The influence of digital marketing on purchase decisions of florist products: the mediating role of brand awareness and customer trust

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Abstract

The increasing penetration of the internet in Indonesia, which reached 79.5% in 2024, has significantly influenced the dynamics of business and consumer interaction, particularly in the digital marketplace. Despite these advancements, specific sectors, such as the florist industry, have not fully capitalized on digital opportunities. This study aims to address a research gap concerning the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies within the florist sector by examining the case of Auriel Florist Surabaya, a business experiencing a decline in sales despite active online promotional efforts. Employing a quantitative research design, data were collected through a survey of 100 customers and analyzed using SmartPLS to examine the relationships among digital marketing, brand awareness, customer trust, and purchase decisions. The results indicate that digital marketing has a significant positive impact on brand awareness, which in turn has a strong influence on purchase decisions. In contrast, customer trust does not exhibit a direct significant impact on purchase decisions. These findings suggest that brand recognition plays a more critical role in shaping consumer behavior than trust alone. Future studies are recommended to incorporate additional variables and test the model across different industries to enhance generalizability.

Keywords: digital marketing, purchase decisions, brand awareness, customer trust.

Introduction

The advancement of technology has brought significant changes to the global community, including Indonesia in particular, affecting nearly every aspect of life from education, healthcare, to the economy and business. In recent years, the progress of information and communication technology through internet access has become a major driving force behind social and economic transformation. Initially, internet technology served merely as a simple medium for information and communication. However, as technology evolved and the number of internet users grew, its functions expanded significantly.

As technology continues to advance and the digital era unfolds, society becomes increasingly inseparable from the rapidly developing technologies (Ali & Cuandra, 2023). Recent data shows that global internet penetration has reached a highly significant level. According to the annual report from the international research agency We Are Social (a global agency specializing in digital marketing and social media) more than 5 billion people worldwide were connected to the internet in 2024, accounting for over 63% of the global population. Even more interestingly, nearly every country in the world now has an average internet penetration rate exceeding 50% of its population. Even in developing countries, which previously faced major challenges in building digital infrastructure, the rate of

internet adoption has continued to rise significantly. In Indonesia, according to the 2024 survey by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (APJII), the internet penetration rate has reached 79.5%, meaning that approximately 221,563,479 people out of a total population of 278,696,200 are now connected online. The significant increase in internet users in Indonesia, combined with a lifestyle that is becoming increasingly digital, has driven the growth of e-commerce (Supyati et al., 2025).

The growth in internet usage is also marked by the emergence of various social media platforms and e-commerce marketplaces, both of which have had a significant global impact. In recent years, social media usage has grown rapidly, becoming an integral part of people's daily lives around the world. This tremendous growth also reflects the increasing reliance of society on social media as a primary source of information and communication, while also driving changes across various sectors, including business and marketing. The use of social media for marketing, known as digital marketing, plays an important role in attracting customers and building loyalty through positive experiences created between the brand and customers (Supyati et all., 2025). The impact is especially evident in the field of marketing, which in turn directly influences customer purchasing behavior. The emergence of the digital era, along with widespread internet usage, has transformed the way people communicate and interact, while also triggering lifestyle changes, one of which is the shift toward online product purchasing (Ali et all., 2023). Online business transactions become more and more popular not only among the business organizations but also among the customers (Jusuf & Sarwono, 2021). According to international studies, the customers have spent millions on online shopping since modern applications and smartphones make this process easier and more available with lower costs, and most people spend many hours a day browsing various shopping services (Statista, 2019; Sweiss et al., 2021; Alwan & Alshurideh, 2022).

Understanding this trend is crucial, especially in the context of changes in consumer behavior, in order to determine strategies that can be implemented to adapt to the ever-evolving market dynamics. The internet has become a key enabler of digital economic growth, allowing businesses of all sizes to leverage this technology to expand their market reach. With the rapid growth of the internet and penetration of digital technology, e-commerce companies have experienced major changes in their marketing approach (Rose, van der Merwe, & Jones, 2024). Digital marketing is a marketing strategy that a company needs for the current era (Putri, 2021). All lines of business (both in products and services) require digital marketing (Putri, 2021).

According to the latest survey from We Are Social, which measures how internet users aged 16 to 64 discover new brands, products, and services through various digital platforms, this trend has a significant impact on marketing strategies and brand building for companies in the current digital era. The findings show that the majority of customers discover new information through online platforms, reflecting the central role of digital media in shaping brand awareness and modern consumption patterns. Digital marketing involves promoting products using internet connectivity and digital technologies. It can serve as a key strategy for companies to expand their market reach and increase brand awareness among the public. Digital marketing has revolutionized how companies interact with their customers and promote their brands (Nipa et al., 2024). With the presence of e-commerce and social media, many local businesses have been able to compete and reach

