
Optimizing Digital Marketing Strategy through Influencer Credibility, Content Quality, and Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) in Building Customer Trust and Increasing Purchasing Decisions (Study on Erigo Fashion Brand in Makassar City)

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the influence of Influencer Credibility, Content Quality, and Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) on Customer Trust and their impact on Purchase Decisions for the Erigo fashion brand on the TikTok platform. This study employs a quantitative approach using the accidental sampling method, where respondents consist of consumers who have purchased Erigo products through TikTok. A total of 125 respondents participated in this study. Data were collected through online questionnaires and analyzed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method with SmartPLS 3 software. The results show that Influencer Credibility, Content Quality, and e-WOM have a positive and significant effect on Customer Trust. Additionally, Influencer Credibility has a positive and significant direct effect on Purchase Decisions, while Content Quality and e-WOM have positive but not significant direct effects. However, both variables demonstrate significant indirect effects on Purchase Decisions through Customer Trust as a mediating variable. These findings highlight that Customer Trust plays a crucial mediating role in linking digital marketing strategies to consumer purchasing behavior. Therefore, fashion brands such as Erigo should strengthen influencer credibility, enhance the quality of promotional content, and optimize positive e-WOM to build consumer trust that drives purchase decisions on TikTok.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology and the Internet has had a significant impact on various aspects of life, including business and marketing. The Internet has become not only a means of communication but also a strategic medium for expanding market reach.

One example of this technology is the increasingly popular social media platforms. Social media have changed how consumers interact with brands and products, as they can now obtain information, reviews, and recommendations instantly. In Indonesia, Internet usage continues to increase annually. According to Katadata.co.id (2024), Internet users in Indonesia reached 185 million people in early 2024, an increase from the previous year (Mutia Annur, 2024). This reflects the enormous potential of digital marketing, but research focusing on how specific platforms like TikTok influence consumer behavior towards local brands like Erigo is still very limited, indicating a gap that needs to be explored.

TikTok is a social media platform that has experienced rapid growth and a significant influence in shaping consumer behavior. This short video-based application is not only used for entertainment but also as an effective marketing tool, especially among the younger generation. TikTok offers the advantage of an algorithm that can accelerate the spread of viral content, allowing brands to reach audiences quickly. According to a report by We Are Social and Hootsuite (2022), TikTok has more than 99 million active users in Indonesia, making it one of the platforms with the widest reach. This has led many businesses, including the fashion brand Erigo, to utilize TikTok as their primary promotional medium. However, little research has examined how TikTok's marketing dynamics specifically work for local fashion brands, making the relevance of Erigo's strategy on TikTok a crucial research issue.

In marketing strategies through TikTok, the role of influencers is crucial. Influencers are individuals with large followings who can influence the opinions and behaviors of their audience. Influencer credibility, which encompasses expertise, trustworthiness, and personal appeal, can help shape positive product perceptions. In TikTok, influencer credibility often works in conjunction with content quality to create a more persuasive message, as its influence is amplified by the fast-paced and engaging short-form video format. In the context of the Erigo fashion brand, influencers often serve as fashion style role models, making their influence on consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions significant (Kusuma & Nurhaliza, 2023). Thus, the relationship between influencers and content quality is a crucial aspect in understanding consumer behavior toward TikTok.

Research conducted by Octaviani (2023) found that influencer characteristics such as expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and similarity positively and significantly influence brand trust, which in turn impacts consumer loyalty. Furthermore, research by Hilal and Astuti (2022) also showed that influencer credibility and online reviews can influence consumer perceptions. These findings suggest that influencers, content, and reviews are interconnected in influencing trust; thus, further research is needed that integrates these three variables simultaneously, particularly on the TikTok platform, which has characteristics that differ from other social media platforms.

In addition to influencer credibility, content quality also plays a crucial role in attracting and influencing consumers. Visual content that is engaging, informative, relevant, and emotionally engaging can enhance the appeal of the product being promoted. In TikTok, content quality relies on creativity in narrative construction, the use of music, visual effects, and the ability to convey a message concisely, yet effectively. In the context of persuasion, content quality works hand-in-hand with influencer credibility, because strong content can strengthen an influencer's reputation and increase consumer trust. The

fashion brand Erigo, which is able to deliver high-quality content, has a greater opportunity to increase engagement and foster trust in its products.

A study by Akhmad and Wijaya (2023) showed that influencer marketing and customer reviews have a positive influence on purchasing interest in fashion products on TikTok Shop. Another study by Ariyani and Mulyana (2024) state that content quality and online reviews are crucial elements in building brand awareness and loyalty, especially when combined with the presence of influencers. These findings clarify that content quality is inseparable from influencer influence and the role of e-WOM, forming a mutually supportive logical framework.

In addition, electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), or digital word-of-mouth communication, is another highly influential factor in shaping consumer perceptions. E-WOM includes reviews, comments, testimonials, and recommendations from other users on digital platforms. On TikTok, e-WOM spreads rapidly through comments, video reactions, and reposts, and can strengthen or weaken messages built through influencers and content quality. Consumers tend to trust fellow users' experiences more than direct promotions from brands. The more positive the e-WOM received by the Erigo Fashion Brand, the higher the potential for creating customer trust, so these three factors, influencer credibility, content quality, and e-WOM complement each other in building trust.

Research by Fitriani and Sulastri (2023) confirms that e-WOM and e-trust positively influence purchasing decisions in online transactions. Furthermore, Nguyen et al. (2013) emphasize that trust often mediates the relationship between e-WOM and purchasing decisions, highlighting the importance of understanding how trust is formed through a combination of digital information. This reinforces the need to examine e-WOM within a model that incorporates influencers and content quality.

Customer trust is a crucial element in purchasing decisions, particularly in the context of high-risk digital purchases. Consumers with a high level of trust in a brand tend to be more confident in making purchasing decisions. This trust is formed by various factors, including the credibility of influencers, quality of content, and e-WOM information they consume. In the context of the Erigo Fashion Brand, trust is crucial because consumers often compare various brands before purchasing fashion products, especially in an era of intense competition and rapidly changing trends. Findings by Lestari and Ramadhan (2024) and Alamsyah and Sutanto (2024) also confirm that trust is a key mediator in e-commerce purchasing decisions.

The purchase decision is the final stage of the consumer product selection process. This decision is influenced by various internal and external factors, including perceptions, preferences, and levels of confidence in the product. In the digital context, purchasing decisions on TikTok Shop, marketplaces, and affiliate links are highly dependent on trust. Previous studies, such as Batubara and Handayani (2022) and Nasution and Pratama (2023), have found that trust mediates the influence of e-WOM and social media usage on purchasing decisions. This suggests that trust is a connecting element between digital marketing stimuli and purchasing behavior.

