Customer Engagement in Building Brand Loyalty with Consumer Trust as a Mediator

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Abstract. *The business and marketing world has been greatly influenced by digital transformation, which has opened up many opportunities to increase customer engagement. This includes active interaction between customers and brands through social media, mobile applications, and websites. With the advent of digital platforms, businesses can now interact with their audiences in real time, offering personalized experiences that match individual preferences and behaviors. Based on the results of research on Customer Engagement in Building Brand Loyalty through Consumer Trust as a Mediator, it can be concluded that consumer engagement plays an important role in increasing brand loyalty. Consumers who interact more often with a brand tend to have an emotional bond that ultimately impacts their loyalty to the brand. In addition, consumer trust in a brand also acts as an intermediary factor that strengthens the relationship between customer engagement and brand loyalty. Consumers who feel confident in the quality, transparency, and commitment of a brand are more likely to remain loyal and recommend the brand to others. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method to test the relationship between research variables based on empirical data that is processed statistically. Quantitative research aims to explain phenomena by collecting numerical data which is then analyzed using statistical methods to obtain objective conclusions. In this context, a quantitative approach is used to identify and measure the causal relationship between independent and dependent variables. Quantitative research is a research method based on the philosophy of positivism. The philosophy of positivism emphasizes objective measurement of reality through data that can be observed, measured, and analyzed systematically.*

Keywords: *Business; Customer; Engagement; Loyalty; Marketing.*

1. Introduction

The world of business and marketing has been greatly influenced by digital transformation, which has opened up many opportunities to increase customer engagement. This includes active interaction between customers and brands through social media, mobile applications, and websites. With the advent of digital platforms, businesses can now interact with their

audiences in real time, offering personalized experiences that match individual preferences and behaviors (Abdullah Al Masud et al., 2024).

In today's competitive landscape, businesses are not only looking to increase sales but also to build stronger emotional connections with their customers. Digitization allows brands to communicate more effectively, using data-driven insights to understand customer needs and deliver relevant content at the right time. Features like AI-powered chatbots, targeted email marketing, and social media engagement help brands build trust and loyalty, turning one-time visitors into long-term customers. Digital marketing strategies—such as influencer collaborations, interactive content, and loyalty programs—play a critical role in retaining customer interest and encouraging repeat purchases. As technology continues to evolve, businesses that embrace digital engagement will have a significant advantage in sustaining growth, enhancing brand reputation, and nurturing customer relationships in a hyper-connected world.

Social media usage has grown rapidly worldwide, with over 4.7 billion people actively using platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok. In Indonesia alone, over 170 million people are connected to social media, demonstrating the vital role these platforms play in everyday life. Social media is no longer just a place to share updates or personal news; it has evolved into a powerful tool for businesses to engage with their audiences, build brand awareness, and drive customer loyalty (Zhao et al., 2024). Given these statistics, businesses must integrate social media into their marketing strategies to maximize consumer engagement. Social media provides a dynamic space where brands can interact with customers in real time, addressing their concerns, responding to questions, and providing personalized content that is relevant to their interests. This level of engagement not only strengthens relationships but also fosters trust and credibility, making customers more likely to choose a particular brand over competitors.

Leveraging social media analytics allows businesses to gain valuable insights into consumer behavior, preferences, and trends. Features such as targeted advertising, influencer collaborations, live streaming, and interactive polls allow brands to create highly engaging content that resonates with their target audience (Huang et al., 2024). Additionally, user-generated content and online reviews play a significant role in shaping public perception, as potential customers often rely on peer recommendations before making purchasing decisions. By maintaining a strong and active presence on social media, businesses can not only increase their visibility but also grow a loyal customer base that advocates for their brand. In an era where digital interactions drive purchasing behavior, companies that prioritize social media marketing will have a competitive advantage in capturing and retaining consumer attention (Nurhadi et al., 2024).