new customers who were previously difficult to access. Moreover, the use of the internet has also impacted consumer behavior. customers use the internet not only to search for information about products and services but also to communicate with other customers about their experiences and interactions with businesses (Hien & Nhu, 2022). customers are now more likely to research products online before making a purchase, indicating a shift in how they interact with the market.
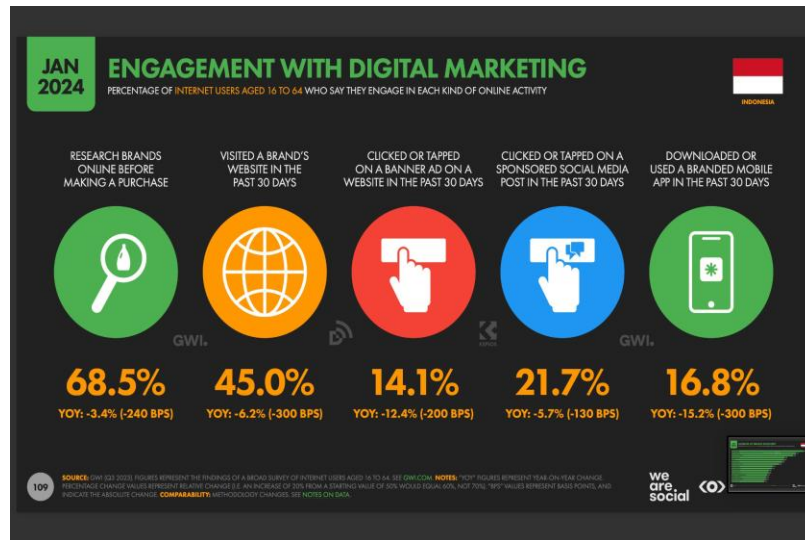

Figure 1. Engagement with Digital Marketing
Source: A global survey by We Are Social in 2024

In fact, the We Are Social survey found that 68.5% of customers research a brand before making a purchase, and 45% visited a brand's website in the past 30 days, further highlighting the growing importance of digital marketing in the purchasing decision process. Moreover, digital marketing is capable of attracting a wide range of customers, permit businesses to communicate to customers effectively via online media from various backgrounds and to guide them through the purchase process (Dastane, 2020; Lodhi & Shoaib, 2017). Additionally, companies must be able to deliver clear and distinct marketing communication to attract customers' purchase intentions, setting them apart from competitors (Azmi, Afriyani, & Kurniaty, 2025).

In the context of today's modern lifestyle, online shopping has become an integral part, supported by rapid advancements in communication networks (Amrullah & Ashari, 2024). Social media and e-commerce, which are easily accessible, have become powerful tools for customers to gather as much information as possible about products and services, enabling them to find the most beneficial options from the customer's perspective. This, of course, presents a challenge for businesses. With the increasing population of internet users, digital marketing has become an effective tool for businesses to reach a wider target market at a more cost-efficient rate compared to traditional marketing methods

Business owners must, by necessity, keep up with technological advancements to maintain the existence of their businesses and products amid market competition, including businesses like Auriel Florist. Auriel Florist is a floral business brand that has been established since 2020 in Surabaya. As a business operating in the flower and flower arrangement sales sector, Auriel Florist aims to meet the community's need for quality floral

products, whether for personal use or special events such as weddings, birthdays, festive celebrations, and symbolic greetings. Since its inception, Auriel Florist has adopted an online-based sales strategy. This has become a key strength in reaching a broader customer base, both within Surabaya and its surrounding areas. By utilizing digital platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, and the Shopee e-commerce platform, Auriel Florist has been able to offer a practical, modern flower shopping experience that aligns with the lifestyle of today's customers.

According to the 2024 We Are Social survey, several online platforms that are most popular, especially in Indonesia, include WhatsApp at 90.9%, Instagram at 85.3%, Facebook at 81.6%, TikTok at 73.5%, and Telegram at 61.3%, occupying the top five positions. Auriel Florist itself has already utilized these platforms to simplify the purchasing process for its customers. In its business development journey, Auriel Florist has faced significant challenges. Sales data from Auriel Florist show a notable downward trend in the number of products sold each month over the past four years. This decline indicates challenges in maintaining sales revenue. One of the main challenges faced by Auriel Florist is the increasing competition in the online florist industry. The growing number of competitors offering similar products at competitive prices has made the market more saturated, compounded by the rapid development of digital marketing, which has impacted the purchasing behavior of customers and, consequently, the sales of Auriel Florist. This situation poses a threat to the sustainability of the business if it is not addressed with the right marketing strategies. These factors serve as the primary reasons for conducting this research. The objective is to identify strategies that can help Auriel Florist boost product sales. This research also aims to discover strategies and methods that can differentiate the Auriel Florist brand from its competitors in the market. By conducting a thorough analysis of the market, consumer behavior, and trends in the florist industry, this study is expected to provide concrete and practical solutions for Auriel Florist. In this way, the brand can not only overcome current challenges but also open up opportunities for sustainable growth in the future.

Literature Review

This study aims to examine the influence of Digital Marketing on Purchase Decisions for Auriel Florist's products, with Brand Awareness and Customer Trust serving as mediating variables. To explore the relationships among these variables, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), developed by Icek Ajzen in 1991, serves as the primary theoretical foundation. This theory posits that consumer behavior is driven by behavioral intentions, which are shaped by three key factors: attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms (social influences), and perceived behavioral control.

In the context of Digital Marketing and Purchase Decisions, the Theory of Planned Behavior provides a framework to understand how customers' intentions to buy a product are influenced by various factors, such as their attitudes toward the product, existing social norms, and the degree of control they perceive over making the purchase decision. Brand awareness, driven by various digital marketing strategies, can shape customers' positive attitudes toward a particular brand. Meanwhile, Customer Trust plays a crucial role in shaping perceived control and confidence in the products being offered. These two factors brand awareness and customer trust play significant roles in shaping intention and

ultimately influencing customer purchase decisions.

