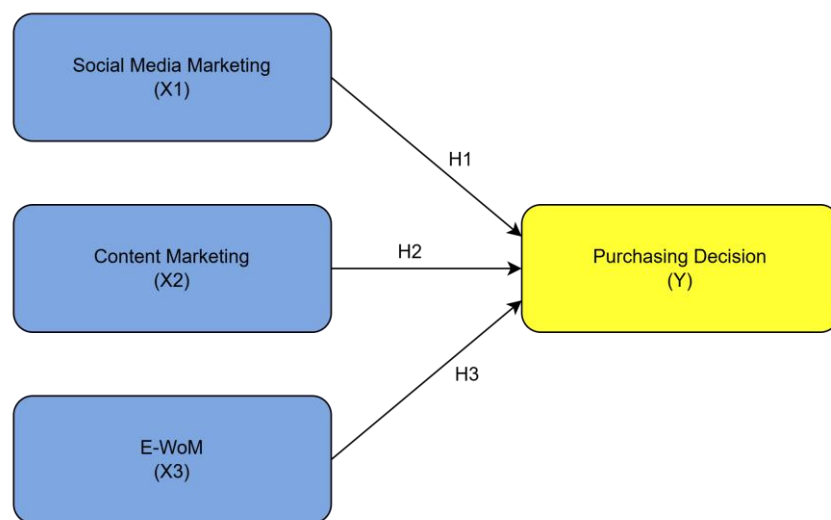


Figure 1. concept framework, 2026

3. Proposed Method

This study employs a quantitative method and is classified as explanatory research (Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D., 2023). Its objective is to explain the cause-and-effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables by testing the formulated hypotheses (Stockemer & Bordeleau, 2023). This study was conducted among batik Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the city of Semarang. The research subjects were consumers who had previously ordered batik products through digital platforms such as social media or online marketplaces. The population in this study consists of all consumers who have ever purchased or ordered batik products from batik MSMEs in the city of Semarang. The sample was selected using purposive sampling with the following criteria: (Augusty Ferdinand, 2021)

- Consumers who have purchased batik products online more than three times on the Shopee and TikTok marketplaces.
- Consumers who have seen batik promotions on Shopee and TikTok.
- Consumers who are at least 17 years old.

The sample size used was 100 respondents, determined using the Lemeshow formula (Sugiyono, 2022). Data was collected using a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms with a 1–5 Likert scale (Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D., 2023; Islam et al., 2022). The analytical tool used in this study was SEM-PLS, involving tests of the Outer Model (Measurement Model) and the Inner Model (Structural Model) (Hair, J. F et al., 2022).

4. Results and Discussion

This study is an explanatory study focusing on batik buyers who shop through online marketplaces in the city of Semarang. The sample for this study was selected using purposive sampling, consisting of 100 respondents determined using the Lemeshaw formula. Data were collected via Google Forms using a 1–5 Likert scale. The collected data were tabulated with the following distribution:

Table 1. Overview of Respondents

Gender	Total	%
Male	73	73%
Female	27	27%
Age		
21-30 years old	26	26%
31-40 years old	35	35%
41-50 years old	25	25%
More 50 years old	14	14%
E-Commerce Using		
Tiktok	35	35%
Shopee	65	65%

(Source: processed primary data, 2026)

Based on this data, the majority of respondents were male (73%) and fell within the productive working-age group, with the largest proportion in the 31–40 age range (35%). In terms of online shopping preferences, most respondents preferred Shopee (65%) over Tik-Tok (35%). This indicates that the e-commerce marketplace remains the primary platform for consumers in Semarang to purchase batik products, followed by social commerce platforms.