The Erigo fashion brand is currently experiencing significant improvements in its quality, design, and marketing strategy. However, Erigo still faces challenges in building brand awareness and consumer loyalty, influenced by global brands and rapidly changing fashion trends. TikTok provides Erigo with the opportunity to compete digitally through

influencer marketing, engaging content, and optimizing e-WOM. These three strategies are interconnected and have the potential to strengthen Erigo's market position if consistently implemented.

One problem identified through field observations is that potential Erigo customers in Makassar often experience confusion when assessing the credibility of the influencers promoting Erigo products on TikTok. Many influencers lack the background or style to align with the brand's identity, making promotional messages feel inauthentic and raising doubts. This situation indicates that influencer credibility and content relevance remain strategic issues in Erigo's marketing strategy.

Customers in Makassar also considered the quality of Erigo's promotional content on TikTok to be inconsistent. Some videos focus excessively on visual effects or trends, without conveying clear and relevant product information. Content that was too brief also left consumers feeling undereducated before purchasing. This dissatisfaction with content quality can undermine customer trust and hinder purchasing decisions, highlighting the issues in conveying product information through digital content.

Erigo customers in Makassar also face challenges in assessing the reliability of other users' reviews and comments on TikTok. Negative reviews that are not transparently addressed by the brand reinforce negative perceptions, whereas an imbalance in positive reviews raises doubts about the authenticity of e-word marketing. This inconsistency makes it difficult for potential consumers to make purchasing decisions, thus subtracting e-words from their role in building trust.

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that influencer credibility, content quality, and electronic word-of-mouth play a significant role in building customer trust, which ultimately impacts purchasing decisions. However, few studies have specifically examined the relationship between these three factors and trust and purchasing decisions in the context of TikTok and the Erigo Fashion Brand. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of influencer credibility, content quality, and electronic word of mouth on customer trust and their impact on consumer purchasing decisions for the Erigo Fashion Brand through the TikTok platform.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Influencer credibility plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' perceptions of promoted products. Ohanian (1990) states that endorser credibility consists of expertise, attractiveness, and trustworthiness. Asserts that credible influencers increase the effectiveness of marketing messages because consumers tend to trust figures perceived as authoritative (Erdogan, 1999). In the context of TikTok, a platform that heavily emphasizes visual delivery and personal engagement, influencer credibility is evident in its consistency in creating content relevant to their audience's lifestyles. For fashion brands such as Erigo, selecting influencers with authenticity and a style that aligns with the brand's identity is crucial for consumers to perceive the product as trustworthy and suited to their needs.

Content quality is a crucial factor in attracting consumer attention and shaping positive brand perceptions. According to De Vries et al. (2012), engaging and relevant content can increase engagement and influence purchase intentions. Ashley and Tuten (2015) added that quality content must have a clear message, engaging visuals, and consistency with brand identity. In TikTok, video content quality is crucial given that the format demands

high creativity and concise yet impactful messaging. Erigo, a fashion brand targeting the younger generation, relies heavily on visual creativity in showcasing fashion styles, mix-and-match styles, and concise storytelling to capture consumer attention and maintain a modern and trending image.

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) is a form of communication between consumers through digital media that has a significant influence on consumer behavior. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) define e-WOM as positive or negative statements about products available online. Litvin et al. (2008) state that e-WOM is more credible because it originates from real user experiences. On TikTok, e-WOM appears through comments on videos, stitches, duets, short reviews, and user testimonials that demonstrate direct experience using the product. For Erigo, this type of content is crucial because fashion is a product category that relies heavily on visual evidence, so experience-based reviews can strengthen consumer confidence in the quality of the materials, comfort, and style of clothing being promoted.

Customer trust is the key foundation for building long-term relationships between consumers and brands. Morgan and Hunt (1994) explain that trust is the belief that another party will act consistently and reliably. Gefen et al. (2003) add that trust is formed through positive experiences, transparency, and perceived honesty. In the context of TikTok, trust is formed through a combination of the consistency of brand content, authenticity of influencers promoting products, and other users' reactions to that content. For Erigo, customer trust is strengthened when users see products displayed in real-life situations, such as unboxings, try-on hauls, or outfit recommendations, which provide a transparent picture of product quality.

The purchase decision is the final stage of the consumer decision-making process. Kotler and Keller (2016) explain that purchasing decisions occur after consumers evaluate alternatives. Schiffman and Wisenbilit (2015) emphasize that decisions are influenced by perception, motivation, and marketing communications. In TikTok, purchasing decisions can occur directly through the shopping link feature or through the interest formed through repeated exposure to brand content. For Erigo, purchasing decisions are often driven by the visual influence of influencer recommendations, viral fashion trends, and the presence of content creators who demonstrate how to mix and match clothes, making consumers feel more confident about purchasing.

Various studies have demonstrated the influence of influencer credibility on customer trust. Sokolova and Kefi (2020) found that credible influencers increase trust in the products they promote. On platforms such as TikTok, influencers who demonstrate clothing styles that align with fashion trends and product characteristics increase consumer confidence in the product's quality. In the case of Erigo, collaborating with influencers who share a similar fashion aesthetic helps create the impression that the product is relevant, comfortable, and trustworthy, thereby strengthening customer trust.

The link between content quality and customer trust has been extensively studied. Huang and Benyoucef (2013) stated that quality content creates perceptions of professionalism and brand seriousness. In TikTok's competitive environment, Erigo's content, which showcases product details, a variety of styles, and strong visual storytelling, can foster the perception that the brand understands consumer needs. When content appears honest, clear, and not exaggerated, consumers are more likely to trust that the displayed products represent their true quality.

Likewise, e-WOM has a direct impact on customer trust because consumers rely more on recommendations from fellow users. Hidayah and Saputra (2021) emphasize that reviews based on real experiences influence trust more than formal brand promotions. On TikTok, forms of e-WOM, such as short reviews, try-on videos, and comments on the comfort of clothing materials, are important factors for potential buyers. For Erigo, consistently positive e-WOM helps reinforce the brand's image as reliable and in line with user expectations, thereby increasing overall trust.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with the aim of analyzing numerical data to interpret the relationship between the variables studied (Sugiyono, 2019). The population in this study was all consumers who had purchased Erigo fashion brand products through TikTok. The sampling technique used was accidental sampling, which is a sampling technique based on chance, namely any consumer who had been exposed to Erigo fashion brand promotional content on TikTok and made a purchase (Sugiyono, 2019).

According to Hair et al. (2014), if the population size is not known with certainty, then the sample size can be determined by multiplying the number of indicators by 5 to 10. In this study, there are 24 indicators, so the minimum number of samples used is $25 \times 5 = 125$ respondents.

Data collection techniques included observation, documentation, and questionnaire distribution. Primary data in this study were obtained through a Google Form-based questionnaire distributed to respondents who were consumers of the fashion brand Erigo and actively used TikTok. The research instrument used a Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions of each variable indicator. The collected data were then analyzed using the Partial Least Squares method (using the SmartPLS 3 program) to test the relationships between variables in the research model (Hair et al., 2014).