Additionally, interactions conducted through digital platforms have a huge impact on customer purchasing behavior, beyond just communication. Studies show that around 75% of customers are more likely to purchase products from brands that actively engage with them

through digital platforms such as social media, mobile apps, and websites. This highlights the critical role of digital engagement in influencing consumer decision-making and brand preferences (Norzalita Abdul Aziz et al., 2023). The more consumers interact with a brand through these channels, the more likely they are to develop a sense of trust and familiarity, which ultimately leads to a purchase decision (Siqueira et al., 2021). Consistent and relevant engagement plays a key role in strengthening this trust. By providing valuable content, personalized recommendations, and responsive customer service, brands can build deeper relationships with their audiences. Today's consumers expect brands to be not only accessible but also interactive, offering a seamless experience across multiple digital touchpoints (Macca et al., 2024). Features like instant messaging, AI-based chatbots, personalized promotions, and loyalty programs further enhance the relationship between brands and customers, making interactions more engaging and meaningful.

Social media acts as a catalyst in fostering consumer loyalty. When customers feel recognized, appreciated, and emotionally connected to a brand, they are more likely to become repeat buyers and even advocate for the brand in their social circles (Treiblmaier & Petrozhitskaya, 2023). Positive digital interactions often translate into word-of-mouth marketing, where satisfied customers share their experiences, leave reviews, and recommend products to friends and family. This organic promotion significantly improves a brand's reputation and credibility, ultimately driving long-term customer retention and business growth (Anwar Sadat Shimul et al., 2024). In an era where digital presence is a key differentiator, businesses that prioritize engagement and trust-building strategies on digital platforms will gain a competitive advantage. By continually refining their digital interactions, brands can create a loyal customer base that not only drives sales but also strengthens their market position in an increasingly digital-driven world.

Additionally, a seamless and enjoyable online shopping experience has a direct impact on customer loyalty. When customers feel valued and prioritized with a shopping experience that meets their needs, they are more likely to develop a strong attachment to the brand. A seamless digital shopping journey—characterized by personalized recommendations, responsive customer service, and an intuitive interface—significantly increases customer satisfaction, which in turn strengthens brand loyalty (Ebrahimabad et al., 2024). Empirical studies support this claim. A study by Lemon & Verhoef (2016) highlighted that customer experience is a critical determinant of brand loyalty, as it directly influences customer satisfaction and emotional engagement. Similarly, a study by Kumar & Reinartz (2018) found that businesses that deliver personalized experiences through digital platforms experience a 20-30% increase in customer retention rates. These findings suggest that positive digital shopping experiences not only drive repeat purchases but also foster deeper relationships between brands and their consumers (Mofokeng, 2023).

Major e-commerce platforms such as Amazon and Alibaba have successfully leveraged AI-based recommendations, fast delivery services, and easy-to-use interfaces to enhance customer experience and build long-term loyalty. Amazon's Prime membership program, for

example, has been instrumental in increasing customer retention, with studies showing that Prime members spend an average of $1,400 per year compared to non-members who spend around $600 (Consumer Intelligence Research Partners, 2021). This illustrates how a well-designed digital shopping experience can drive customer satisfaction and increased spending. Businesses that can leverage the power of digital platforms to offer a fast, convenient, and customized shopping experience are more likely to build long-term relationships with customers. Features such as loyalty programs, real-time support, and hassle-free return policies contribute to positive consumer perceptions, making them more likely to choose the same brand again and again. Research by PwC (2022) revealed that 73% of consumers consider customer experience to be an important factor in their purchasing decisions, further emphasizing the importance of optimizing digital interactions (Tuan & Doan, 2025).

In a competitive market, companies that prioritize user experience on online platforms will gain a significant advantage. By continuously improving personalization, service efficiency, and overall ease of use, businesses can not only increase purchase frequency but also build long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with their customers. Investing in digital customer experience is no longer an option, but a necessity for sustainable growth and brand success in the digital age (Asaithambi et al., 2024).