Outer Model Test

Convergent Validity

Table 2. Reliability and Validity Test

Variable	Indica- tor	Loading Factor	Composite Reliability	AVE	Diskriminant Va- lidity
Social Media Marketing (X1)	X1.1	0.852	0,923	0,778	Valid
	X1.2	0.862			
	X1.3	0.849			
	X1.4	0.843			
Content Marketing (X2)	X2.1	0.768	0,902	0,753	Valid
	X2.2	0.821			
	X2.3	0.755			
E-WOM (X3)	X3.1	0.827	0,912	0,711	Valid
	X3.2	0.811			
	X3.3	0.805			
	X3.4	0.844			
Purchasing Decision (Y)	Y.1	0.816	0,895	0,785	Valid
	Y.2	0.789			
	Y.3	0.775			
	Y.4	0.749			
	Y.5	0.782			

(Source: processed primary data, 2026)

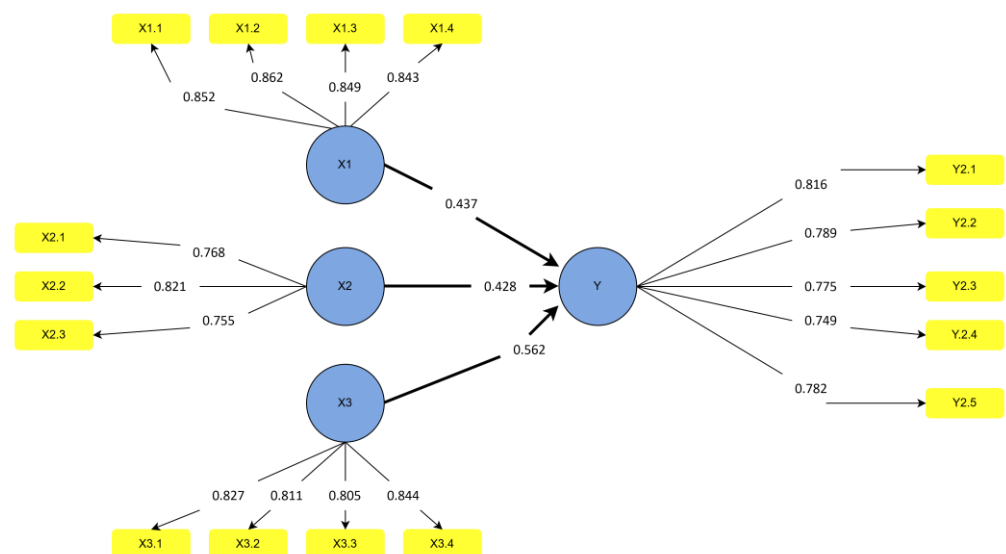


Figure 2. processed primary data, 2026

Based on the analysis results, it can be concluded that the outer model test for all variables meets the required criteria for convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity is well established, as all indicators have factor loadings ranging from 0.749 to 0.862, which are above the standard threshold of 0.70. This accuracy is reinforced by the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for each variable, all of which are above 0.50 (ranging from 0.711 to 0.785), as well as the results of the discriminant validity test, all of which were found to be valid.

In addition to strong validity, all constructs in this study were also found to possess very high reliability or internal consistency. This is demonstrated by the Composite Reliability (CR) values of the four variables, which range from 0.895 to 0.923, far exceeding the required minimum threshold of 0.70. With all criteria for testing the measurement model (outer model) met, the research instrument is deemed valid, reliable, and highly suitable for use in the next stage of analysis: hypothesis testing and examining relationships between variables via the inner model (structural model).

Inner Model Test

The results of the study show an R-squared value of 84.6%. This indicates that the three variables have an 84.6% influence on the decision to purchase batik, while the remaining 15.4% is explained by other factors outside the model. The results of the hypothesis testing are presented in the following table:

Table 3. Hypothesis test

Hypothesis	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Significance Levels
Social Media Marketing (X1) -> Purchasing Decision (Y)	3,216	0,005	Accepted
Content Marketing (X2) -> Purchasing Decision (Y)	3,489	0,012	Accepted
E-WOM (X3) -> Purchasing Decision (Y)	4,582	0,000	Accepted

(Source: processed primary data, 2026)

Table 3 illustrates the significant role. In the hypothesis test, the hypothesis is accepted if the p-value is < 0.05 .

Testing hypothesis (H1): The role of social media marketing in purchase decisions shows a p-value ($0.005 < \alpha (0.05)$). It has a positive effect. This implies that social media marketing contributes positively to increasing batik purchase decisions in Semarang, so the hypothesis is accepted.

Testing hypothesis (H2): The effect of content marketing on purchase decisions shows a p-value ($0.012 < \alpha (0.05)$). This means that content marketing has a positive effect on increasing batik purchase decisions in the city of Semarang; therefore, the hypothesis is accepted.