To obtain measurable research results that can be analyzed quantitatively, each variable in this study must be operationally defined. In this study, there are four main variables: Influencer Credibility (X_1), Content Quality (X_2), e-WOM (X_3), Customer Trust (Y), and Purchase Decision (Z). The operational definitions and indicators for each variable are shown in the following table.

Table 1. Operational Definitions and Measurement of Variables

Variables	Operational Definition	Indicator
Influencer Credibility (X_1)	Consumer perceptions of influencer credibility levels in promoting Erigo fashion products on TikTok, based on influencer expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expertise 2. Trustworthiness 3. Attractiveness 4. Authenticity 5. Engagement (Ohanian, 1990)
Content Quality (X_2)	The quality of Erigo's promotional video content on TikTok was assessed based on message clarity, creativity, relevance, and visual appeal.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Message Clarity 2. Clarity & Visual Appeal 3. Informativeness 4. Creativity in Content Presentation 5. Content Consistency with Brand Identity (Ashley & Tuten, 2015)

Table 1. Operational Definitions and Measurement of Variables (Continued)

Variables	Operational Definition	Indicator
Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) (X ₃)	Communication between TikTok users in the form of comments, reviews, and testimonials regarding Erigo products influences consumer perceptions.	1. Review Quality 2. Review Quantity 3. Review Credibility 4. User Recommendation 5. Sharing Behavior (Litvin et al., 2008)
Customer Trust (Z)	The level of consumer confidence that Erigo provides reliable product quality, according to information conveyed via TikTok.	1. Reliability 2. Integrity 3. Confidence in Product 4. Consistency Experience 5. Safety Feeling (Morgan & Hunt, 1994)
Purchase Decision (Y)	Consumers' final decisions to purchase Erigo products are based on TikTok information, reviews, and content.	1. Buying Interest 2. Purchase Intention 3. Decision Confidence 4. Alternative Comparison 5. Repurchase Likelihood (Kotler & Keller, 2016)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This research was conducted among consumers of Erigo fashion products in Makassar who had purchased through TikTok Shop. Data collection was conducted online using a Google Form questionnaire distributed through social media tailored to the characteristics of respondents who are active on digital platforms.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics

Category	Classification	Number of people	Percentage (%)
Gender	Man	47	37.6%
	Woman	78	62.4%
Age (years)	< 20 years	9	7.2%
	20 years – 24 years	46	36.8%
	25 years – 29 years	41	32.8%
	30 years – 34 years	18	14.4%
	≥ 35 years	11	8.8%
Last education	High School/Equivalent	28	22.4%
	Diploma	19	15.2%
	S1	63	50.4%
	Masters/Doctoral Degree	15	12.0%
Work	Student	38	30.4%
	Private sector employee	52	41.6%
	Businessman	21	16.8%
	ASN/PNS	9	7.2%
	Other	5	4.0%

Based on the data in the table above, of the 125 respondents, the majority were women (78 people) (62.4%), while 47 were men (37.6%). This indicates the dominance of women as active TikTok users in online fashion shopping activities. Most respondents were aged

20–29 years (69.6%), which is considered a young and productive generation with a high level of exposure to digital promotions. In terms of education, respondents with a bachelor's degree dominated (50.4%), followed by high school/equivalent (22.4%), and diploma (15.2%). Based on occupation, the majority were private employees (41.6%) and students (30.4%), indicating that respondents had purchasing power and were actively involved in online fashion consumption.

Based on Table 3 of the Outer Model Test presented below, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for all variables is >0.5 , and is declared valid. Furthermore, the loading factor value was > 0.5 . Therefore, it can be concluded that all items in the questionnaire met the validity requirements.

Table 3. Outer Model Test

Variables/indicators	Outer Loading	AVE	Composite reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Influencer Credibility		0.667	0.909	0.875
X1.1	0.841			
X1.2	0.814			
X1.3	0.798			
X1.4	0.819			
X1.5	0.812			
Content Quality		0.777	0.945	0.926
X2.1	0.916			
X2.2	0.912			
X2.3	0.917			
X2.4	0.908			
X2.5	0.740			
E-WOM		0.743	0.935	0.914
X3.1	0.852			
X3.2	0.890			
X3.3	0.855			
X3.4	0.833			
X3.5	0.880			
Consumer Trust		0.691	0.819	0.888
Z.1	0.858			
Z.2	0.851			
Z.3	0.825			
Z.4	0.842			
Z.5	0.775			
Purchase Decision		0.719	0.927	0.901
Y.1	0.761			
Y.2	0.887			
Y.3	0.808			
Y.4	0.874			
Y.5	0.900			

Table 4. Cross Loading Results

	Influencer Credibility	Content Quality	E-WOM	Consumer Trust	Purchase Decision
X1.1	0.841	0.515	0.479	0.530	0.562
X1.2	0.813	0.589	0.528	0.589	0.611
X1.3	0.798	0.542	0.507	0.492	0.512
X1.4	0.819	0.592	0.506	0.530	0.620
X1.5	0.812	0.581	0.552	0.567	0.600
X2.1	0.630	0.916	0.646	0.678	0.630
X2.2	0.645	0.912	0.699	0.699	0.673
X2.3	0.630	0.917	0.641	0.674	0.625
X2.4	0.622	0.908	0.679	0.699	0.650
X2.5	0.513	0.740	0.622	0.650	0.642
X3.1	0.572	0.661	0.852	0.744	0.673
X3.2	0.488	0.633	0.890	0.760	0.643
X3.3	0.573	0.657	0.855	0.822	0.735
X3.4	0.588	0.668	0.833	0.820	0.668
X3.5	0.492	0.602	0.880	0.785	0.642
Z.1	0.541	0.571	0.773	0.762	0.761
Z.2	0.617	0.677	0.694	0.738	0.887
Z.3	0.574	0.510	0.538	0.593	0.808
Z.4	0.657	0.647	0.606	0.663	0.874
Z.5	0.634	0.683	0.678	0.693	0.900
Y.1	0.558	0.638	0.823	0.858	0.737
Y.2	0.553	0.644	0.795	0.851	0.653
Y.3	0.475	0.581	0.845	0.825	0.644
Y.4	0.624	0.751	0.687	0.842	0.764
Y.5	0.561	0.598	0.632	0.775	0.591

In Table 4, the cross-loading factor value is useful for determining whether the construct has adequate discriminant, namely by comparing the loading value on the intended construct, which must be greater than the loading value with other constructs.

Reliability Test

Based on the data in Table 4 above, the results of the Smart PLS calculation obtained a Cronbach's alpha value for all independent and dependent variable items with a Cronbach's alpha value > 0.7 , so it can be said that the measurement scale for all constructs is reliable (Hair et al., 2014).