By applying the Theory of Planned Behavior in this study, it is expected to provide clearer insights into the mechanisms linking digital marketing to purchase decisions, as well as how brand awareness and customer trust function as mediating variables. In this way, the theory offers a strong foundation for analyzing the data and contributes to a deeper understanding of the psychological processes behind customer decision-making in today's digital marketing landscape.

Although numerous studies have explored the impact of digital marketing on consumer behavior and purchase decisions, there remains a gap in understanding how digital marketing influences purchasing decisions in niche industries like floristry, particularly in local businesses. Many studies have broadly addressed digital marketing's effects on customer purchase decisions, but few have focused on the specific context of small, local businesses that rely heavily on digital channels for sales. Furthermore, while brand awareness and customer trust are often cited as critical factors in customer decision making, the specific roles these variables play in the context of floristry businesses, especially in the digital realm, have not been sufficiently examined. Several existing studies have investigated digital marketing within the florist industry; however, the majority exhibit limitations in both scope and methodological depth. For instance, Wulandari et al. (2021) analyzed the relationship between digital marketing and customer loyalty in a florist business, while Bakti et al. (2024) found that brand image and digital marketing together accounted for only 48.9% of purchase decision factors, suggesting the presence of other influential variables beyond digital marketing alone. Additionally, studies by Quraysin et al. (2022) and Ayuning et al. (2025) have focused on social media strategy and brand awareness, yet did not evaluate how digital marketing activities interact with mediating factors within a comprehensive quantitative framework. These findings reflect a lack of empirical investigation into how digital marketing, particularly through its influence on mediating variables such as brand awareness and customer trust, affects purchase decisions in local floral businesses. This study addresses that gap by quantitatively analyzing those mediating roles within the context of Auriel Florist, a local florist operating in Surabaya, Indonesia. This research aims to fill the gap by examining how digital marketing strategies employed by Auriel Florist influence the purchasing decisions of customers, with a particular focus on the mediating roles of brand awareness and customer trust. Distinct from previous studies that provide a general overview of digital marketing's impact, this research focuses on the application of specific digital tools, such as social media platforms, e-commerce channels, and online advertising, within the specialized context of the local florist industry. By quantitatively examining the mediating effects of brand awareness and customer trust, this study aims to offer a more nuanced and context-specific understanding of how digital marketing efforts shape consumer behavior in a niche service sector, particularly within the dynamic landscape of Indonesia's digital economy.

According to Kotler (2025), to ensure seamless collaboration, the next generation of marketers must possess knowledge of technology, particularly technology that can enhance marketing activities. A group of technologies frequently used by marketers is referred to as marketing technology. Digital marketing involves applying technologies by using digital marketing tools such as websites, social media, and other digital platforms. These tools enable businesses to interact with customers in a more targeted, measurable, and

interactive way, ultimately improving marketing effectiveness and customer engagement (Tam & Lung, 2025). A digital marketing platform is an internet based and offline system that can build, promote, and distribute brand quality through digital channels to end users. Kingsnorth (2022) states that digital marketing is (or should be) part of nearly every important business decision, from product development and pricing to public relations (PR) and even recruitment. The rapid development of information technology poses unique challenges for businesses, as customers have easy access to information. Consequently, comparing products has become a simple task for customers (Sholihin, 2024). Data is easily available through electronic communication. Through electronic communication, this provides multi-channel communication that allows data to be easily exchanged by anyone, anywhere in the world, regardless of who they are.

According to Piepponen et al. (2022), digital transformation has significantly reshaped how companies deliver value, shifting the focus from product features to customer outcomes. Rather than simply offering products or services, companies are now expected to communicate the results or benefits that customers truly seek. This outcome-based approach has changed the marketing landscape, requiring businesses to better understand and align with customer expectations. The shift in marketing orientation has forced companies to search for new formulas to approach and understand customer desires more deeply, where marketing activities are seen as a stronger relationship between producers and customers, rather than just a transaction (Sholihin, 2024). The revolution of social media has completely transformed the internet and consumer behavior, and analytics have evolved to the point where companies can understand consumer behavior in real-time, not only usage statistics but also demographics and even the interests of their customers (Kingsnorth, 2022).

According to Sudirman (2022), the brand plays a crucial role in product marketing. Brands are essential for producers as they help their target customers understand the products they offer. Brand and brand awareness are closely linked in shaping customer perceptions of a product or service. A brand is not just a name or logo, but also a representation of the values, quality, and experiences provided to customers. Brand awareness refers to the condition in which potential buyers have the ability to recognize or recall a particular brand that belongs to a certain product category (Sholihin, 2024). Brand awareness plays a pivotal role in the success of a business, particularly in today's digital age with increasing competition. Brand awareness refers to the extent to which customers recognize and remember a brand, as well as the associations they have with it. Brand awareness is a condition where customers associate brands with information-seeking behavior, and brands with high awareness are more likely to be considered when fulfilling their needs (Utama & Ambarwati, 2022).

