



# The Influence of Digital Marketing and Electronic Word of Mouth (E-Wom) With Brand Image Mediation on Purchase Decisions at Fore Surabaya

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**Abstract:** This study is intended to investigate the impact of Digital Marketing and Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) on Purchase Decisions, with Brand Image as a mediating variable in Fore Coffee consumers in Surabaya. This study applied a quantitative approach through causal methods, involving 100 respondents who had made transactions at Fore Coffee Sulawesi Street. The data was analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the help of SmartPLS 4 software. The findings of the study show that Digital Marketing and e-WOM have a positive and significant effect on Brand Image and Purchase Decisions. Brand image also has a significant influence on Purchase Decisions. In addition, Brand Image has proven to be a partial mediator, so Digital Marketing and e-WOM continue to have a direct influence, but the effect increases when through Brand Image. The research model produced an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.671, which indicates good explanatory ability of the model. Overall, this study emphasizes that strengthening digital marketing strategies, managing e-WOM, and building a consistent brand image is very important in improving consumer purchasing decisions of Fore Coffee.

**Keywords:** Brand Image, Digital Marketing, E-Wom, PLS-SEM, Purchase Decision.

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## 1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has transformed the pattern of consumer interaction with brands, products, and services. This transformation requires a strategic approach to marketing to no longer rely on conventional media, but instead to digital marketing that optimizes digital platforms, including social media, websites, search engines, and various other digital channels to expand audience reach. This is in line with the report (Slice.id, 2024) presented in Figure 1, showing that product research activities are now dominated by digital channels.



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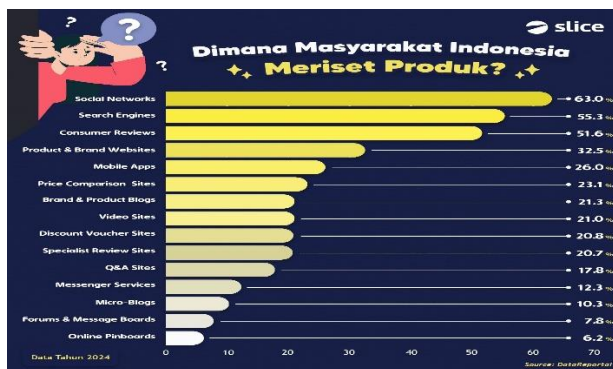


Figure 1. Digital Media used to find brands or products.

Source : Slice.id, (2024)

Data shows that social networks (63.0%), search engines (55.3%), and consumer reviews (51.6%) are the three main sources of product information in Indonesia. The transformation of consumer behavior marked by an increase in the use of digital platforms to obtain product information encourages companies to adapt quickly to using various digital platforms. The change forced all types of businesses, including coffee shops, to adapt quickly. Fore as one of the favorite brands of coffee shops in Indonesia is not spared from these changes.

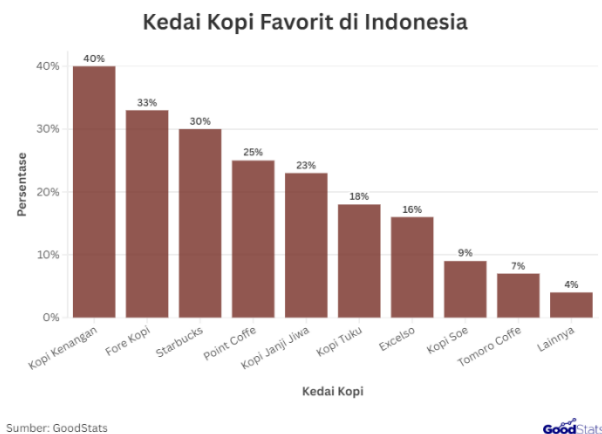


Figure 2. Favorite Coffee Shops in Indonesia.