R Square (R^2) Test

Table 5. R-Square

Variables	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Consumer Trust	0.857	0.855
Purchase Decision	0.731	0.724

Tests on the structural model were conducted to examine the relationship between latent constructs, including the R-square test. Based on the data in Table 5 above, it can be seen

that the R-Square value for the Consumer Trust (Z) variable is 0.857. This means that the Consumer Trust variable can be explained by the Influencer Credibility (X₁), Content Quality (X₂), and e-WOM (X₃) variables by 85.7%, while the remaining 14.3% is explained by other variables outside this research model. The R-square value for the Purchase Decision (Y) variable is 0.731. This means that the Purchase Decision variable can be explained by the Influencer Credibility (X₁), Content Quality (X₂), e-WOM (X₃), and Consumer Trust (Z) variables by 73.1%, while the remaining 26.9% is explained by other variables outside this research model.

Hypothesis Testing

To determine the relationship between latent variables in this research model, it can be seen from the results of the path coefficient estimates or path coefficients and their significance levels or P Values. To test the hypothesis in the proposed research, it can be seen from the magnitude of the P Value. If the P Value <0.05 then Ho is rejected and Ha is accepted or has a significant effect which is correlated with the t-statistic value, where the t-statistic value > t-table. The t-statistic value is the result of the path coefficient estimation to test the strength of the influence between variables and explain the firmness of the relationship between the directions of the variables. This explanation can be seen in Figure 1 and Table 6 below:

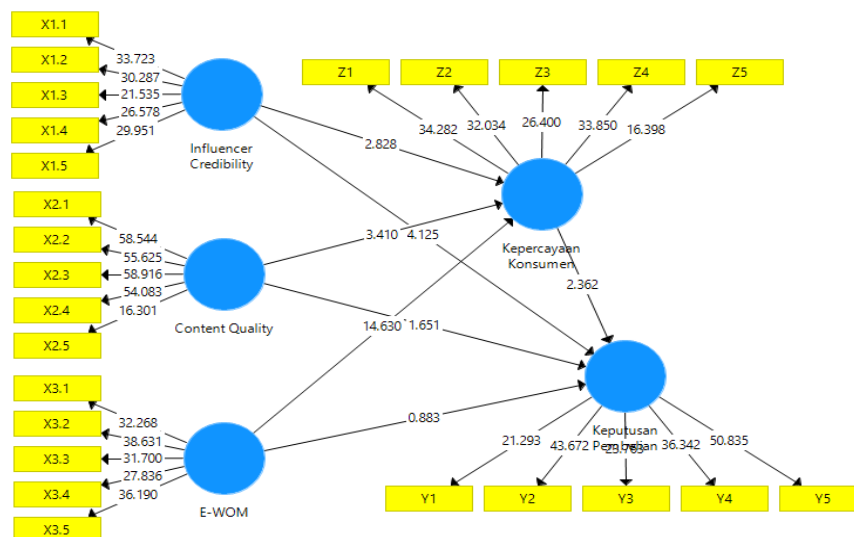


Figure 1. Outer Models

Table 6. Bootstrapping Results

Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing	Path Coefficients	T Statistics	P Values
Influencer Credibility -> Consumer Trust	0.090	2,828	0.005
Influencer Credibility -> Purchase Decision	0.261	4,125	0,000
Content Quality -> Consumer Trust	0.159	3,410	0.001
Content Quality -> Purchase Decision	0.119	1,651	0.099
E-WOM -> Consumer Trust	0.738	14,630	0,000
E-WOM -> Purchase Decision	0.139	0.883	0.378
Consumer Trust -> Purchasing Decision	0.426	2,362	0.019

This study conducted an indirect effect test to determine the indirect influence of the independent latent variable on the dependent latent variable, with one mediating effect. The results of the indirect effect are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Indirect Effect Results

Indirect Effect Hypothesis Testing	Path Coefficients	T Statistics	P Values
Influencer Credibility -> Consumer Trust -> Purchase Decision	0.038	1,617	0.106
Content Quality -> Consumer Trust -> Purchase Decision	0.068	2,198	0.028
E-WOM -> Consumer Trust -> Purchase Decision	0.314	2,250	0.025

Based on the results of PLS data processing in Table 6 of the path coefficient estimation and in Table 7 of the indirect effect test above which includes the P Value, it can be explained with the following hypothesis:

1. Influencer Credibility has a positive and significant influence on consumer trust. (hypothesis accepted)
2. Content quality has a positive and significant effect on consumer trust. (hypothesis accepted)
3. E-WOM has a positive and significant effect on consumer trust. (hypothesis accepted)
4. Influencer Credibility has a positive and significant influence on Purchasing Decisions. (hypothesis accepted)
5. Content quality has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. (hypothesis rejected)
6. E-WOM has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. (hypothesis rejected)
7. Consumer trust has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. (hypothesis accepted)
8. Influencer credibility has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions through consumer trust. (hypothesis rejected)
9. Content quality has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions through consumer trust. (hypothesis accepted)
10. E-WOM has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions through consumer trust. (hypothesis accepted)

Discussion

The Influence of Influencer Credibility on Consumer Trust

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on customer trust, confirming that increased influencer credibility directly contributes to increased consumer trust in Erigo products promoted on TikTok. Empirically, these findings confirm that within the context of short-form video platforms, influencer credibility plays a central role in reducing consumer uncertainty and increasing trust in the brand.

This significant influence indicates that the credibility dimensions of expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and authenticity are highly relevant in TikTok's highly visual, fast-paced, and persona-based ecosystem. First, Influencer Expertise has been shown to be an element that increases the perception of an influencer's competence. In TikTok, competence is measured not only through verbal knowledge but also through the

ability to demonstrate product understanding through hands-on reviews, styling tips, or product usage demonstrations. For Erigo, influencers who can explain the details of materials, stitching quality, or how to combine clothes provide informational value that encourages consumers to trust that the influencer understands the recommended product. Theoretically, this finding supports the concept of expert power in the source credibility model, which states that perceived expertise creates a sense of security in consumers' decision-making.

Second, trustworthiness (influencer trustworthiness) has emerged as the most powerful indicator of consumer trust. In the TikTok era, trustworthiness depended not only on the honesty of the narrative, but also on the influencer's transparency in conveying the product's advantages and disadvantages. TikTok consumers tend to be sensitive to content that appears "paid for" and lacks authenticity. Therefore, influencers who express honest opinions, conduct unscripted reviews, or demonstrate product use in everyday life tend to perceive it as trustworthy. This aligns with Morgan and Hunt's (1994) finding that integrity is the primary foundation of trust.

Third, Attractiveness encompasses more than just physical appearance, but also communication style, personality, and relatability. In TikTok, attractiveness is often the initial hook that keeps consumers watching a video until the end. In the context of Erigo, an influencer's fashion style, perceived as relevant to the brand's identity, leads consumers to perceive the product as fitting the current trends. High attractiveness increases affective trust, which stems from the emotional closeness and liking of the influencer.

Fourth, authenticity is an increasingly crucial indicator in short-form content environments, such as TikTok. Consumers can distinguish content created through genuine experiences from content that seems forced. Influencers who demonstrate a natural creative process, do not overdo product praise, and use products as part of their daily routines send a strong signal that their recommendations are genuine. This authenticity reinforces the theory of parasocial interaction, in which audiences feel a pseudo-social relationship resembling friendship with influencers, thereby increasing trust in the brands they promote.