Brand awareness comprises four levels that reflect the extent to which customers recognize and recall a brand. The first level, Unaware of Brand, refers to a condition in which customers have no knowledge or recognition of the brand. The second level, Brand Recognition, indicates the customer's ability to identify a brand based on visual elements, even if they cannot recall the brand name specifically. The third level, Brand Recall, is characterized by the customer's ability to remember the brand spontaneously when prompted with a product category. The highest level, Top of Mind, represents the brand that comes first to a customer's mind within a product category, reflecting a dominant position

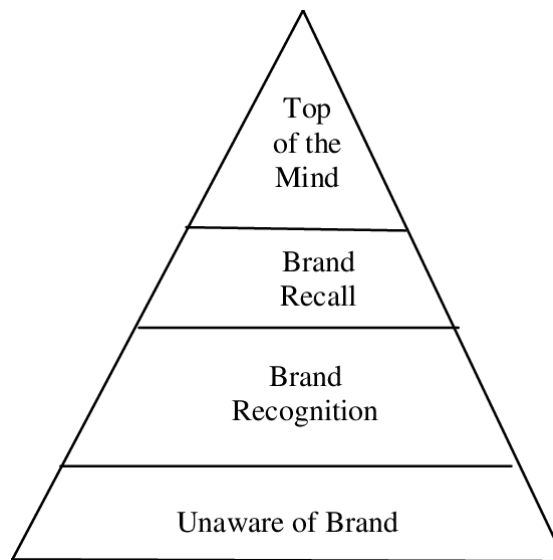in customer memory that significantly influences purchasing decisions.

Figure 2. The levels of brand awareness
Source: Levels of Brand Awareness (Sholihin, 2024)

Customer trust is a customer's belief that other people have integrity and can be trusted, and the person he trusts will fulfill all his obligations in conducting transactions as expected (Utama & Ambarwati, 2022). Customer trust is the foundation of successful e-commerce, influencing customers' willingness to engage in online transactions and shaping their overall satisfaction with the online shopping experience. It is reasonable to assume that, similar to other types of online transactions where trust strongly influences purchase intention, social media-based transactions also rely heavily on customers' trust in retailers in order to succeed (Irshad et al., 2020). Online purchasing differs from traditional purchasing, in which previous customer experiences do not significantly influence their purchase intention when making online purchases. Trust fosters a cooperative environment between parties in a relationship and supports customers in making informed decisions (Hashim & Tan, 2015; Malik et al., 2020). Similar to other online transactions where trust is a critical determinant of purchase intention Escobar et all (2017), transactions initiated through social media also require customers to trust the sellers operating on these platforms in order to complete purchases successfully. Therefore, trust plays a substantial role by facilitating customers in considering whether or not to purchase a product (Malik et al., 2020).

Trust in the context of e-commerce refers to a customer's belief in the reliability, security, and integrity of an online platform. This trust is essential for reducing perceived risks associated with online transactions, such as concerns about data security, privacy, and the authenticity of products and services offered (Rahman et al., 2024). Several key factors influence customer trust, especially in electronic purchasing. The first is the design or appearance of the electronic platform, such as a website. A well-designed, professional, and user-friendly website can enhance the perceived credibility and reliability of a business (Rahman et al., 2024). Another factor is customer service quality, where responsive and efficient support can help resolve issues quickly and provide a sense of assurance, thereby

increasing customer trust (Rahman et al., 2024). Kaya et al. (2019) also emphasize the importance of transparency across all aspects of the customer experience, from product descriptions to return policies, in building trust (Rahman et al., 2024). Suhartanto et al. (2018) found that providing accurate and detailed product information, including reviews and ratings from other customers, can significantly enhance customer trust (Rahman et al., 2024).

According to Islam, Ali, and Azizzadeh (2024), the purchase decision is one of the stages in the decision-making process that occurs before post-purchase behavior. The commonly used framework to describe this process is the five-stage model of the customer buying process, which outlines the steps customers go through in making purchase decisions. A seller must be aware of these stages in order to facilitate the buyer in shopping, communicate effectively with customers, and successfully complete a sale.
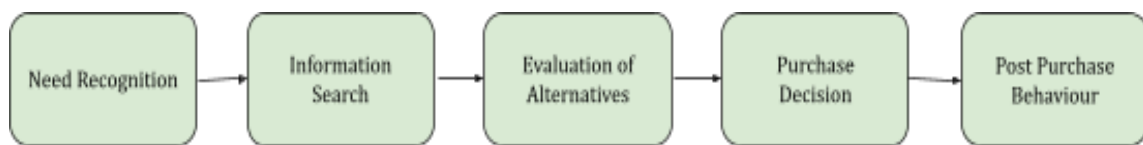

Figure 3. Five stage model of the customer buying process
Source: Kotler & Keller (2012).

Customer purchase decisions are a complex process involving various psychological, social, and situational factors that influence their final choice, which is the purchase itself. This process begins with the recognition of a need, where the customer becomes aware of a deficiency or desire that needs to be fulfilled. Subsequently, they search for information to explore the various available options, using both personal and public sources. Afterward, customers evaluate alternatives based on certain criteria, such as price, quality, and brand reputation. This evaluation process is greatly influenced by brand awareness, where well-known brands with a positive image are more likely to be selected. By understanding this process, companies can design more effective marketing strategies to influence purchase decisions and enhance customer satisfaction.

Based on the research, it can be concluded that brand awareness can be built by leveraging social media and developing digital marketing communication strategies (Wiryany et al., 2023). Strategic planning in developing these strategies is essential to cultivate trust in the brand. Therefore, it can be concluded that the strategy of utilizing digital marketing is effective in enhancing brand awareness. This indicates that digital marketing has a significant impact on brand awareness.
H1: Digital marketing has a significant effect on brand awareness of Auriel Florist products.