The authors chose this title because consumer engagement plays a vital role in building brand loyalty and consumer trust as a key determinant of long-term customer retention. In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, businesses must leverage digital platforms and new technologies to foster deeper relationships with their consumers. Digital transformation has changed the way brands interact with consumers, making interactions more dynamic, interactive, and personal. One of the most effective strategies for building trust is through personalized and relevant interactions across digital channels, such as social media, mobile apps, and websites. Studies have shown that brands that engage customers through tailored content and interactive experiences see higher levels of trust and emotional engagement (Dwivedi et al., 2021). These emotional connections significantly influence purchasing decisions, as consumers are more likely to be loyal to brands that align with their values and consistently deliver positive experiences.

2. Research Methods

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method to test the relationship between research variables based on empirical data processed statistically. Quantitative research aims to explain phenomena by collecting numerical data which is then analyzed using statistical methods to obtain objective conclusions. In this context, a quantitative approach is used to identify and measure the causal relationship between independent and dependent variables. According to Sugiyono (2018:14), quantitative research is a research method based on the philosophy of positivism. The philosophy of positivism emphasizes objective measurement of reality through data that can be observed, measured, and analyzed systematically. This research was conducted on a certain population or sample selected randomly (random

sampling). The data collected using research instruments, such as structured questionnaires, and the results were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The quantitative approach is considered relevant because it is able to provide empirically and objectively measurable results, which can support the generalization of findings to a wider population.

3. Results and Discussion

The object of this study was passengers who visited the Go Show counter room at Kejaksaan Daop 3 Cirebon Station and had experience using Apple and Samsung products as a means to buy train tickets online. The selection of this location was based on the consideration that train passengers generally have relatively high purchasing power, as well as a better level of understanding of brands and factors that influence their purchasing decisions.

This study focuses on the factors that influence brand loyalty towards Apple and Samsung, by considering the variables Customer Engagement (X1) and Customer Trust (X2) as factors that can increase consumer loyalty (Y).

The respondents in this study were passengers who visited the Go Show counter at Kejaksaan Daop 3 Cirebon Station and used Apple and Samsung products. By focusing the research on consumers at this location, it is hoped that a deeper understanding can be obtained regarding the contribution of various factors to brand loyalty, especially among public transportation users such as train passengers—both those who are prospective professionals in business and management, and daily users who rely on digital devices for daily online activities.

Respondent Characteristics Table

Characteristics	Category	Percentage(%)
Gender	Man	55%
	Woman	45%
Age (years)	22 – 25	40%
	26 – 30	45%
	31 – 51	15%
Monthly Income (Rp)	< 5,000,000	30%
	5,000,000 - 10,000,000	50%
	> 10,000,000	20%

Trademark Ownership and Use Table

Category	Sub-Category	Percentage(%)
Smartphone Brands Used	Apple	48%
	Samsung	52%
Duration of Use of the Trademark	< 1 year	10%
	13 years old	35%
	4 - 6 years	40%
	> 6 years	15%

This method compares the square root of AVE (Average Variance Extracted) of a latent variable with its correlation to other latent variables. Discriminant validity is considered fulfilled if the square root value of AVE is greater than the correlation value between latent variables,

indicating that the variable is more related to its own indicators than to other variables in the model.

Discriminant Validity Test Results Table (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

Variables	Brand Loyalty (Y)	Customer Engagement (X1)	Customer Trust (X2)
Brand Loyalty (Y)	0.823	0.711	0.685
Customer Engagement (X1)	0.711	0.846	0.693
Customer Trust (X2)	0.685	0.693	0.837

