
THE ROLE OF BRAND AWARENESS IN MEDIATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTENT MARKETING AND ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH (E-WOM) ON PURCHASE INTENTION OF *TENUE DE ATTIRE* PRODUCTS

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Abstract

The development of social media, especially TikTok, has become a strategic opportunity for fashion brands to expand their marketing reach, including Tenue de Attire. However, despite appearing frequently on the For You Page (FYP), there are still many users who do not realize that Tenue de Attire is a brand that sells fashion products and when compared to other local products, Tenue De Attire has the lowest number of products sold. Through brand awareness, this research seeks to examine how electronic word-of-mouth (e-wom) and content marketing affect purchase intention. Gen Z Surabaya TikTok users made up the study's population. With a sample size of 126 respondents, this study employed the purposive sampling method. The findings of this study show that while electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) exerts a positive and significant influence on brand awareness, content marketing does not demonstrate a noticeable effect. Furthermore, purchase intention is positively and significantly affected by brand awareness. In addition, e-WOM shows a positive and substantial indirect impact on purchase intention mediated by brand awareness, whereas content marketing appears to have no indirect influence in this regard.

Keywords: Content Marketing, E-WOM, Brand Awareness, Purchase Intention

INTRODUCTION

The accelerated exchange of information, driven by technological advances, has resulted in changes in marketing approaches. With a large and growing population of social media users, Indonesia offers a huge market potential for companies looking to utilize social media as one of their main marketing tools. TikTok, as a leading social media platform favored by Indonesian youth, has become an effective tool for companies to expand audience reach. The rapid growth of TikTok users, most of whom belong to Generation Z, demonstrates that the platform has successfully captured strong interest from this demographic group.

Engaging content on TikTok can increase brand awareness and build close relationships between brands and consumers (FF Leung, Gu, & Palmatier, 2022 in Wei et al., 2024), making it important for companies to consider a presence on this platform. One local brand from the fashion industry that also utilizes content marketing on TikTok in terms of mix and match outfits is Tenue De Attire. Tenue De Attire consistently creates content such as fit checks, outfit styling, and parody content. Tenue De Attire made one specific content on TikTok as its trademark, namely the content “sorry, my type is...”, making the content successfully penetrate millions of views, likes, and thousands of comments.



Figure 1 Comments on Tenue De Attire's TikTok Account

Source: TikTok @tenuedeattire

Despite the number of views, likes, and comments that Tenue De Attire has on TikTok, it is not enough to effectively increase brand awareness among consumers, where there are still often comments on content on Tenue De Attire's TikTok account that indicate that viewers do not know what products are sold by the account.

Table 1
Cumulative Sold Product Data in 2021-October 2024

Brand Name	Number of TikTok Followers	Number of Likes on TikTok	Products Sold on TikTok Shop
Ignore.id	176,3 thousand	4,9 million	176,2 thousand
Guteninc	65,7 thousand	595,4 thousand	46,7 thousand
Heymale.id	125,8 thousand	1,4 million	7,293
Tenue De Attire	338,8 thousand	48, 4 million	7,256

Source: TikTok Data Processed, 2024

Based on Table 1, although Tenue De Attire has the largest follower count and the highest number of likes among other local brands, Tenue De Attire's product sales have the lowest number among others. Brand awareness serves as a crucial link between content marketing and purchase intention. If content marketing is done well but brand awareness is low, the impact on purchase intention will decrease (Yunani & Kamilla, 2023). There was a decrease in the number of followers of TikTok Tenue De Attire in 2025 by 3.7 thousand when compared to other comparable local brands that experienced an increase in the number of followers in 2025.

Table 2
Number of TikTok Followers 2024-2025

Brand Name	2024	2025
Ignore.id	176,3 thousand	199,5 thousand
Guteninc	65,7 thousand	66,5 thousand
Heymale.id	125,8 thousand	143,1 thousand
Tenue De Attire	338,8 thousand	335,1 thousand

Source: TikTok Data Processed, 2025

Tenue De Attire, as a local fashion brand, also implements electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) effectively through the TikTok platform. According to Wang (2018) in (Romadhon & Susila, 2024) *electronic word of mouth (E-WOM)* is “Any positive or negative statement made by potential, current, or former customers about a product or company, available to various individuals and organizations via the Internet”. Brands that get many positive reviews on social media will be more easily recognized, and brand awareness increases, which in turn encourages consumers to make purchases (Bija & Sukawati, 2023). Therefore, this research seeks to examine how content marketing and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) influence purchase intention through the mediating role of brand awareness.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Content Marketing

As a strategic approach, content marketing focuses on creating, managing, distributing, and expanding the reach of engaging, engaging, and informative content tailored to a specific intended audience, to foster interaction around that content (Kotler et al., 2017). Rather than relying on direct promotion, this method seeks to provide meaningful information that resonates with the audience's interests and needs, thereby enhancing brand credibility and loyalty. According to Milhinhos, as cited by (Putri & Dermawan, 2023), the key indicators of effective content marketing include relevance, accuracy, value, clarity, discoverability, and consistency. When these elements are combined, content marketing can become a powerful tool not only for capturing attention but also for guiding potential customers through the decision-making process, ultimately driving purchase intention.