The research conducted by Mukti and Isa (2024) shows that digital marketing, word of mouth, product trust, and brand image, had a positive influence on the final customer purchasing decision. This finding emphasizes the importance of digital marketing strategies and word of mouth in shaping product trust and brand image, which ultimately encourages customers to make purchases. The research conducted by Nurmartiani et al. (2024) shows that digital marketing and product quality have a significant impact on customer trust. The study also found that a strong digital marketing strategy can enhance customer trust in a product or brand.

H2: Digital marketing has a significant effect on customer trust in Auriel Florist products.

The research conducted by Inayati et al. (2022) found that digital marketing has a positive and significant impact on purchase decisions. Samsudeen and Kaldeen (2020) demonstrated that digital marketing, particularly through social media and email marketing, plays a significant role in enhancing customer engagement and purchase intention. Furthermore, the study by Utomo et al. (2023) revealed that product quality, promotion, and digital marketing directly have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction and purchase decisions. This indicates that digital marketing has a significant impact on purchase decisions.

H3: Digital marketing has a significant effect on the purchase decision of Auriel Florist products.

Malakiano and Susila (2025) concluded that higher brand awareness increases the likelihood of customers trusting and purchasing the product. Research by Paientko et al. (2024) states that on online platforms, brand awareness can be achieved through various methods and activities that connect customers with the brand, such as advertising, sales promotions, public relations, and more. In current developments, customers often discover brands through endorsements from social media influencers, who provide detailed information, reasons to purchase a product, and information about trending products from specific brands (Paientko et al., 2024).

H4: Brand awareness has a significant effect on the purchase decision of Auriel Florist products.

According to the research conducted by Toji and Sukati (2024), customer trust is the belief that a product or service will meet the customer's needs and expectations. Therefore, high customer trust can enhance customer purchase decisions. The study also found that online customer reviews, brand image, and customer trust are important factors that can influence a product's purchase decision.

H5: Customer trust has a significant effect on the purchase decision of Auriel Florist products.

Research conducted by Dwiputri et al. (2024) found that digital marketing has a positive and significant impact on brand awareness. The more effective the digital marketing strategy implemented, the greater the customer awareness of the brand. This directly impacts purchase decisions, where increased brand awareness positively influences customers' tendencies to choose a product. As customers become more familiar with and trust the brand, they are more motivated to choose that product over other brands. Therefore, an effective combination of good digital marketing and strong brand awareness is crucial to enhancing customer purchase decisions. Digital marketing significantly influences brand awareness, so the optimization of digital marketing activities will help form and increase brand awareness. An increase in digital marketing does not directly affect the increase in purchase decisions, indicating that digital marketing can influence purchase decisions only if supported by brand awareness as a mediating variable. This suggests that digital marketing can impact purchase decisions only when mediated by brand awareness (Razak, Taan, & Niode, 2024).

H6: Digital marketing, mediated by brand awareness, has a significant effect on the purchase decision of Auriel Florist products.

Research conducted by Raza et al. (2021) found that when customer trust is high, the relationship between viral marketing and purchase decisions becomes stronger, as customers tend to respond positively to viral content (Safatulloh & Wiratama, 2024). Further research by Oktaviani et al. (2022) showed that effective digital marketing increases customer trust, which in turn leads to better purchase decisions. In other words, a successful digital marketing strategy can strengthen the relationship between the brand and customers, thereby fostering higher levels of trust, ultimately resulting in improved purchase decisions.

H7: Digital marketing, mediated by customer trust, has a significant effect on the purchase decision of Auriel Florist products.
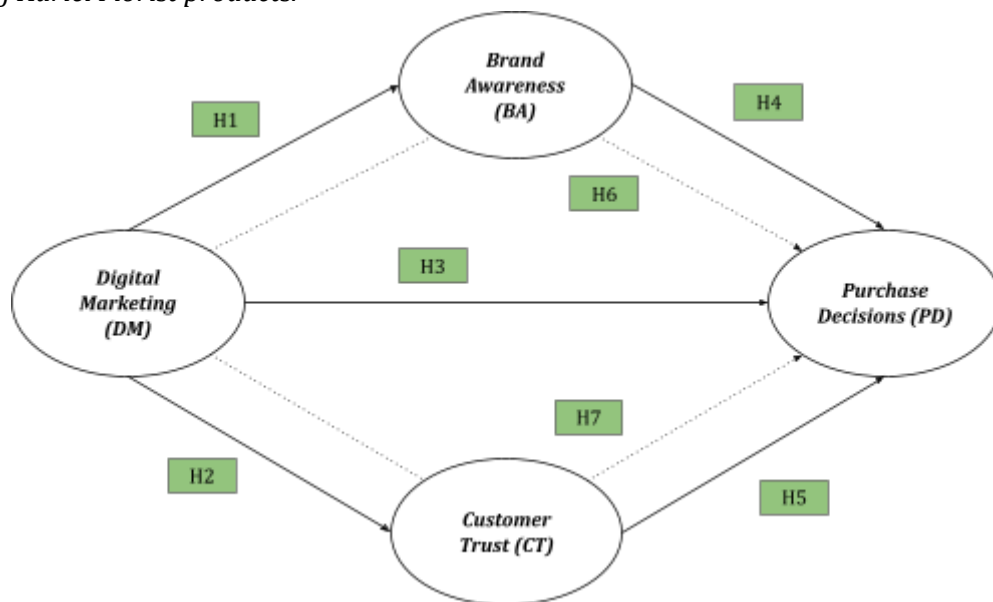

Figure 4. Research Framework.