In the discriminant validity test table using the Fornell-Larcker approach, the bold diagonal values that appear are the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values of each construct, while other values outside the diagonal reflect the correlation between constructs. The main principle of this method is that a construct is said to have good discriminant validity if its AVE value is greater than its correlation value with other constructs. Based on the calculation results displayed, it can be seen that the Brand Loyalty construct has an AVE value of 0.823, which is higher than its correlation with Customer Engagement (0.711) and Customer Trust (0.685). The same thing also applies to the Customer Engagement construct, which has an AVE of 0.846, higher than its correlation with Brand Loyalty (0.711) and Customer Trust (0.693). Similarly, the Customer Trust construct shows an AVE of 0.837, higher than its correlation with Customer Engagement (0.693) and Brand Loyalty (0.685). Thus, all constructs in this study have met the discriminant validity requirements according to the Fornell-Larcker criteria, which means that each variable has a clear conceptual uniqueness and does not overlap with each other in measuring consumer behavior in the context of brand loyalty.

1) Reliability Test Results with Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability testing is carried out to ensure that each latent variable in this study has good internal consistency, so that the indicators used can provide stable and reliable results in various measurements. The two main measures used in reliability testing are Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha (CA).

a. Composite Reliability (CR) is used to measure the internal reliability of a construct by considering the variance of its indicators. A CR value ≥ 0.70 indicates that the construct has good reliability and can be relied on.

b. Cronbach's Alpha (CA)used to measure the level of internal consistency between indicators in one variable. A CA value ≥ 0.60 indicates that the indicators in the variable have fairly good consistency in measuring the same concept.

Reliability Test Results Table

Variables	Composite Reliability (CR)	Cronbach's Alpha (CA)	Information
Customer Engagement (X1)	0.891	0.915	Reliable (≥ 0.7)
Customer Trust (X2)	0.874	0.902	Reliable (≥ 0.7)
Brand Loyalty (Y)	0.885	0.910	Reliable (≥ 0.7)

Information:

CR value ≥ 0.70 indicates high reliability.

CA value ≥ 0.60 indicates good internal consistency.

2) Analysis and Interpretation

a.   Customer Engagement (X1)

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.891 and Composite Reliability of 0.915 indicate that the indicators used to measure Customer Engagement are very consistent and reliable. With a value above 0.70, this variable has high reliability, meaning that the data collected from respondents related to Customer Engagement is stable and valid enough to represent this construct in the study.

b.   Customer Trust (X2)

Customer Trust also shows good results with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.874 and Composite Reliability of 0.902. This indicates that all measurement items used to describe consumer trust in the brand have been tested consistently. This variable is reliable and can be used to explain the role of Customer Trust in building consumer loyalty.

c.   Brand Loyalty (Y)

For the Brand Loyalty variable, the Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.885 and Composite Reliability of 0.910 confirm that the measurement of brand loyalty is very reliable. The internal consistency of the indicators is adequate, so that the results of the study linking Brand Loyalty with other variables have a strong basis in terms of data quality.

Overall, the three variables showed good reliability, indicating that this research instrument is feasible and valid for use in further analysis such as testing the relationship between variables and structural models.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study on Customer Engagement in Building Brand Loyalty through Consumer Trust as a Mediator, it can be concluded that consumer engagement plays an important role in increasing brand loyalty. Consumers who interact more frequently with a brand tend to have an emotional bond that ultimately impacts their loyalty to the brand. In addition, consumer trust in a brand also acts as an intermediary factor that strengthens the relationship between customer engagement and brand loyalty. Consumers who feel confident in the quality, transparency, and commitment of the brand will be more likely to remain loyal and recommend the brand to others. The results of the analysis show that the Apple and Samsung brands, as two dominant brands in the technology industry, have varying levels of customer engagement and consumer trust, which directly affect user loyalty. Other factors

such as price, innovation, customer service, and user communities also contribute to consumers' decisions to continue using or switching to other brands. Overall, this study confirms that in building brand loyalty, companies need to focus not only on product quality, but also on marketing strategies that can increase consumer interaction, strengthen emotional attachment, and build sustainable trust. By understanding these factors, companies can create more effective strategies to maintain and expand their loyal customer base.

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