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)

Through digital media, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) enables individuals to share information, including personal experiences and perceived advantages related to product purchases. This content commonly appears in photo format, videos, and written comments, which are then widely disseminated online (Trisunarno, 2020, as cited in (Naufan, 2024). According to (Shrafat et al., 2021), the key indicators of e-WOM include accuracy,

relevance, timeliness, and comprehensiveness. In the age of digital technology, e-WOM has a significant impact on shaping consumer behavior, particularly on social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. The interactive nature of these platforms allows users not only to consume content but also to engage in discussions, share reviews, and influence the purchasing decisions of their peers. This phenomenon is especially significant among Generation Z, who are known for their reliance on peer recommendations and online reviews before making purchase decisions.

Brand Awareness

According to Kopp (2019), as cited in Kusuma et al. (2020), brand awareness represents the level at which consumers can recognize or recall a product based on its name. Building strong brand awareness requires consistent efforts from companies to keep the brand present in the minds of consumers (Izaak et al., 2023). Furthermore, as outlined by Wilujeng and Edwar (2014), cited in Supangkat dan Pudjoprastyono (2022), brand awareness can be assessed by several key indicators: brand recall, which is consumers ability to recall a brand when presented with a product category; brand recognition, or the ability to confirm prior exposure to the brand; purchase, which reflects the decision to buy the product; and consumption, which indicates the actual usage of the product. These indicators collectively demonstrate the depth of consumer familiarity and engagement with a brand.

Purchase Intention

According to Kotler (2016), as cited in (Lazuardi & Kaihatu, 2021), purchase intention refers to a form of consumer behavior that emerges as a response to a particular object, representing the customer's willingness or desire to buy a product. Ferdinand (2014), as cited in Firmansyah & Purwanto (2022), identifies four indicators of purchase intention: transactional interest, which reflects a tendency to buy the product; referential interest, or the willingness to suggest the product to others; preferential interest, indicating a strong preference for a particular brand over others; and exploratory interest, which describes a curiosity or motivation to seek out information about the product. These indicators provide a comprehensive view of the factors that drive a consumer's intent to purchase.

The Influence of Content Marketing on Brand Awareness

High-quality and informative content is essential in assisting consumers during the information search and evaluation stages of the purchasing decision process, as it equips them with deeper insights into the products or services being offered. According to Putra and Priansa (2023), the uniqueness and authenticity of content are critical factors that enhance consumer recall. When content is perceived as original and aligned with the brand's identity, it becomes easier for consumers to remember and associate it with the product. This, in turn, contributes significantly to the development of brand awareness. Moreover, the effectiveness of content marketing is amplified when the message is designed in accordance with the characteristics of the intended market segment. By delivering personalized and segment-specific content, companies can foster deeper emotional bonds with their audience, set themselves apart from competitors, and foster long-term brand recognition. In essence, content marketing serves as a foundational tool in shaping consumer perceptions, increasing brand salience, and driving engagement. Its ability to educate while simultaneously building brand familiarity makes it a powerful strategy in influencing consumer behavior and guiding them along the path to purchase.

The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on Brand Awareness

E-WOM plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behavior, as it provides peer-generated information that is frequently seen as more reliable and credible compared to traditional advertising. Positive reviews or recommendations shared online have the potential to influence the perceptions of prospective buyers, especially during the evaluation and decision-making stages of the consumer journey. According to (Ayla et al., 2024), the dissemination of content on digital platforms can act as a stimulus that triggers audience engagement. When consumers are exposed to engaging and informative content, it can prompt cognitive and emotional responses that manifest in the form of E-WOM. These responses include actions such as commenting, sharing, or recommending a product or service to others online. The emergence of such responses reflects the effectiveness of the initial stimulus and suggests that content shared by a brand or other consumers can create a ripple effect that extends the brand's reach and reinforces its credibility. In this context, E-WOM serves as both a reflection of consumer satisfaction and a strategic driver of brand perception. Its impact is amplified in the digital era, where consumer voices can quickly influence a wide audience. Therefore, businesses must not only focus on delivering quality products and services but also cultivate positive E-WOM by encouraging satisfied consumers to share their experiences, thereby strengthening trust and potentially increasing purchase intention.