Research Methods

The research method used is the quantitative method. The quantitative method can be defined as a research method based on positivist philosophy, used to study specific populations or samples, data collection using research instruments, data analysis being quantitative or statistical, with the aim of describing and testing the hypotheses that have been established (Sugiyono, 2024). Descriptive quantitative research has the main objective of providing a complete picture of a condition or problem, aiming to explore or clarify a phenomenon (Wijayati et al., 2024).

The scope of this research is set to focus on the influence of the independent variable, Digital Marketing, on the dependent variable, Purchase Decision, with the mediating variables of Brand Awareness and Customer Trust, due to the time limitations of the study, and to allow for a more in depth investigation. This research will examine the impact of Digital Marketing used by Auriel Florist on the level of Brand Awareness and Customer Trust among customers, and their purchasing decisions. Additionally, this study will limit the analysis to respondents who are Auriel Florist customers in the Surabaya area,

considering demographic factors such as age, gender, and purchase frequency. Thus, the results of the study are expected to provide specific insights into the effectiveness and impact of Digital Marketing in enhancing the Purchase Decision of Auriel Florist products.

The data collection technique used to obtain relevant information for this study is the survey questionnaire method. The population in this study consists of individuals who are the target audience of Auriel Florist's digital marketing. The sampling technique used is probability sampling, specifically simple random sampling. Since the exact population size in this study is unknown, the sample size calculation is performed using the Cochran formula (Sugiyono, 2024). The sample size to be taken in this study is 100 people. The data analysis method used in this study is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which is a statistical technique that allows for analyzing complex relationships between observed variables and latent variables (variables that cannot be measured directly). In the context of this study, the method that will be used is Partial Least Square (PLS), one of the approaches in SEM that is highly suitable for exploratory research and models involving multiple indicators. PLS can address issues such as multicollinearity and small sample sizes, which often pose challenges in social and business research.

Result

A total of 100 respondents provided data for this research through the completed questionnaire. Their profiles, summarized in the table below, help contextualize the findings and ensure accurate representation of their perspectives.

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Criteria	Category	Number of Respondents	Percent
Gender	Male	66	66%
	Female	34	34%
Age	18-24 years	48	48%
	25-34 years	47	47%
	35-44 years	4	4%
	45 years old and above	1	1%
The first time hearing about Auriel Florist brand	Social Media	53	53%
	Recommendation from friend or family	43	43%
	E-commerce	2	2%
	Others	2	2%
Frequency of shopping for flowers online	Frequently (more than once a month)	18	18%
	Occasionally (once every three months)	37	37%
	Rarely (once every six months or more)	39	39%
	Never	6	6%

In terms of gender distribution, the majority of respondents were male 66%, while female respondents accounted for 34%. This indicates a gender imbalance in the respondent pool, with a greater number of male participants engaging in the survey. This skewed distribution may reflect broader user behavior patterns in digital engagement

within the studied context or suggest that male customers are more active in purchasing or interacting with floral products online than commonly assumed. However, this finding also opens the opportunity for further investigation into gender specific preferences and behaviors in digital purchasing, especially in the florist industry.

Regarding the age profile, the respondents were predominantly within the 18–24 age group (48%), closely followed by those aged 25–34 (47%). This shows that the sample largely consists of younger individuals, who are generally more familiar with digital platforms and responsive to digital marketing efforts. Their inclusion in the sample provides valuable insight into how digital marketing strategies affect purchasing decisions among the younger demographic.

When asked about how they first discovered Auriel Florist, a significant portion of respondents (53%), indicated social media as their primary source of information. This highlights the significant impact of digital marketing and online platforms on creating brand awareness. Regarding purchasing frequency, most respondents indicated infrequent flower purchases. Specifically, 39% reported buying flowers rarely, approximately once every six months. These findings suggest that while floral products are popular, purchases are generally event based or situational. This respondent profile provides a clear understanding of Auriel Florist's customer base and serves as a basis for analyzing the impact of digital marketing on purchasing decisions in the following sections.

Table 2. Construct convergent validity measurement

Indicator	Digital Marketing (DM)	Brand Awareness (BA)	Customer Trust (CT)	Purchase Decisions (PD)
X1.1	0.799			
X1.2	0.738			
X1.3	0.780			
X1.4	0.817			
X1.5	0.842			
X1.6	0.792			
X2.1		0.851		
X2.2		0.823		
X2.3		0.847		
X2.4		0.844		
X3.1			0.856	
X3.2			0.909	
X3.3			0.879	
X3.4			0.815	
Y.1				0.824
Y.2				0.825
Y.3				0.821
Y.4				0.846
Y.5				0.845

Referring to the data presented in the previous table, it is evident that all item loading factor values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70. This indicates that each item demonstrates strong convergent validity, meaning that the indicators effectively represent

their respective latent constructs.

Discriminant validity refers to the extent to which a construct is truly distinct from other constructs. One commonly used method to assess discriminant validity is the Fornell-Larcker Criterion. This approach involves comparing the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of each latent variable with the correlations between that variable and other latent variables. Discriminant validity is considered to be established if the AVE of a latent variable is greater than its correlations with any other latent variables in the model.

