

Attempt to Boost the Sales through the Adoption of Viral Marketing Strategy

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received : 20/02/2023

Revised : 28/04/2023

Accepted: 28/04/2023

Key words:

Viral Marketing; Purchase Intention.

DOI:

[Doi.org/10.37366/jespb.v8i01.712](https://doi.org/10.37366/jespb.v8i01.712)

ABSTRACT

Differences in marketing tools due to technological developments allow marketers to customize and use digital platforms, one of which is using of viral marketing strategies. This study confirms the role of viral marketing strategies in Azarine's skincare product purchase intentions and attempts to measure the effectiveness of these strategies on sales. By using 100 respondents spread across different cities in Indonesia via social media, the results proved that viral marketing strategies divided into messenger, messages and environments, can be significant predictors of consumer's purchase intention. The relationship between the designs was tested by SmartPLS4 with the path analysis technique, showed that increased interaction and product engagement generated interest in purchases and effectively increased sales in the short term.

ABSTRAK

Perbedaan sarana pemasaran akibat perkembangan teknologi mendorong pemasar untuk dapat beradaptasi dan memanfaatkan platform digital salah satunya dengan menggunakan strategi pemasaran viral. Riset ini berupaya untuk mengonfirmasi peran dari konstruk pemasaran viral terhadap niat pembelian produk skincare Azarine untuk mengukur efektivitas dari konstruk ini terhadap penjualan. Dengan menggunakan 100 responden yang tersebar di berbagai kota di Indonesia melalui media sosial membuktikan bahwa strategi pemasaran viral yang terbagi atas messenger, messages dan environment mampu menjadi prediktor signifikan atas niat pembelian konsumen. Hubungan antar konstruk di uji menggunakan program SmartPLS 4 dengan Teknik Path Analysis, menunjukkan bahwa maraknya perbincangan atau keterlibatan produk memicu ketertarikan seseorang untuk melakukan pembelian dan efektif meningkatkan penjualan dalam jangka pendek

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid pace of information is currently providing significant changes to people's lives in the current era. The shift in lifestyle presents a tendency for people in this generation to have more things that need to be fulfilled compared to the previous generation. Purwanto & Sahetapy (2022) explain that the current generation pays attention to many things that previous generations may not have prioritized. One of the needs that is most considered by the current generation is the need for beauty treatments to support appearance. The use of skincare as an effort to improve physical appearance has become a trend in society with the aim of increasing their physical image and self-confidence. This awareness of appearance has led to the development of beauty products in Indonesia.

Reporting from the statista page, revenue in the

skincare segment in Indonesia in 2022 will reach US\$2.05 billion, and the market is expected to grow 6.18% annually (CAGR 2022-2026), reinforced by total sales of 1.98 billion US Dollars in 2019. The high demand for skincare products has led to the emergence of many local cosmetic and skincare products in Indonesia. In data from BPOM RI 2022, the number of cosmetic products registered in the last five years has reached 420,124 products, which certainly makes competition in the cosmetics and skin care industry very competitive.

The intense competition that exists makes cosmetic and skin care (Skincare) companies make various efforts to promote their products. In line with the development of gadget users and social media, the company's marketers are using it to switch to using digital marketing efforts, one of which is utilizing the viral marketing method (viral

marketing) to reach a wider market.

Viral marketing is a marketing method capable of generating interest and potential sales of a brand or product through messages that spread quickly from person to person. The concept of viral marketing is almost similar to word of mouth in which the marketing method involves customers directly to disseminate information about brands or products to reach other potential buyers in a wider market, but evolved by utilizing digital technology.