Fifth, engagement (influencer engagement with the audience) is a catalyst that strengthens all the other indicators. Engagement included interactions through comments, Q&A, video replies, and TikTok duets. High engagement indicates that influencers are truly present in their follower communities, thus strengthening the perception that they care about their audiences' needs. In the context of Erigo, influencers who respond to questions about product size, price, or quality foster interaction-based trust, which is a key differentiator compared to passive endorsements.

Theoretically, these findings enrich the literature on source credibility and customer trust in the context of short videos. This research shows that on TikTok, unlike photo-based platforms like Instagram, influencer credibility is shaped more by the dynamics of real-time, authentic, and interactive content. The findings also confirm Morgan and Hunt's (1994) model that trust is formed from the integration of competence, integrity, and emotional connection, while Sokolova and Kefi (2020) support the evidence that influencer credibility increases trust and drives purchase intentions.

Practically speaking, for Erigo, influencer credibility isn't just about "who promotes," but also about "how the influencer builds relationships with their audience." Influencers who are skilled in fashion styling, honest in their reviews, engaging in and relevant to youth

trends, authentic in their delivery, and actively engaging with their audience will be better able to build and maintain consumer trust on an ongoing basis. Therefore, Erigo's marketing strategy needs to emphasize influencer selection based on these five indicators, not just the follower count.

Overall, these findings confirm that influencer marketing strategies for TikTok must prioritize credibility as a key psychological mechanism for building trust. Erigo needs to develop an influencer selection process based on reputation, competence, and authenticity to ensure that its narratives align with the expectations of increasingly discerning young consumers. By strengthening influencer credibility, brands have a greater chance of instilling lasting trust, ultimately influencing consumer purchasing behavior.

The Influence of Content Quality on Consumer Trust

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that the Content Quality variable has a positive and significant effect on Consumer Trust, confirming that content quality plays a crucial role in building consumer trust in Erigo fashion products promoted through TikTok. Empirically, these findings confirm that TikTok users, who are accustomed to fast-paced visual content and short narratives, use content quality as a heuristic cue in assessing a brand's credibility. This means that the clearer, more informative, more creative, and more consistent the content presented, the stronger the consumer's interpretation that the brand is trustworthy. This confirms that content functions not merely as a promotional tool but also as a trust signal that mediates the perception of the reliability of fashion brands like Erigo on TikTok.

Analysis of the first indicator, Message Clarity, shows that message clarity plays a key role in helping consumers quickly understand product benefits. On TikTok, ambiguous or overly complex messages are easily overlooked; therefore, concise, to-the-point, and easy-to-understand content increases the perceptions of brand credibility. Furthermore, the Visual Appeal indicator proved highly relevant in the context of short-form video platforms. Content aesthetics, including visual composition, color, and editing quality, help build a positive first impression that transforms into trust when visuals are consistent with Erigo's identity as a modern, casual fashion brand.

The third indicator, informativeness, contributes significantly to building trust. TikTok consumers seek not only entertainment, but also clear information about product materials, prices, and features. When content provides complete and unmistakable information, perceptions of brand reliability increase. The fourth indicator, creativity, plays a significant role in attracting attention and differentiating Erigo from competitors. The storytelling format, creative transitions, and unique video concepts create authentic and professional impressions, strengthening trust. Creativity also adds deep emotional value, and theoretically contributes to affective trust formation in the digital marketing context.

The final indicator, consistency, is a strategic pillar for building long-term trust. Consistency in aesthetics, communication tone, and brand identity across each post signals Erigo's commitment to and seriousness in maintaining its brand image. Inconsistency is often perceived as a sign of unprofessionalism or lack of quality, while strong consistency creates a stable association between the brand and its values. In the context of Morgan and Hunt's (1994) theory, this consistency constitutes "reliability," strengthening consumers' belief that the brand is reliable over time.

Theoretically, these findings expand the literature on trust formation in social commerce by confirming that content quality is a key cognitive cue for establishing trust on short-form video platforms. In TikTok, where the decision to watch or ignore content is made in a matter of seconds, quality content acts as a reputation signal that is automatically associated with brand credibility. This is consistent with the perspective of Cue Utilization Theory, which posits that consumers construct quality perceptions based on the visual and narrative stimuli they observe.

Practically, for Erigo, these findings provide critical insight: improving content quality not only improves the appearance of marketing communications but also builds a psychological foundation that determines loyalty and future purchasing decisions. Consumers interpret quality content as evidence of a brand's professionalism and seriousness; therefore, marketing strategies should focus on improving message clarity, optimizing visuals, presenting honest information, creativity relevant to a young audience, and aesthetic consistency to maximize consumer trust.

The Influence of E-WOM on Consumer Trust

Hypothesis testing results indicate that Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) has a positive and significant influence on Consumer Trust, confirming that TikTok consumers not only respond to commercial messages from brands but also build trust based on social interactions and the experiences of other users. Quality of e-WOM is an important credibility signal for consumers in assessing whether Erigo fashion products are trustworthy.

This significant influence can be explained through the five key indicators of e-WOM. First, Review Quality, which encompasses the detail, relevance, and honesty of reviews, provides consumers with a cognitive basis for assessing product reliability. When TikTok reviews feature real-life experiences such as demonstrations of Erigo clothing, consumers interpret this information as factual evidence, increasing perceptions of trust. Second, Review Quantity, which refers to the number of comments, duets, stitches, or video reviews from other users, creates a social volume effect. Consumers view a high number of reviews as an indicator of brand popularity and reputation, in line with the bandwagon effect, thus strengthening trust in Erigo.

Third, Review Credibility, or the perception of authenticity and impartiality of reviews, is a core dimension explaining why E-WOM is more persuasive than brand advertising. In TikTok, spontaneous expressions and a natural delivery style, such as unsponsored review videos, create the perception that the review is authentic, thus fostering more stable trust. Fourth, User Recommendation, which is a user's intention to recommend a product through comments or content, functions as a social endorsement. Explicit recommendations strengthen consumer trust because they are perceived to originate from verified positive experiences. Fifth, Sharing Behavior, which is the tendency of users to share content or reproduce reviews through the duet or stitch feature, confirms that information has high social value. The more frequently content about Erigo is shared, the greater the social credibility that is formed, which ultimately significantly increases consumer trust.

Theoretically, these findings extend the frameworks of Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) and Litvin et al. (2008) by showing that on short video platforms like TikTok, the dimensions of quality, quantity, credibility, recommendations, and sharing not only complement each other but also work simultaneously to create layered trust formation. E-WOM functions

as a stronger social proof mechanism than text-based social media because it involves visual cues, emotional expressions, and live-product demonstrations. These findings also strengthen Morgan and Hunt's (1994) trust model, which states that trust is formed through verified and repeated social interactions within a user community.