Table 3. Discriminant validity Fornell Larcker measurement

Variable	Brand Awareness (BA)	Customer Trust (CT)	Digital Marketing (DM)	Purchase Decisions (DM)
Brand Awareness (BA)	0.842			
Customer Trust (CT) Digital	0.774	0.865		
Marketing (DM)	0.711	0.660	0.795	
Purchase Decisions (PD)	0.823	0.718	0.756	0.832

As presented in the table above, the square root values of the AVE for each variable > the correlation coefficients between that variable and any other construct. This suggests that each construct is more strongly related to its own indicators than to those of other constructs, thus providing evidence that all variables meet the criteria for discriminant validity.

Table 4. Construct reliability measurement

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	AVE
Brand Awareness (X2)	0.863	0.865	0.907	0.708
Customer Trust (X3)	0.887	0.888	0.922	0.749
Digital Marketing (X1)	0.883	0.885	0.912	0.633
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0.889	0.889	0.918	0.692

The results of this analysis show that the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all variables are greater than 0.70, indicating that each construct demonstrates adequate internal consistency and can be considered reliable.

Table 5. R Square

Variable	R square	R square adjusted
Brand Awareness (X2)	0.505	0.500
Customer Trust (X3)	0.435	0.430
Purchase Decisions (Y)	0.742	0.734

In the PLS-SEM method, the R-square (R^2) value is an important indicator used to measure the extent to which the variance of an endogenous (dependent) variable can be explained by exogenous (independent) variables within the model. R-square reflects the

model's predictive power for a specific construct and serves as one of the key benchmarks for evaluating the strength of structural relationships among variables in the model. The R^2 value ranges from 0 to 1, where a value closer to 1 indicates a higher explanatory power of the model for the endogenous variable.

An R^2 value of 0.505 for Brand Awareness indicates that 50.5% of the variance in Brand Awareness can be explained by Digital Marketing, which suggests a moderately strong influence. Meanwhile, the R^2 value of 0.435 for Customer Trust indicates that 43.5% of the variance in customer trust is influenced by digital marketing activities, which falls within the moderate to weak range depending on the research context. The highest R^2 value is observed for Purchase Decisions, at 0.742, meaning that 74.2% of the variance in purchase decisions can be explained by Digital Marketing. This reflects a substantial level of explanatory power for purchase decisions within the model. Overall, these results indicate that Digital Marketing plays a significant role in influencing all three variables, with the strongest impact observed on purchase decisions.

Table 6. Path coefficients

|	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
Brand Awareness (X2) - Purchase Decisions (Y)	0.508	0.530	0.120	4.244	0.000
Customer Trust (X3) - Purchase Decisions (Y)	0.114	0.145	0.153	0.747	0.455
	0.711	0.717	0.066	10.734	0.000
Digital Marketing (X1) - Brand Awareness (X2)	0.660	0.668	0.111	5.950	0.000
Digital Marketing (X1) - Customer Trust (X3)					
Digital Marketing (X1) - Purchase Decisions (Y)	0.319	0.268	0.167	1.915	0.056
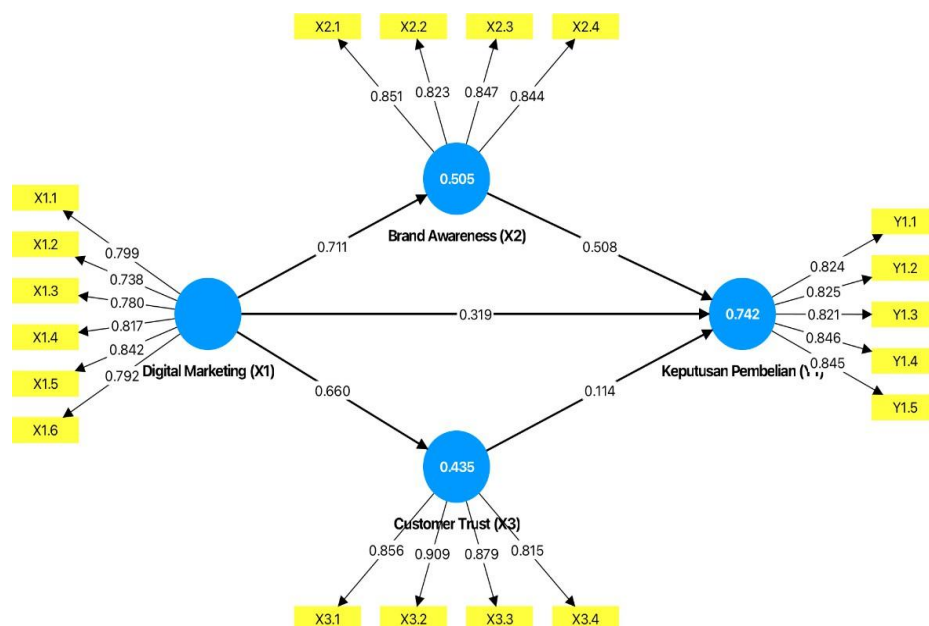
Figure 5. Outer Model Research Result