The concept of viral marketing itself was first coined by Jeffrey F Rayport in his article entitled *The Virus of Marketing* in 1996, which mentioned what if a virus was used as a marketing program, because the marketing message that was spread would only take a very short time, an unlimited budget. too much but has a very broad impact so that marketing becomes more effective. Viral marketing by Helm (2000) is defined as a communication and distribution concept that relies on customers to send digital products via e-mail to other potential customers in their social environment and turn on these contacts to also deliver products. The current viral marketing strategy can be implemented through several media both visually, audio and audio-visual in the form of content on several platforms such as Tik-tok, Youtube, Sportify, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Line, Quora and several other platforms including e-commerce. commerce. In a study, viral marketing proved to be effective in increasing sales due to the interest in following trends from their audience as potential consumers to use products that are currently being discussed. In addition, viral marketing is also considered more efficient because it is spread by consumers and its distribution is mostly in a group of people with the same interests and tastes so that the information provided on brands or products is considered more reliable, more acceptable and the information is trusted.

Research that has been conducted on the effect of viral marketing on consumer purchase intentions for several years states that there is a positive and significant influence between viral marketing on purchase intention (Liu & Wang, 2019; Sawaftah *et al*, 2020; Fard & Marvi, 2020). However, there are also research studies which state that there is no

significant effect between viral marketing on consumer purchase intentions, through viral marketing messages (Trivedi, 2017). Therefore, this study seeks to determine the effectiveness of using viral marketing strategies on consumer purchase intentions for one of the local skin care products, namely the Azarine skincare which is very popular among skincare users in Indonesia.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Viral marketing is a modern form of word of mouth marketing, where this form of marketing makes consumers act as messengers or information disseminators about a product or brand to other potential customers. This multiplied or decreased spread makes viral marketing also called viral marketing, because according to the working concept, if consumers are satisfied with a brand or product, they will tend to provide direct recommendations or even reviews to those closest to them on a widespread basis, such as the development of a virus. By Arifin (2005) in (Permana, 2022), viral marketing is a program designed like a virus that spreads from one person to another which spreads quickly and widely.

The definition of viral marketing according to Hasan's theory (2010: 24) states that viral marketing is basically a form of word of mouth marketing through electronic media (e-word of mouth marketing) or called e-WOM whose promotional function is networking and designed like an infectious virus. from one person to another quickly and broadly by providing special rewards to consumers. Kotler & Armstrong (2012) also mentions that viral marketing is an internet version of using word of mouth marketing, which is closely related to creating e-mails or marketing events that are contagious so that consumers are willing to spread them to their friends. Meanwhile, according to Hamed (2018), viral marketing is a marketing strategy that focuses on spreading information and opinions about a product or service from person to person, using unconventional means such as the Internet or E-mail.

Based on some of these explanations, it can be assumed that viral marketing is a marketing practice that utilizes an individual as a consumer to spread

marketing messages to other individuals or groups, using digital media as intermediaries so that they can spread quickly.

Purchase intention (Purchase intention) is an action taken by someone such as spending energy, time, and costs based on factors that have been considered to buy something in order to fulfill their wants and needs (Purwanto & Sahetapy., 2022). Meanwhile, according to Kotler & Keller (2016: 198) purchase intention is a form of behavior from consumers who wish to buy or choose a product based on their experience, use and desire for a product. Purchase intention is the behavior or actions of a person based on the urge to acquire, own or use goods or services on the basis of fulfilling their wants or needs. According to Ferdinand (2014), indicators of purchase intention (purchase intention), include:

Transactional interest, namely the consumer's intention to make a purchase on a product; Referential interest refers to the tendency of consumers to provide references or recommend a product to other consumers; Preferential interest where the consumer's intention is to make a product the first choice in shopping activities; and Explorative interest where consumers intend to find out more about a product to be purchased.

Liu & Wang (2019) and also Prataga & Santoso (2022) in their research concluded that in general viral marketing has a positive effect on consumer purchase intentions. This research shows the effectiveness of viral marketing as an advertising medium that has the potential to influence consumer purchase intentions.

Rabidas & Bowen (2019) found that viral marketing has a very effective role in influencing purchase intentions in the context of the fashion industry by creating interest and desire and attracting the attention of consumers so as to motivate them to take actions that lead to purchases. This is supported by research by Fard & Marvi (2020) which states that viral marketing has a positive effect on the purchase intention of mobile application users. Based on Sawaftah's research (2020) also showed results that there was a significant positive impact between viral marketing on consumers' purchase intentions for smartphone

products.