On a practical level, the findings of this study have implications for Erigo's digital strategy for TikTok. E-WOM has proven to be not only a supporting element but also a key driver of consumer trust. Therefore, brands must strategically orchestrate customer experiences that encourage positive reviews, increase community engagement, create open discussion spaces, and respond quickly and transparently to reviews. A critical insight from these findings is that trust is not built by the brand but by the community of users who share experiences. Therefore, e-WOM should be positioned as a key pillar of Erigo's reputation management of TikTok to strengthen the foundation of long-term trust.

The Influence of Influencer Credibility on Purchasing Decisions

The hypothesis testing results indicate that influencer credibility has a positive and significant impact on purchasing decisions, confirming that influencer credibility is a key driver driving TikTok consumers to purchase Erigo fashion products. In the context of short-form video-based social media, consumers respond not only to the content of the message but also to how the influencer's character, delivery style, and emotional connection influence their perceptions. The higher the credibility of the influencer involved in the promotion, the more likely consumers are to move past the evaluation stage and make purchase decisions more quickly.

More deeply, the five key indicators of influencer credibility demonstrate a complementary dynamic in driving purchase action. Influencer expertise, evident in their product knowledge, ability to explain benefits, and fashion insights, signals the competence that consumers believe serves as an objective basis for assessing Erigo's product quality. Trustworthiness is reflected through an honest and unexaggerated delivery style and the influencer's track record of providing candid product reviews. This dimension is central to the persuasion process because TikTok consumers are highly sensitive to signs of insincerity and endorsements that appear to be purely commercial.

Furthermore, influencer attractiveness, in terms of appearance, delivery style, and charisma, serves as an affective stimulus that triggers self-identification. Young consumers, who are TikTok's primary audience, tend to purchase products used or recommended by figures they admire as a form of lifestyle aspiration. Authenticity also plays a crucial role because TikTok prioritizes spontaneity, and natural-looking content increases the perception that influencers genuinely use and enjoy Erigo products. Finally, engagement strengthens influencers' interpersonal relationships with their followers. Active interaction through comments, replies, or mentions of personal experiences creates closeness that has a greater persuasive impact on purchasing decisions.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings reinforce the Consumer Decision-Making Model and Source Credibility Theory, which state that information sources perceived as competent and trustworthy can shorten the decision-making process from the evaluation stage to purchase action (Kotler and Keller, 2016). Influencer credibility functions as a peripheral cue in the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), which becomes increasingly relevant on fast-paced platforms like TikTok, where decisions are often made intuitively. These findings also extend the digital marketing literature by demonstrating that the effect

of influencer credibility is not only limited to forming purchase intentions but also drives actual purchases in the context of video-based social commerce.

Practically, the implication for Erigo is that influencer selection should not only consider follower count but also focus on competency, integrity, authenticity, and the influencer's level of interaction with their community. Influencers with a combination of high expertise, authentic delivery, and active engagement have been shown to have the strongest persuasive influence on driving TikTok consumers to make purchases. Therefore, Erigo's marketing strategy must prioritize influencer credibility as a key foundation for maximizing campaign success and converting content exposure into actual purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Content Quality on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that the Content Quality variable has a positive but insignificant effect on Purchase Decisions, confirming that this influence is not yet strong enough to result in direct purchase actions on TikTok. Content quality only provides an initial cognitive effect in the form of a positive perception, but does not immediately motivate consumers to purchase Erigo products. This finding provides critical insight that visual exposure and information in TikTok content do not work as primary drivers of purchase decisions without the presence of other psychological mechanisms that strengthen consumer confidence.

A more detailed analysis of each indicator provides a clearer picture of why the direct effect of Content Quality has not been significant. Regarding Message Clarity, Erigo's promotional content on TikTok may have provided clear information, but it was not strong enough to convey a persuasive message that moves consumers from interest to action. Visual Appeal, the primary strength of short-form video media, does increase engagement and heighten interest, but visual aesthetics alone are not enough to create purchasing urgency. Consumers of TikTok tend to passively enjoy visuals without taking further action, so visual appeal only serves as an initial stimulus.

The Informativeness indicator also contributes to cognitive content, but the information presented in short video formats is often limited, failing to address consumers' need for more concrete evidence, such as detailed ingredients, product durability, or real user reviews. This shortcoming leads consumers to seek additional validation from other sources before purchasing. Regarding Creativity, while creative content can enhance recall and reinforce brand identity, creativity alone does not guarantee a purchase decision if it is not accompanied by authenticity and strong social proof. Finally, Consistency plays a crucial role in building perceptions of professionalism and brand image, but content consistency only impacts the brand image formation stage, not direct purchasing behavior.

Theoretically, these results support the Hierarchy of Effects Model, which states that marketing content works in the stages of awareness, interest, desire, and action. Content quality appears strong in the first two stages but is insufficient to drive consumers to the "action" stage without the presence of mediating factors such as trust or social proof. This expands the understanding in digital marketing studies that high-quality content is not a guarantee of a transaction, especially on platforms such as TikTok, which focus on entertainment and fast-paced visual consumption. The effects of content are more attentional than behavioral; therefore, its direct influence on purchasing decisions is weak.

These empirical findings are consistent with those of Yusniar and Indra (2022) and Rohman and Rakhmawati (2024), who showed that content quality tends to influence purchase intention, but does not directly drive purchase decisions without the mediation of trust. A critical insight from this study is that TikTok consumers require an additional layer of legitimacy through trust, user reviews, or influencer credibility before deciding to purchase. In the context of Erigo, aesthetic and creative content strengthens brand presence, but it is not enough to create the emotional drive or conviction necessary for purchase.

Practically, Erigo's content strategy must move beyond mere aesthetics and information to be more authentic and based on social proof. Content must be able to convey real product experiences through testimonials, behind-the-scenes footage, user-generated content, and direct interactions. Thus, content not only builds awareness and interest but also becomes a key element that drives consumers towards actual purchasing decisions. These findings emphasize that content quality must be combined with a trust-building strategy to generate a significant impact in the context of short video-based e-commerce.

The Influence of E-WOM on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the hypothesis testing show that the Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) variable has a positive but insignificant effect on Purchase Decisions, indicating that e-WOM has a tendency to encourage consumers to purchase Erigo fashion products on TikTok, but is not statistically strong enough. This finding suggests that although consumers pay attention to the reviews and opinions of other users, these signals are not yet the main factor that drives direct purchasing actions on video-based platforms like TikTok.

When analyzed based on indicators, Review Quality on TikTok tends to vary because many reviews are spontaneous, brief, or quick reactions, so they do not always provide comprehensive product information. Review Quantity also often does not reflect the quality of the experience, as a high number of comments can be influenced by virality rather than actual experience. Weaknesses in these two indicators weaken the potential of e-WOM to drive purchasing decisions. Furthermore, the Review Credibility on TikTok is often questioned due to the emergence of hidden endorsements and temporary video trends. This makes consumers hesitate before purchasing, as they need additional verification from influencers or more detailed reviews.