Source : GoodStats, (2024)

Based on the survey "Indonesia's Favorite Coffee Shops" by GoodStats, (2024), which is presented in figure 2, Fore Coffee managed to occupy the second position (33%) as a favorite coffee shop, placing it below Kopi Kenangan (40%). This data shows Fore Coffee's competitive position among leading brands in Indonesia. However, in the face of the rapid growth of the coffee industry and increasingly fierce competition in cities such as Surabaya, and coupled with shifts in consumer behavior towards digital media, Fore must analyze what variables contribute to the dynamics of consumer behavior in the purchasing decision-making mechanism. In this context, Digital Marketing has emerged as one of the essential factors because of its effectiveness in marketing products and ensuring that information reaches consumers directly (Kusumawati & Arkansyah, 2024).

Digital Marketing provides a space for consumers to share information, opinions, and reviews on online platforms such as social media. This is known as e-Wom, which is a form of digital interaction between consumers in the form of product reviews and recommendations. (Miremadi & Haghayegh, 2022). e-Wom plays an important role in product marketing strategies in the digital age. This is because the conversations and views expressed by consumers online have the ability to influence other consumers' preferences and purchasing decisions (Amin & Yanti, 2021). Consumers are generally more influenced by reviews and recommendations delivered digitally when making purchasing decisions (William & Tjiptodjojo, 2025).

But the success of Digital Marketing and e-Wom is greatly influenced by a solid brand image. A solid brand image is built from everything consumers see and hear (Hanaysha, 2022). Brand image acts as a key guide that influences how customers perceive the products offered (Prihananto et al., 2024). E-wom that is positive on digital platforms has the potential to build consumer trust and strengthen a positive image of a brand. Consumers who have a positive perception of their brand or product show a higher tendency to make decisions to purchase products from the brand (Ayu & Kuswati, 2022).

Research on the influence of digital marketing on purchase decisions shows a variety of findings. Some researchers, such as (Arrianda et al., 2024; Virariani et al., 2023; Yusuf et al., 2023) explain that digital marketing has a positive influence on purchasing decisions. However, different results were found by (Hubbina et al., 2023; Millenium et al., 2021) which actually reported the negative effects of digital marketing on purchase decisions.

Research findings related to Electronic Word of Mouth (e-Wom) and its influence on purchasing decisions are also inconsistent. (Changreani et al., 2023; Maulidya et al., 2025) found that e-Wom had a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions. On the contrary, the study put forward by (Agustina et al., 2023; Prasetya & Sigit, 2023) shows that e-WOM does not affect purchasing decisions.

Previous research involving brand image as a mediating variable has been conducted by (Fazrin et al., 2024; Zain & Vania, 2024) but the brand image in the study mediated the influence of e-Wom on purchase intention. Furthermore, Fietroh & Rizqi, (2025) examined the role of brand image in mediating the relationship between e-Wom and purchase decisions, but has not examined the influence of digital marketing on purchasing decisions through brand image. On the other hand, Iswara et al., (2024) found that brand image mediated the influence of digital marketing, but brand image in the study mediated on purchase intention. Meanwhile, Muti & Frimansyah, (2025) examined the role of brand image in mediating digital marketing on purchase decisions, but has not tested the influence of e-Wom on purchase decisions through brand image. The research by Nugroho, (2025) examines the influence of brand image in mediating the influence of digital marketing and e-Wom, but brand image mediates purchase intention, not purchase decisions.

Inconsistencies in the results of previous research, both in the direct influence and the mediating role of *brand image*, have created a *research gap*. Based on the consideration of the gap, this study is intended to analyze "The Influence of Digital Marketing and Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) with Brand Image Mediation on Purchase Decisions in Fore Surabaya".

## 2. Literature Review

### Digital Marketing

Digital marketing is described as the use of digital systems to build channels that effectively meet consumer needs and function to achieve company goals (Asikin et al., 2024). Digital marketing is a marketing approach that utilizes a variety of digital channels, including the internet, web platforms, social networks, e-mail, databases, mobile devices, and digital TV. Digital marketing serves to enable businesses to reach more consumers, learn their profiles and behaviors, evaluate product value, and maintain customer loyalty, so that companies can achieve marketing goals (Chaffey & Smith, 2023). According to Santosa & Vanel, (2022) Digital Marketing Indicators are, Accessibility, Interactivity, Entertainment, Credibility, Irritation, and Informativeness.

### Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)

Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) is a process of communication between customers that occurs on digital platforms, including the exchange of information, opinions, and recommendations regarding products, services, or brands in various forms such as online reviews, ratings, comments, testimonials, blog or social media posts, to video reviews, which are spread through platforms such as review sites, forums, or online communities (Indrawati et al., 2023). Another definition of e-WOM is that it includes positive or negative aspects of brands, products, services from current, former, or potential consumers, who voluntarily share their experiences on the internet (Ismagilova et al., 2020). According to Goyette I. et al., (2010), the main indicators of e-WOM include: Intensity, valence and content.

### Brand Image

Brand image is defined as the cognitive representation that consumers have of a brand, which is formed through associative relationships, empirical experiences, and deep impressions embedded in the consumer's memory. Brand image acts as a distinctive identity that distinguishes a brand from competitors who offer similar products, while reflecting the brand's efforts to meet the psychological and social needs of consumers through the constructed image (Kotler et al., 2022). Brand image plays a role as an important asset that shapes consumer confidence in the value offered, not just name recognition, but a reflection of various associations embedded in consumers' minds (Tahir et al., 2024). According to Keller & Swaminathan, (2020), Brand image acts as a psychological bridge between marketing strategy and consumer experience towards purchase decisions. When a marketing strategy

succeeds in forming a positive perception, brand image can influence consumer attitudes and decisions. Brand image indicators include: brand association, quality perception, brand uniqueness, brand personality, and suitability with consumer lifestyle.

### Purchase Decision

Purchasing decisions mark the final stage of consumer behavior within the framework of a complex decision-making process, in which consumers consciously choose one product or brand from the many options offered to meet their needs and desires (Kotler et al., 2022). According to Listyawati et al., (2024), Purchasing decisions arise as a result of the consumer's deliberation process in determining the product to be obtained, which is based on empirical experience as well as previously collected information. The stages of the purchase decision include: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchasing decisions, and post-purchase behavior (Kotler et al., 2021). Indicators of measurement of purchasing decisions include: product choice, brand choice, seller choice, purchase amount, purchase time and payment method (Kotler et al., 2022).

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework serves as a model that illustrates the interconnection between theories and various factors that have been recognized as crucial issues or problems (Sugiyono, 2023).

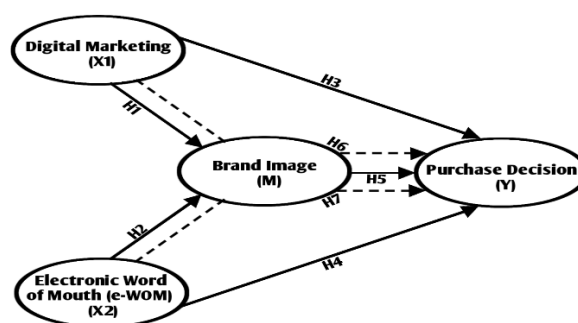


Figure 3. Conceptual Framework.

### Hypothesis

Hypothesis are temporary answers to research problems, which need to be tested for truth through actual data (Sugiyono, 2023).

H1 = Digital Marketing is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on Brand Image.

H2 = Electronic word of mouth (e-Wom) is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on Brand Image.

H3 = Digital Marketing is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions.

H4 = Electronic word of mouth (e-Wom) is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on the Purchase Decision

H5 = Brand Image is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on the Purchase Decision.

H6 = Brand Image is suspected of mediating the influence of Digital Marketing on Purchase Decisions.

H7 = Brand Image is suspected of mediating the influence of Electronic word of mouth (eWom) on Purchase Decision.

### **3. Research Methods**

#### **Types of Research**

This study adopts a Quantitative Descriptive approach with causal methods to identify cause-and-effect relationships. According to Creswell, (2023) The quantitative approach is defined as a research methodology that prioritizes the measurement and analysis of numerical data on the phenomenon that is the object of study.

#### **Research Location**

This research was carried out in Surabaya, precisely at the branch of the fore coffee shop located on Sulawesi Street No.54, Ngagel, Wonokromo District, Surabaya, East Java.