In Dwitama's research (2022) viral marketing also has a positive effect on consumer purchasing decisions which are divided into messenger, message and environment sub-variables. As for the research mentioned above along with the dimensions of the viral marketing variables, namely messenger, messages and environment, the hypothesis can be formulated as follows: H1: Viral Marketing (Messenger) has a positive effect on Consumer Purchase Intentions H2: Viral Marketing (Messages) has a positive effect on Consumer Purchase Intentions H3: Viral Marketing (Environment) has a positive effect on Consumer Purchase Intentions.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

Determination of the sample in this study using snowball sampling technique due to limited knowledge about the population. Snowball sampling is a sampling method in which samples are obtained through a rolling process from one respondent to another. Snowball sampling is included in the Non-Probability Sampling technique, which is a technique that does not provide equal opportunities or opportunities for each element of the population to be selected as a sample (Sugiyono, 2015). The procedure for implementing the snowball sampling technique can be carried out in stages with in-depth interviews and questionnaires. With this snowball sampling technique, one customer of Azarine skincare products was selected, who would become the key informant to then provide instructions on who the informants were from fellow users of Azarine skincare products and were competent to provide data, bearing in mind that fellow users of cosmetic and beauty products often interact with each other.

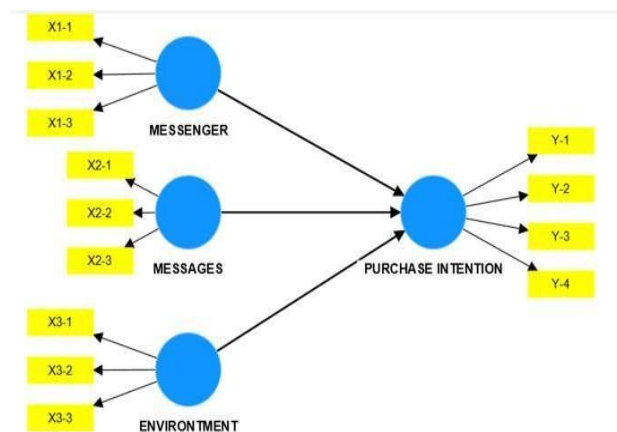
The data analysis method in this study uses Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) using SmartPLS version 4 software. The PLS calculation stages use two models, namely the Measurement Model (Outer Model) and Structural Model Testing (Inner Model). The outer model is the relationship between the indicator and the construct. If the loading factor value is more than 0.5 then it has good validity. The loading factor significance test

can be carried out with the t statistic or p value, if the t statistic value is more than 1.96 and the p value <0.05 then it has significant validity. The next analysis is construct reliability by taking into account the Composite Reliability (CR), Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values. If the CR value is more than 0.7, CA is more than 0.7 and the AVE value is more than 0.5, then the construct is said to be reliable. (Abdillah & Jogiyanto., 2015:196).

In Abdillah & Jogiyanto (2015: 194) the validity test was carried out to determine the ability of the instrument to measure what should be measured, which in this study there was a convergent validity test using the Outer Loading and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) parameters.

Test convergent validity in PLS by using a reflective indicator based on the loading factor (correlation between item scores and construct scores) indicators that measure the construct and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. In Abdillah and Jogiyanto (2015: 195), the rule of thumb used for convergent validity is outer loading > 0.7, communality > 0.5 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) > 0.5

The research model in this study was tested using path analysis. In this study, path analysis was used to determine causal relationships, which explained the direct and indirect effects of viral marketing variables by messenger, messages and environment sub-variables on purchase intention variables on consumers of Azarine skincare products and tested the effectiveness of these variables on purchases.