From the User Recommendation perspective, although user recommendations can increase awareness, in fashion product categories like Erigo, consumers often require visual evidence such as material quality, size, and comfort that cannot always be reflected in brief recommendations. Furthermore, Sharing Behavior (users' tendency to share content) on TikTok is driven more by entertainment and aesthetics than by the usefulness of product information, so its effect is stronger on virality than on purchasing decisions. This critical analysis shows that the nature of e-WOM in TikTok is more attention-driven communication than decision-driven communication, so it is not surprising that the direct influence on purchasing decisions is insignificant.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce the perspective in Consumer Decision-Making Theory that purchase decisions require a credible stimulus and strong experience. In this context, e-WOM on TikTok serves as an initial stimulus in the form of social cues but is not enough to trigger purchases without the support of other indicators such as influencer credibility or trust (Kotler and Keller, 2016). TikTok consumers tend to seek additional

validation before purchasing high-touch fashion products. These findings also confirm the Social Proof framework that social influence is only effective when the information source is perceived as relevant, competent, and authentic, attributes that are not optimal in TikTok e-WOM in the context of Erigo.

These results are consistent with research by Putra and Novita (2025), which found that e-WOM has a positive but indirect influence on purchasing decisions, with trust as the primary mediator. Similarly, Baber (2020) showed that the effectiveness of e-WOM is highly dependent on the perceived authenticity of reviews. Practically, e-WOM on TikTok amplifies exposure and builds a positive image of Erigo but does not automatically result in purchase conversions without real-life testimonials, credible content, and consistent social value. Therefore, Erigo's digital marketing strategy needs to optimize review quality, increase testimonial credibility, and encourage more authentic community interactions so that e-WOM can function not only as an awareness booster but also as a stronger driver of purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Consumer Trust on Purchasing Decisions

The hypothesis testing results indicate that customer trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions for fashion brand Erigo products on TikTok. This finding confirms that trust is a key determinant driving consumers to make transactions, particularly on platforms based on short videos and fast interactions, such as TikTok. Empirically, the higher the consumers' trust in the reliability and integrity of the Erigo brand, the greater their tendency to make purchase decisions without a lengthy evaluation process.

Specifically, consumer trust is reflected in several important indicators. First, reliability (the belief that a product is reliable) is a fundamental aspect that influences purchasing decisions. Consumers are more likely to purchase when they believe that Erigo products have consistent quality and match what is advertised. Second, integrity (honesty and openness of brand information) also plays a crucial role—when brands display product information transparently and do not exaggerate quality, consumers feel more secure in purchasing. Third, confidence in a product (confidence in product quality) is a psychological driver that strengthens purchasing decisions, especially when consumers see positive testimonials from other users or previous personal experiences. Fourth, consistency of experience (consistency of past experiences) confirms that previous satisfying purchasing experiences create repeat trust, which accelerates purchasing decisions. Fifth, feeling of safety (a feeling of security in purchasing) is an important emotional factor, especially in online transactions, where security regarding payment, quality, and delivery are prerequisites for actual purchasing decisions.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings reinforce Trust Theory, where consumer trust is influenced by perceived competence, benevolence, and brand integrity (Gefen et al., 2003; Morgan and Hunt, 1994). In the context of TikTok, these three dimensions are reflected in the consistency of promotional content, information transparency, and social interactions between brands and users. The results also support the Theory of Planned Behavior, which states that trust strengthens purchase intentions by reducing consumer uncertainty and perceived risk. Furthermore, these findings align with the Trust-Based Online Consumer Decision-Making model, which asserts that trust is a key mediator in the digital product purchasing process (Kim et al., 2008). Trust serves as a mechanism

that links perceived risk, user experience, and marketing stimuli to actual purchasing behavior.

Practically, in the context of Erigo on TikTok, consumer trust not only builds readiness to purchase but also creates long-term loyalty. Trust is the foundation of customer commitment to a brand, in line with Commitment-Trust Theory (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Consumers who believe that Erigo provides consistent quality, is honest in promotions, and is responsive to feedback will make purchasing decisions more easily and be willing to make repeat purchases. Therefore, Erigo's marketing strategy must emphasize strengthening the aspects of reliability, communication integrity, and review transparency. Practices such as displaying authentic reviews, providing honest product information, maintaining service quality, and building responsive interactions are strategic steps to strengthen trust, which can be converted into actual purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Influencer Credibility Through Consumer Trust on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that the indirect effect of Influencer Credibility on Purchase Decisions through Consumer Trust is positive but not significant. This means that consumer trust cannot yet strongly mediate the influence of influencer credibility on purchasing decisions regarding Erigo fashion products on TikTok. However, in practice, the positive direction of the relationship indicates that increasing influencer credibility still contributes to strengthening purchase decisions, although it is not sufficient to become a dominant mediation pathway. This finding indicates that TikTok consumers, who tend to be impulsive and highly visual, do not always rely on trust built by influencers before making purchase decisions.

From an indicator perspective, the influencer's expertise aspect does increase consumer confidence in the information conveyed, but expertise alone is not enough to drive purchasing decisions without concrete evidence of the product's benefits. The Trustworthiness indicator contributes to the formation of perceptions of influencer honesty, but consumers still require additional validation through other user reviews (social proof) before making a purchase. Attractiveness helps capture audience attention, but visual appeal influences the interest phase more than the action phase. Authenticity, while important on the TikTok platform, is often situational; content perceived as authentic does not automatically generate purchase intent if it is not combined with evidence of actual use. Meanwhile, Engagement only creates emotional closeness but does not necessarily encourage consumers to make a transaction without a strong cognitive drive. Thus, the five influencer credibility indicators build trust, but trust itself does not have sufficient influence to significantly mediate Erigo consumers' purchasing decisions.

Conceptually, these findings enrich the Trust-Based Consumer Behavior Model by demonstrating that trust mediation in the TikTok context does not operate linearly (Kim et al., 2008). On a short-form video platform, trust formed from influencer credibility does not directly translate into purchasing decisions because the consumer decision-making process is more influenced by perceived risk, perceived value, and the emotional appeal of product content. Influencer credibility builds trust, but trust is not the dominant mechanism when consumers are in an ecosystem driven by trends, speed of information, and impulsive decisions. In other words, influencer credibility functions as an initial

cognitive cue, but it is not a final determinant of purchasing behavior unless reinforced by the strong social proof and real-life experiences of other users.