Testing Hypothesis (H3): E-WOM has a positive effect on purchase decisions, as evidenced by a p-value of $(0.000) < \alpha (0.05)$. This indicates that E-WOM contributes to increasing purchase decisions; therefore, the hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion

Based on the results of the hypothesis (H1) testing, it was found that social media marketing has a positive and significant influence on batik purchasing decisions in Semarang, as indicated by a p-value of 0.005. This finding suggests that optimizing digital platforms such as TikTok and Shopee can effectively drive consumer interest (Huo & Filieri, 2025; Tatik & Setiawan, 2025; Tsai et al., 2025). Interactive and visual social media marketing is crucial, especially for the batik industry, to showcase a variety of patterns and build a personal connection with customers (Juliana et al., 2026). This aligns with the theory that two-way communication on social media strengthens the relationship between brands and consumers (Mubiru & Goyal, 2026; Aryati Dewi et al., 2025). These results also reinforce previous studies stating that social media marketing plays a vital role in increasing brand awareness and positively influencing consumer purchasing behavior (Juliana et al., 2026; Cenizo, 2025; Nurjaya et al., 2025).

The results of the second hypothesis test (H2) show that content marketing has a positive and significant effect on batik purchase decisions, with a p-value of 0.012. In the batik industry, content that educates the public about the philosophy behind batik motifs, traditional production processes, and fabric care tips serves as a major draw for consumers (Safina et al., 2025; Sari et al., 2025). Relevant and consistent content has been proven to build positive perceptions and consumer trust in the quality of the batik products offered. Conversely, irrelevant content can reduce marketing effectiveness (Suparwo & Shalsabila, 2026; Tsai et al., 2025). The findings of this study support the literature, which confirms that well-managed content marketing acts as an effective educational and promotional tool in stimulating consumer interest in purchasing on digital platforms (Ramadani et al., 2025). Therefore, in this era of digitalization, it is essential to create engaging content marketing to drive sales growth as purchases continue to happen (Tsai et al., 2025; Wei, 2025; Gupta & Dutt, 2024).

The test of the third hypothesis (H3) demonstrated that Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) has the strongest positive and significant influence on batik consumers' purchasing decisions in Semarang, with the smallest p-value of 0.000. This phenomenon indicates that online reviews, ratings, testimonials, and comments from previous buyers on marketplaces (such as Shopee and TikTok Shop) serve as sources of information that prospective consumers consider objective and trustworthy before making a purchase (Kartawinata et al., 2025; Ramadani et al., 2025). Positive online reviews have been shown to boost consumer confidence and minimize doubts regarding the credibility of batik products (Achmad et al., 2026; Suparwo & Shalsabila, 2026; Aryati Dewi et al., 2025; Le et al., 2025). This confirms the findings of previous research, which indicated that interactions and recommendations among consumers on digital platforms have a substantial impact on final purchasing decisions (Hasnawati et al., 2026; Mathur et al., 2026; Le et al., 2025; Sudaryanto et al., 2025; Handoyo, 2024).

5. Conclusions

Research findings indicate that digital marketing strategies are crucial for boosting batik purchase decisions among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the city of Semarang. Specifically, social media marketing has a positive and significant impact on increasing purchase decisions. This means that by using social media effectively—such as interacting with consumers, sharing engaging visual content, and responding promptly—MSMEs can increase consumer interest in purchasing batik products. Additionally, content marketing also has a positive and significant impact on increasing purchasing decisions. Informative, relevant, and consistent content can provide added value to consumers and increase their interest in batik products. In the context of batik, sharing the production process, the philosophy behind the motifs, and the uniqueness of the products can capture consumers' attention.

Reviews, comments, and recommendations from other consumers shared through digital media can also build trust among potential customers and encourage them to make a purchase. Overall, the combination of social media marketing, content marketing, and consumer reviews can create effective synergy in improving marketing performance. Therefore, batik SMEs are advised to actively manage social media, produce high-quality content, and maintain

positive consumer reviews to increase product order volume. Through digital marketing optimization, batik SMEs can boost online engagement and convert these digital activities into actual product orders.

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