The hypothesis test in this study uses the evaluation of the structural model (inner model), which is measured using the T-statistic value. Testing the significance of the hypothesis through T-statistics must be greater than 1.96 for the two tailed hypothesis (Abdillah & Jogiyanto., 2015)

The use of this technique enables distribution-free data to apply, and does not require normal distribution assumptions, and does not require a large sample (with a minimum sample recommendation of 30). Testing is done by t-test, if the alpha or p-value is > 5% and the T-statistic value is 1.96, then it is concluded that it is significant, or vice versa. If the results of testing the hypothesis on the outer model are significant, this indicates that the indicator is considered to be used as an instrument for measuring latent variables. Meanwhile, if the test results on the inner model are significant, it can be interpreted that there is a significant influence of latent variables on other latent variables.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to measure the effectiveness of using viral marketing strategies on consumer purchase intentions for Azarine Skincare products. Respondents in this study were 100 users of the Azarine Skincare product, obtained from the results of a questionnaire which was distributed through several social media platforms, namely Base Twitter, Line, Whatsapp Message and Instagram, on December 1, 2022 from one user of this skincare product to another.

Based on the questionnaires that have been collected, it can be seen that the majority of users of Azarine Skincare products are dominated by women, namely 90 respondents (90%) because in general women have more desire to treat and beautify themselves while users of Azarine Skincare products. There are 10 male respondents, which means that this skincare product is unisex and not limited by gender and proves that not only women have the awareness to care for skin health and pay attention to their appearance, but also men.

In addition, users of Azarine Skincare products are quite varied, but are dominated by respondents in the 21-25 year age group with a total of 58 users

(58%) followed by 16-20 year age group with 35 respondents (35%). because someone at that age generally has a high interest in trying new things or following trends that are developing. Meanwhile, the number of respondents aged more than 25 years is relatively small. Respondents in the 26-30 year age group totaled 5 respondents (5%) and in the 31-45 year age group only 2 respondents (2%), because generally someone at this age is likely to have settled or been loyal to a brand and product that it is necessary according to age.

Based on the job category, it can be seen that Azarine Skincare users have quite varied jobs, but are dominated by students or students with 72 respondents (72%), followed by Employees or Office Employees with 15 respondents (15%), Entrepreneurs with 5 respondents (5%), Freelancers or Freelancers as many as 5 respondents (5%) and other jobs including teachers and housewives as many as 3 respondents (3%).

The dominance of users from students and students can be based on the Azarine product itself which is generally provided for someone who is just starting to use skin care products, the label of natural raw materials raises the perception of safety for beginners in the world of skincare. In addition, these students and students are generally active in sharing and sharing recommendations on various matters, both offline and online without exception regarding a product including skincare, so that the development of information about Azarine products which is being hype on social media reaches a lot of these circles.

Based on the categories of sources of information obtained, in general it can be seen that Azarine Skincare users know about Azarine skincare products through various intermediaries, but are dominated by the Tik Tok Platform with 41 respondents (41%), followed by recommendations from friends of 19 respondents (19%), Instagram as many as 15 respondents (15%), Twitter as many as 15 respondents (15%) and other intermediaries including family and relatives and E-Commerce to the Internet as many as 10 respondents (10%). The dominance of Tik Tok as an intermediary media for the expansion of this product is in line with the popularity of this platform among gadget and social

media users.

	<i>Outer loading</i>
X1-1 <- MESSSENGER	0.871
X1-2 <- MESSSENGER	0.878
X1-3 <- MESSSENGER	0.713
X2-1 <- MESSAGES	0.849
X2-2 <- MESSAGES	0.818
X2-3 <- MESSAGES	0.863
X3-1 <- ENVIRONMENT	0.773
X3-2 <- ENVIRONMENT	0.755
X3-3 <- ENVIRONMENT	0.857
Y-1 <- PURCHASE INTENTION	0.859
Y-2 <- PURCHASE INTENTION	0.846
Y-3 <- PURCHASE INTENTION	0.778
Y-4 <- PURCHASE INTENTION	0.829

Sumber: Data yang diolah

	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Composite reliability</i>	<i>Average variance extracted (AVE)</i>
ENVIRONMENT	0.715	0.838	0.634
MESSAGES	0.799	0.881	0.711
MESSSENGER	0.763	0.863	0.679
PURCHASE INTENTION	0.847	0.898	0.687