The Influence of Brand Awareness on Purchase Intention

According to (Silaningsih et al., 2023), brand awareness is characterized by the speed and ease with which consumers are able to identify a brand when exposed to visual or contextual cues. It acts as a core component in the formation of consumer preferences and decision-making, as higher brand awareness often correlates with increased consumer trust and a higher likelihood of purchase. Riyadini and Krisnawati (2022) emphasize that consumers tend to make quicker purchasing decisions when they are already familiar with a brand. Recognition through visual elements such as logos, packaging, or advertisements can trigger memory recall, allowing consumers to feel a sense of confidence and familiarity with the product. This cognitive shortcut enables the brand to stand out amidst market competition and simplifies the consumer's decision-making process. In essence, brand awareness not only facilitates brand recall and recognition but also influences consumer attitudes and behaviors. A well-established brand in the minds of consumers is more likely to be chosen over less familiar alternatives, especially in situations where time or effort in evaluating options is limited. Therefore, enhancing brand awareness is a strategic priority for marketers aiming to increase market share and consumer loyalty.

The Influence of Content Marketing on Purchase Intention through Brand Awareness

Informative content allows consumers to gain a deeper understanding of the features, benefits, and uniqueness of a product or service, which in turn fosters stronger cognitive and emotional connections with the brand. This engagement builds consumer trust, enhances the perceived credibility of the brand, and ultimately influences purchasing decisions. Azizah and Huda (2022) emphasize that content marketing significantly influences purchase intention, primarily through its influence on brand awareness. Their research demonstrates that content marketing serves as an intermediary between brand awareness and purchase intention. When companies consistently provide relevant and valuable content, they enhance brand visibility and recall, which leads to higher levels of brand awareness. This elevated awareness not only captures consumer attention but also positively affects their behavior,

increasing the likelihood of product choice and purchase. In this regard, content marketing is not merely a promotional tool but a strategic mechanism for guiding consumers along the decision-making journey. By reinforcing brand awareness and simultaneously nurturing trust and familiarity, content marketing effectively encourages consumers to move from awareness to action, from recognizing a brand to ultimately making a purchase.

The Influence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) on Purchase Intention through Brand Awareness

Unlike traditional advertising, E-WOM is perceived as more authentic and trustworthy because it originates from actual consumer experiences. These peer-generated opinions help reduce uncertainty, shape brand perceptions, and influence the attitudes of prospective buyers. According to research by Azizah and Huda (2022), E-WOM significantly affects purchase intention, particularly through the mediating role of brand awareness. The findings suggest that as more consumers share positive experiences online, the visibility and credibility of the brand increase, making it more recognizable to a broader audience. This growing brand awareness, reinforced by social proof, enhances consumer trust and confidence in the product or service, which in turn strengthens the intention to purchase. In this context, E-WOM does not operate in isolation but functions synergistically with brand awareness to guide consumer behavior. Positive digital word-of-mouth extends the reach of the brand, builds reputation organically, and ultimately drives consumer actions by bridging the gap between awareness and purchasing decisions.

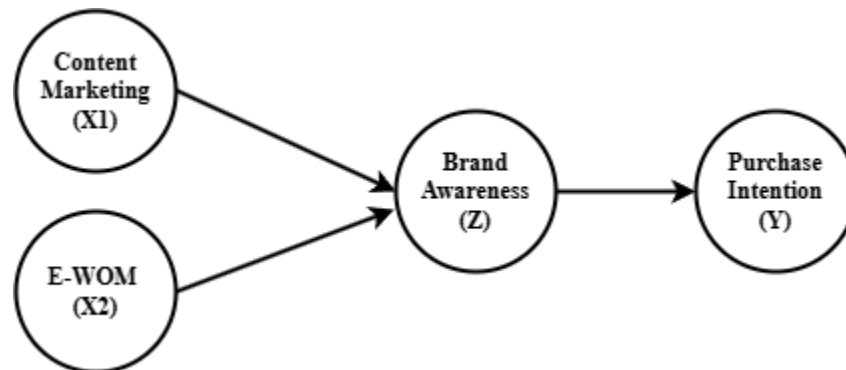


Figure 2
Conceptual Framework

Based on the conceptual framework above, the hypotheses of this study are as:

1. Hypothesis 1: Content marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness of Tenue De Attire products for TikTok Gen Z users in Surabaya.
2. Hypothesis 2: Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness of Tenue De Attire products among TikTok Gen Z users in Surabaya.
3. Hypothesis 3: Brand Awareness has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention of Tenue De Attire products for TikTok Gen Z users in Surabaya.
4. Hypothesis 4: Content marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention of Tenue De Attire products through brand awareness among TikTok Gen Z users in Surabaya.