The purpose of this test is to examine the significance and strength of the relationships between latent variables. In PLS-SEM, bootstrapping is used to test the significance of path coefficients by generating t-statistics and p-values. The significance criteria are as follows: if the p-value is less than 0.05 (commonly using a 5% significance level), the relationship between latent variables is considered significant. Furthermore, a t-statistic greater than 1.96 indicates that the path coefficient is statistically significant. A positive and significant path coefficient implies a positive relationship between two latent variables. Conversely, a negative and significant coefficient indicates a negative relationship between the variables. Based on the results of the path analysis (path coefficients), the obtained p-values indicate the level of significance of the relationships between variables in the research model. The analysis shows that the effect of Digital Marketing (X1) on Brand Awareness (X2) has a p-value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant relationship. Similarly, the effect of Digital Marketing (X1) on Customer Trust (X3) is also significant, with a p-value of 0.000. Furthermore, the influence of Brand Awareness (X2) on Purchase Decision (Y) is significant as well, with a p-value of 0.000, suggesting that Brand Awareness plays an important role in influencing customer purchase decisions.

In contrast to these findings, the effect of Customer Trust (X3) on Purchase Decision (Y) has a p-value of 0.455, indicating that this relationship is not statistically significant. This implies that, in the context of this study, Customer Trust does not have a direct impact on Purchase Decision. Additionally, the direct effect of Digital Marketing (X1) on Purchase Decision (Y) has a p-value of 0.056, which is slightly above the standard significance threshold of 0.05. This suggests that the direct influence of Digital Marketing on Purchase Decision is not statistically significant, although it is close to the critical value, thus indicating a weak and inconclusive effect. In conclusion, Digital Marketing has a significant indirect effect on Purchase Decision through Brand Awareness, but not through Customer Trust. Moreover, Brand Awareness is proven to be a significant mediating variable in this research model. These findings can serve as a valuable foundation for digital marketing strategies, particularly in building brand awareness as a bridge to enhance customer purchase decisions.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that digital marketing plays a significant role in shaping consumer behavior, though its influence on purchase decisions occurs indirectly primarily through the enhancement of brand awareness. This suggests that digital marketing strategies contribute to strengthening a brand's visibility and cognitive availability, which are critical components in the customer decision making process. The ability of digital content to deliver consistent messaging, evoke emotional responses, and foster interaction allows customers to develop a sense of familiarity and recognition with the brand.

Brand awareness emerged as a strong predictor of purchase decisions, underscoring its function as an emotional driver. From a theoretical standpoint, this aligns with the hierarchy of effects model, which posits that customers typically progress from awareness to knowledge, preference, and finally, purchase. When customers recognize and recall a brand, they are more likely to choose it over unfamiliar alternatives, particularly in product categories where visual appeal and quick decision making are prevalent as is the case in the

florist industry. The results of this study align with those of Anggraini et al. (2025), who also found that the proper application of digital marketing strategies significantly improves brand awareness and strengthens a company's competitiveness.

Although Nasution et al. (2025) found that customer trust plays a significant role in shaping purchase decisions, the findings of this study indicate otherwise. Customer trust did not show a statistically significant effect on purchasing behavior, suggesting that in this particular context, trust may not be the primary driver influencing customer choices. This result may reflect the nature of purchasing behavior in the florist sector, which is often driven by occasion based or emotional needs. In such scenarios, decisions are likely made quickly and influenced more by visual presentation, convenience, and customer reviews rather than long term trust. Additionally, the digital platforms used such as social media and online marketplaces may prioritize transactional convenience over relational engagement, limiting the role of trust in the immediate buying process. Pratiwi et al. (2025) discovered that both ease of use and customer trust significantly affect purchase decisions, with trust having a more substantial influence. This suggests that while customer trust may not be a primary factor in this context, it plays a more prominent role in other industries or consumer behavior models, as indicated by their research. Such contrasting findings highlight the importance of considering industry-specific factors when analyzing consumer behavior and purchasing patterns This study contributes new insights by focusing on the florist industry, which is often underrepresented in academic research on digital marketing and consumer behavior. The unique characteristics of this industry centered on aesthetics, emotional appeal, and customization make it particularly responsive to digital engagement.

Conclusion

This study reveals that digital marketing plays a crucial role in shaping customer perceptions, particularly in enhancing brand awareness and building customer trust. Brand awareness significantly influences customer purchase decisions, indicating that customers tend to prefer products or services that are familiar and easily recognizable. Customer trust, however, did not significantly influence purchase decisions, suggesting it is not a primary factor in this study's context. Interestingly, while digital marketing has the potential to influence purchase decisions, this influence occurs indirectly, through its role in enhancing brand awareness. These findings offer practical implications for businesses, encouraging digital strategies that consistently build brand awareness to effectively influence purchasing behavior.

A key contribution of this study is its focus on the florist industry, which remains underrepresented in digital marketing research. By addressing this gap, the study provides insights into consumer behavior within a niche market. The findings are valuable both academically and practically, especially for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in creative and personalized service sectors.

Limitations

The results of this study should be interpreted with caution due to several limitations. First, the study focuses specifically on the florist industry within a particular geographic area, which may constrain the generalizability of the findings to other sectors or regions. Second, the use of cross-sectional data provides only a single point-in-time perspective,

thereby limiting the ability to observe changes or trends over time. These limitations may affect the extent to which the conclusions can be applied in broader contexts. Future studies are encouraged to explore additional variables such as social media engagement or perceived value to gain a more comprehensive understanding of digital marketing's role. Comparative studies across industries or regions and longitudinal approaches could also enhance the applicability and robustness of future findings beyond the florist sector.

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