Sumber: Data yang diolah

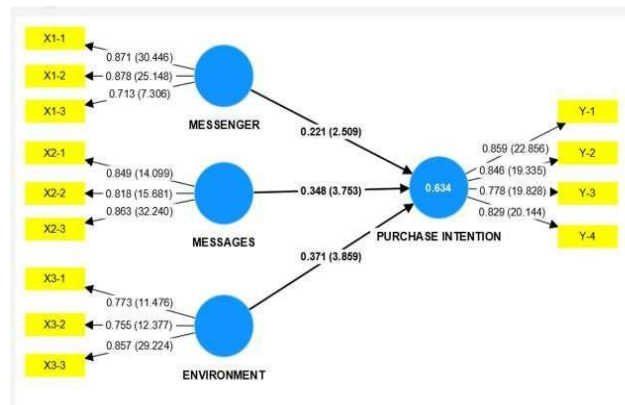
Based on the data above, all indicators in this research have an outer loading value of more than 0.7, so they are proven valid. Then, the reliability test of each construct in this study also fulfilled the parameters or rule of thumb that had been determined, namely the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values were worth more than 0.7.

After making sure that the evaluation of the measuring tool is met, the authors test the relationship between constructs using the path analysis technique by the measuring tool used is the Smart PLS version 4 program. The test results are as follows:

	<i>T-statistics</i>	<i>P-values</i>	<i>Status Hipotesis</i>
ENVIRONMENT -> PURCHASE INTENTION	3.859	0.000	Terdukung
MESSAGES -> PURCHASE INTENTION	3.753	0.000	Terdukung
MESSSENGER -> PURCHASE INTENTION	2.509	0.012	Terdukung

We can understand that the Environment, Messages and Messenger constructs in viral marketing have proven to have a significant effect on the purchase intention of users of the Azarine Skincare product. The T-statistics value for each of

the Environment constructs is 3.859 (0.000), Messages is 3.753 (0.000), and Messenger of 2.509 (0.012). This conclusion is based on predetermined parameters or rule of thumb where a construct can be said to have a significant influence if the T-statistics value has a score of more than 1.96 with a degree of confidence of 0.05. Thus, the hypothesis in this research is supported.



The results of this study prove that the viral marketing variables described in the Messenger, Message, and Environment sub-variables have a significant positive effect on a person's purchase intention for a product. If viewed from the questions in the questionnaire, many users of Azarine skincare products make purchases based on recommendations from other users through information about the product and the effectiveness of using the product on social media platforms. As for one of the indicators that measure the acquisition of information about Azarine skincare products through social media shows an average value of 3.41 using a 1-4 Likert-like scale in table 4.4.1 along with the indicators that make up the Messenger construct.

NO	INDIKATOR MESSENGER	MEAN
1	Saya menggunakan produk <i>Skincare</i> Azarine karena adanya keunggulan efektivitas penggunaan produk di beberapa ulasan pengguna	3.29
2	Ulasan dan rekomendasi pengguna <i>Skincare</i> Azarine memudahkan saya untuk memperoleh informasi dan melakukan pembelian	3.39
3	Saya banyak mengetahui informasi produk <i>Skincare</i> azarine melalui platform media sosial seperti Youtube, Tiktok, dan Instagram	3.41

Further it can be understood that all indicators in the Messenger construct as a whole have an average value above 3.00 (Agree). Respondents felt the effectiveness of using the Azarine skincare product from several skincare users which was

strengthened by the information they got from reviews and recommendations from users, including through several social media platforms, such as Tik-Tok, Instagram and Youtube.