5. Hypothesis 5: Electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) has a positive and significant effect on the purchase intention of Tenue De Attire products through brand awareness among TikTok Gen Z users in Surabaya.

RESEARCH METHOD

Data collection was conducted through a structured questionnaire, which was distributed online using Google Forms to ensure accessibility and convenience for the respondents. The responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, allowing for the assessment of participants' levels of agreement with various statements. The collected data were then analyzed with the help of SmartPLS software, which facilitated robust statistical analysis and model evaluation. The target population for this research consisted of Generation Z users of TikTok residing in Surabaya, Indonesia. A purposive sampling method was used to choose participants who fulfilled criteria aligned with the study's objectives of the study. In total, 126 valid responses were obtained and included in the final analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Result

Table 3
Outer Loading

	X1_Content Marketing	X2_E-WOM	Y_Purchase Intention	Z_Brand Awareness
X1.1	0.804			
X1.2	0.752			
X1.3	0.752			
X1.4	0.701			
X1.5	0.717			
X1.6	0.758			
X2.1		0.771		
X2.2		0.786		
X2.3		0.814		
X2.4		0.730		
Y1.1			0.862	
Y1.2			0.865	
Y1.3			0.859	
Y1.4			0.774	
Z1.1				0.850
Z1.2				0.785
Z1.3				0.732
Z1.4				0.891

Source: Data Processed, 2025

All of the reflective indicators on the content marketing variable (X1), electronic word of mouth (X2), purchase intention (Y), and brand awareness (Z) have factor loading values greater than 0.5, according to Table 3 in the outer loading table. This indicates that all of the indicators in this study have met their validity requirements.

Table 4
Discriminant Validity

	X1_Content Marketing	X2_E-WOM	Y_Purchase Intention	Z_Brand Awareness
X1_Content Marketing	0.748			
X2_E-WOM	0.681	0.776		
Y_Purchase Intention	0.444	0.613	0.841	
Z_Brand Awareness	0.424	0.644	0.721	0.816

Source: Data Processed, 2025

As shown in Table 4, the brand awareness variable (Z), purchase intention variable (Y), electronic word of mouth variable (X2), and content marketing variable (X1) each exhibit square roots of the AVE values that are greater than their respective correlations with other constructs. This indicates that all variables in the study have met the criteria for discriminant validity.

Table 5
Composite Reliability

	Composite Reliability
X1_Content Marketing	0.884
X2_E-WOM	0.858
Y_Purchase Intention	0.906
Z_Brand Awareness	0.888

Source: Data Processed, 2025

It can be concluded that all of the variables in this study are reliable because table 5 demonstrates that the composite reliability value of the brand awareness (Z), purchase intention (Y), electronic word of mouth (X2), and content marketing variable (X1) is more than 0.70.

Table 6
R-Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Y_Purchase Intention	0.520	0.516
Z_Brand Awareness	0.415	0.406

Source: Data Processed, 2025

Based on Table 6, the analysis results indicate that the purchase interest variable (Y) has an R-Square value of 0.520. This indicates that brand awareness (Z), electronic word-of-mouth (X2), and content marketing (X1) can account for 52% of the purchase interest variable (Y), with other variables not included in the study accounting for the remaining 48%.

According to the analysis results, the brand awareness variable (Z) has an R-Square value of 0.415, meaning that it can be explained by the content marketing variable (X1) and electronic word of mouth (X2) by 41.5%, with other variables not included in the study accounting for the remaining 58.5%.

Table 7
Direct Effect Hypothesis Test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
X1 -> Z	-0,027	-0,005	0,095	0,289	0.386
X2 -> Z	0,663	0,657	0,083	8,000	0.000
Z -> Y	0,721	0,723	0,036	20,284	0.000

Source: Data Processed, 2025

Based on Table 7, the results of the direct effect hypothesis test show that:

1. Content marketing (X1) has no significant effect on brand awareness (Z), so **hypothesis 1 is rejected.**
2. Electronic word of mouth (X2) has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness (Z), so **hypothesis 2 is accepted.**
3. Brand awareness (Z) has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention (Y), so **hypothesis 3 is accepted.**