These results are consistent with research by Wijaya (2020) and Sokolova and Kefi (2020), who found that influencer credibility can directly influence purchasing decisions without the mediation of trust, especially on visual-based platforms like TikTok. From a practical perspective, these findings provide important insights for Erigo; enhancing influencer credibility alone is not sufficient to drive purchasing decisions through trust. Established trust needs to be strengthened with supporting strategies, such as user-generated reviews, authentic testimonials, product demonstration content, and quality assurance. Therefore, while influencer credibility is the foundation for building trust, Erigo needs to optimize social proof and real customer experiences so that trust can serve as an effective bridge to purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Content Quality Through Consumer Trust on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that the indirect effect of Content Quality on Purchase Decisions through Consumer Trust is positive and significant. This suggests that the higher the quality of the content presented by influencers and brands, the greater is the level of consumer trust formed, which ultimately drives purchase decisions for fashion brand Erigo products on the TikTok platform.

Content quality on the TikTok platform encompasses five key indicators: Message Clarity, Visual Appeal, Informativeness, Creativity, and Consistency, which collectively shape audience perceptions of a brand's credibility and professionalism. Message Clarity helps consumers quickly understand product benefits in a short video format. Visual Appeal, in the form of image aesthetics and editing quality, creates a premium perception and increases trust in the brand's seriousness. Informativeness ensures that consumers receive sufficient details about product features, size, materials, or user experience. Creativity, manifested through storytelling, music trends, or shooting styles, creates an emotional impact that strengthens psychological connections with the audience. Consistency in tone, visual style, and narrative with Erigo's identity builds perceptions of brand stability and honesty. These five indicators create a reputation signal that increases trust before a purchase decision is made.

Content quality, as a multidimensional construct, functions not only as a communication tool but also as a shaper of perceived authenticity and brand reliability (Ashley and Tuten, 2015; De Vries et al., 2012). In the context of TikTok, the rapid consumption of audiovisual-based content demands clear messages and strong visual aesthetics to capture consumer attention. When consumers perceive Erigo's content as informative, creative, and consistent with the brand image, they interpret it as evidence of professionalism and honesty. This process creates trust as a psychological pathway that bridges content quality with purchase decisions. As trust increases, perceived risk decreases, and consumer readiness to make a purchase increases.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce the Trust-Based Consumer Decision-Making Model, which asserts that trust is a significant mediator between cognitive stimuli (information, message quality) and purchasing behavior (Kim et al., 2008). These findings are also in line with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), where high-quality content makes consumers process messages through the central route, so that purchasing decisions become more convincing when supported by trust. Thus, content

quality makes an important theoretical contribution to the digital marketing literature, particularly in the context of short videos, by showing how audiovisual message elements can build trust as a key to driving purchases.

These findings are also consistent with research by Yusniar and Indra (2022), Maharani and Yusuf (2023), and Lou and Yuan (2019), which emphasized that content quality influences trust, and trust ultimately drives purchase intentions and decisions. Practically, in the context of Erigo on TikTok, content quality has been shown to not only increase interest but also create ongoing credibility. Content with a clear message, visual appeal, and creativity is more likely to foster trust, which increases the likelihood of a purchase. This suggests that to increase the effectiveness of its marketing strategy, Erigo needs to emphasize the production of authentic, educational, consistent, and structured content to strengthen consumer trust and convert it into purchasing decisions. Therefore, it can be concluded that content quality plays a strategic role in shaping consumer trust as the primary pathway connecting marketing stimuli to actual purchasing behavior in a short video-based digital environment like TikTok.

The Influence of E-WOM Through Consumer Trust on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that the indirect effect of the e-WOM variable on Purchasing Decisions through Consumer Trust is positive and significant. This indicates that the more positive and credible the information spread through e-WOM on TikTok, whether through comments, video reviews, or recommendations from other users, the greater the level of consumer trust formed towards the Erigo brand, and ultimately drives the purchase decision of the promoted fashion products. This indicates that on the TikTok platform, trust formed from social interactions between users becomes an important bridge that transforms perceptions into actual purchasing actions.

From an indicator perspective, review quality is a crucial factor that helps consumers assess the relevance and depth of information shared by other users. Detailed reviews based on real-life experiences strengthen the perception of a product's reliability; however, review quality alone is insufficient without consistent reviews from other users. Review quantity serves as a social indicator that a product is widely used and in demand; a large number of reviews creates social proof that strengthens trust. However, TikTok consumers look beyond quantity when considering the authenticity of reviews. Review credibility is a key determinant of trust. Reviews perceived as honest, unexaggerated, and not perceived as covert promotions are more likely to increase trust and reduce perceived risk. User recommendations strengthen social influence because explicit recommendations from fellow users create normative pressure that the product is worth purchasing. Meanwhile, Sharing Behavior, the tendency of users to share their content or experiences, helps organically expand information and creates a validation network that further strengthens trust. The combination of these five indicators not only generates positive perceptions but also forms trust as an emotional-cognitive response that drives consumers to make purchases.

Conceptually, these findings reinforce the Trust-Based Consumer Decision-Making Model, which asserts that e-WOM works effectively through the mediation of trust (Kim et al., 2008). On the TikTok platform, e-WOM not only functions as a means of disseminating information but also as social proof that strengthens consumers' belief in the product's benefits. Trust reduces perceived risk and uncertainty, resulting in faster and more certain purchasing decisions. In this context, the relationship between e-WOM and

purchasing decisions is not direct, but occurs through a process of internalizing information that involves assessing the credibility, authenticity, and consistency of other users' reviews. These findings validate that the power of e-WOM in the TikTok context lies not only in the number of interactions, but also in the ability of the information to form stable trust.

This finding is consistent with the research findings of Putra and Novita (2025) and Baber (2020), which showed that e-WOM is more effective in influencing purchasing decisions when trust acts as a mediator. In the context of Erigo on TikTok, a practical insight that can be drawn is that strengthening e-WOM should focus on increasing the credibility and authenticity of reviews, and not just on the intensity of content dissemination. These include strategies such as encouraging honest reviews from consumers, activating user communities, displaying real testimonials, and providing prompt responses to comments. Thus, although e-WOM is one of the main drivers of brand exposure, the trust formed by e-WOM is key to converting positive perceptions into actual purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study indicate that Influencer Credibility, Content Quality, and Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) have a positive effect on Customer Trust, with Influencer Credibility and Content Quality having a significant effect, while E-WOM has a significant effect on trust in the context of Erigo fashion marketing on TikTok. Trust is proven to be the main mediating mechanism in connecting Content Quality and e-WOM with Purchase Decision, while Influencer Credibility has only a direct effect on purchases. These findings enrich the digital marketing literature on TikTok by confirming that purchase decisions are not only influenced by marketing stimuli but primarily by trust built through content and social interactions, making it a key variable in consumer behavior models on short video platforms.

Managerially, the results of this study imply that Erigo needs to be more selective in selecting influencers who have high credibility and are aligned with the brand identity, develop informative and authentic content to build meaningful engagement, and actively manage e-WOM through quick responses to reviews and encouragement of positive testimonials. However, this study has limitations in the use of accidental sampling methods, a limited number of respondents, and a focus on one brand and platform. Future research is recommended to use probability sampling methods, expand the research object to other brands or different product categories, and include additional variables such as perceived risk or platform engagement to obtain a more comprehensive model of digital consumer behavior.

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