NO	INDIKATOR MESSAGES	MEAN
1	Keterlibatan produk <i>Skincare</i> Azarine dalam berbagai konten sosial media membuat saya tertarik untuk membeli	3.19
2	Diskusi mengenai produk <i>Skincare</i> Azarine mendorong saya untuk ikut bergabung dan mencari tahu mengenai keunggulan produk tersebut	3.22
3	Konten dari produk <i>Skincare</i> Azarine informatif, menarik, mudah diingat dan dapat dipercaya	3.06

Based table above, we can see that the massive involvement and discussion of Azarine skincare products encourages people to be interested in finding information about these products and make purchases. From a scale of 1-4 Likert-like scale, in general the average value for this message construct is above 3.00 (Agree). Respondents felt that the active discussion about the Azarine skincare product in various social media content encouraged them to try the product, reinforced by the widespread discussion about the advantages of this product. In addition, because of the hectic conversations that took place, the information from the content was easy to remember and trusted by potential consumers of azarine skincare products.

NO	INDIKATOR ENVIRONMENT	MEAN
1	Keterlibatan Teman, Tetangga dan keluarga memudahkan saya untuk memperoleh informasi mengenai produk <i>Skincare</i> Azarine	3.04
2	Banyaknya platform yang mengulas mengenai produk <i>Skincare</i> azarine mempengaruhi keyakinan saya untuk membeli produk tersebut	3.29
3	Tanggapan dari keluarga dan teman memengaruhi kepuasan saya setelah menggunakan produk <i>Skincare</i> Azarine	3.05

Based on table above, it can be seen that the number of platforms that review Azarine's skincare products influences a person's confidence to buy the product, as evidenced by the large number of people who think they agree or have an average score of more than 3.00. In addition, responses from family, friends and people around this product affect a person's satisfaction in using these products where the average value is also more than 3.00 (agree), this is reinforced by the involvement of these people in obtaining information and references for choosing to use this skincare product which also has an average value of more than 3.00 (Agree).

NO	INDIKATOR <i>PURCHASE INTENTION</i>	MEAN
1.	Saya merasa puas dan tertarik untuk melakukan pembelian ulang atas produk <i>Skincare Azarine</i>	3.29
2.	Saya akan memberikan ulasan yang positif dan merekomendasikan produk <i>Skincare Azarine</i> kepada orang lain	3.28
3.	Produk <i>Skincare Azarine</i> akan menjadi salah satu pilihan pertama saya dalam membeli produk perawatan kulit	2.94
4.	Kualitas produk <i>Skincare Azarine</i> sesuai dengan informasi yang saya peroleh dan ulasan yang saya dapatkan	3.19

Based on table above, respondents generally feel satisfied and have an interest in repurchasing Azarine skincare products, as evidenced by the average value of 3.29, which means that most respondents agree with this statement. Reinforced by other statements which also have an average value of more than 3.00 (Agree), in which the majority of respondents are willing to give positive reviews and recommend these skincare products and think that the quality of Azarine's skincare products is in accordance with the information or reviews provided. they get before making a purchase. However, most of the respondents in this study did not intend to make this Azarine skincare product their first choice in choosing skin care products, as evidenced by their average score which has not yet reached 3.00 (Agree) and is only worth 2.94 (Disagree).

5. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, SUGGESTION, AND LIMITATIONS

This research shows that the hypotheses in this study are all proven to have a positive and significant impact on the intention to purchase Azarine skincare products through viral marketing variables which are divided into messengers, messages and environment to encourage someone to try and buy a product. From the discussion in this study, reviews and recommendations from users of Skincare Azarine products have a very big impact on influencing someone to buy something.

This study also proves that the use of viral marketing strategies is effective in stimulating purchases and increasing sales of these products, because the more often a product is involved in a conversation, the more information about the product will stick in the minds of consumers, encouraging them to look for it further and make comparisons. similar product. However, because basically this viral marketing strategy is effective in

the short term, there is a possibility that consumers can easily switch to other brands as evidenced by the results of the study which stated that most respondents had no intention of making this Azarine skincare product their first choice.

This research has been carried out in such a way although there are still some limitations, namely as follows:

1. The distribution of questionnaires was still less extensive in the layers of work and was dominated by students or students
2. The independent variables in this study only include viral marketing which is divided into messenger, message and environment sub-variables on purchase intention, and does not include other variables that might influence consumer purchase intentions.
3. This study only examines the effectiveness of using viral marketing strategies on consumer purchase intentions.

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