Table 8
Hypothesis Test for Indirect Influence

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
X1 -> Z -> Y	-0,020	-0,004	0,069	0,288	0.387
X2 -> Z -> Y	0,478	0,476	0,070	6,852	0.000

Sumber: Data Processed, 2025

Based on table 8, the results of the indirect effect hypothesis test show that:

1. Content marketing (X1) has no significant effect on purchase intention (Y) through brand awareness (Z), so **hypothesis 4 is rejected.**
2. Electronic word of mouth (X2) has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention (Y) through brand awareness (Z), so **hypothesis 5 is accepted.**

Discussion

The findings of this research reveal that content marketing (X1) does not significantly affect brand awareness (Z). This outcome aligns with the research conducted by Gumalang et al (2022), who similarly found that content marketing efforts did not produce a meaningful increase in brand recognition. This suggests that simply disseminating marketing content is not enough to build strong brand awareness, especially if the content lacks elements that connect emotionally with the audience or fails to highlight unique product values. In the case of Tenue De Attire, this may reflect a content strategy that leans heavily on entertainment and trends, without sufficiently emphasizing brand identity or product differentiation.

In contrast, electronic word of mouth (X2) shows a strong and meaningful influence on brand awareness (Z), underscoring the vital role that online consumer interactions and peer recommendations play in shaping public perception of a brand. This finding echoes the results of Vania (2022), who reported that positive discussions and reviews on social media significantly enhanced awareness of Tenue De Attire products. The interactive and personal nature of e-WOM likely makes it a more credible and persuasive source of information for consumers, leading to stronger brand associations. This emphasizes the growing power of user-generated content and peer endorsement in the digital era, where traditional marketing efforts are increasingly overshadowed by organic consumer conversations.

Moreover, the study confirms that brand awareness (Z) positively and significantly influences purchase intention (Y). This relationship highlights the critical role of brand familiarity in driving consumer buying behavior, as people are more inclined to purchase products from brands they recognize and trust. This result aligns with the research of Riyadini & Krisnawati (2022), reinforcing the idea that strong brand awareness not only builds recognition but also translates into commercial benefits by increasing consumers' willingness to buy.

However, further analysis reveals that content marketing (X1) fails to exhibit a notable indirect influence on purchase intention (Y) through brand awareness (Z). In other words, while Tenue De Attire employs a content marketing strategy, its current implementation does not effectively boost brand awareness and, consequently, does not significantly shape consumers' purchase intentions. This stands in contrast to the findings of Yunani & Kamilla (2023), who observed a notable effect in a similar context. The discrepancy may be attributed to differences in execution; Tenue De Attire's content tends to focus more on following popular trends and entertaining formats rather than clearly communicating product value or competitive advantages. Furthermore, the brand's limited use of calls to action may prevent the audience from transitioning from passive viewers to active consumers, thereby weakening the potential impact of its content marketing initiatives.

On the other hand, electronic word of mouth (X2) demonstrates a significant and positive indirect effect on purchase intention (Y) through brand awareness (Z). This indicates that favorable online conversations and customer reviews do not merely raise brand recognition but also stimulate greater consumer interest and intention to purchase. These findings are in line with the results reported by Bija & Sukawati (2023), highlighting the mediating role of brand awareness in transforming e-WOM into tangible buying intentions. Given that e-WOM is often perceived as more authentic and trustworthy than brand-generated content, it appears to exert a stronger influence on shaping both brand image and purchasing behavior.

Collectively, these findings suggest that while content marketing remains a valuable tool, its effectiveness depends heavily on how well it engages the target audience and delivers clear, value-driven messages. For Tenue De Attire, strengthening the informational and persuasive quality of its marketing content, while simultaneously leveraging positive e-WOM, could create a synergistic effect that enhances both brand awareness and purchase intention. The results also underline the necessity for brands in the fashion industry to go beyond surface-level content strategies and focus on fostering genuine consumer advocacy through digital word-of-mouth channels.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study, it can be concluded that content marketing has not had a significant impact on brand awareness, nor does it indirectly influence intention to purchase mediated by brand awareness in the context of Tenue De Attire. This suggests that the current content marketing strategy needs to be improved in order to more effectively build brand awareness and drive consumer purchase intentions. In contrast, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) has been shown to play a crucial role in enhancing brand awareness and, indirectly, positively influencing purchase intention. These results highlight the pivotal role of brand awareness as a mediating factor that transforms consumer perceptions into buying intentions. Therefore, strengthening e-WOM strategies and refining the execution of content marketing are essential steps for Tenue De Attire to improve its marketing performance and strengthen its brand competitiveness in the digital fashion market.

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