#### **Population and Sample**

Population is all elements that are the scope of generalization, where these elements include all subjects to be measured and function as a unit that is the focus of the research (Sugiyono, 2023). Population in the context of this empirical study, the population includes all Fore consumers who have carried out at least one purchase transaction at the Fore outlet on Sulawesi Street. The scale of the population in this study could not be revealed.

A sample can be interpreted as a part of a population that represents the size and characteristic attributes of the population as a whole (Sugiyono, 2023). The sample determination was carried out through a non-probability sampling approach through the application of the purposive sampling technique, which involves the selection of subjects based on special criteria, namely individuals who have made purchases at least once at the Fore outlet on Sulawesi Street. Since the population number is unknown, the sample size is determined based on the Hair formula. The sample size is calculated by multiplying the number of question items in the questionnaire instrument by the number 5-10. In this study, there are 20 questionnaire items, where the number of questionnaire items is multiplied by 5. So the number of samples needed is 100 respondents.

#### **Data Source.**

The research data was obtained from primary sources collected directly by the researcher through the questionnaire dissemination process. In addition, this study also utilizes literature studies to gather relevant theoretical bases from various books, journals, and previous research that support the analysis process.

### **Data Collection Techniques**

Data collection was carried out through an electronic-based questionnaire instrument that applied the Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree), with distribution to respondents carried out through the Google Forms platform.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

In this study, the data analysis method applied was Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which was done with the help of SmartPLS 4 software. PLS-SEM is known as a variant-based approach that is considered effective for exploring the linkages between latent variables, including causal models involving complex mediation. PLS-SEM was chosen because it is goal-oriented for prediction and theory development, and does not require strict (non-parametric) data distribution assumptions. This method includes two main components, namely, the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model) (Hair et al., 2020).

### **Definition Operational**

#### **Digital Marketing (X1)**

1. Accessibility: Ease of consumers in accessing the Fore digital platform to find product information, outlet locations, and make purchases.
2. Interactivity: The ability of Fore's digital channels to facilitate two-way communication and direct response between brands and their consumers.
3. Entertainment: Fore's ability to engage in digital content to be engaging, fun, or entertaining, thus encouraging consumers to spend more time on the platform.
4. Credibility: The level of consumer trust in the information, product quality, and promises conveyed by Fore through its digital channels.
5. Irritation: The level of annoyance or discomfort felt by consumers as a result of Fore's digital marketing strategy.
6. Informativeness: The suitability of Fore digital content provides clear, complete, accurate, and useful information for consumers.

#### **Electronic Word Of Mouth (e-Wom) (X2)**

1. Intensity: The frequency with which consumers receive or seek information about Fore Coffee through digital media such as social media, blogs, or forums.
2. Valence: The tone or sentiment of the information received, whether positive, negative, or neutral.
3. Content: The content of the information shared, such as product reviews, buying experiences, or menu recommendations.

#### **Brand Image (M)**

1. Brand associations: The mental relationship that consumers have with Fore Coffee, such as quality, lifestyle, or brand values.

2. Quality perception: Consumer assessment of the quality of Fore Coffe's products and services.
3. Brand uniqueness: The level of speciality of Fore compared to other coffee brands.
4. Brand personality: Characteristics or image that Fore Coffee has, such as modern, friendly, or premium.
5. Lifestyle Conformity: The degree of conformity of Fore Coffee to the lifestyle and preferences of consumers.

**Purchase Decision (Y)**

1. Product selection: Consumer decision based on the variety of products available at Fore Coffee.
2. Brand choice: Consumer preference for Fore over other coffee brands.
3. Seller choice: Consumer decision based on location or platform of purchase of Fore Coffee (offline/online).
4. Number of purchases: The number of Fore Coffee products purchased by consumers in one transaction.
5. Purchase time: The level of tendency of consumers to buy Fore products when they are doing certain activities such as doing tasks, working, or relaxing.
6. Payment method: The level of convenience and speed of the payment process felt by consumers when transacting at Fore Coffe.

**4. Results and Discussion**

**Outer Model Analysis**

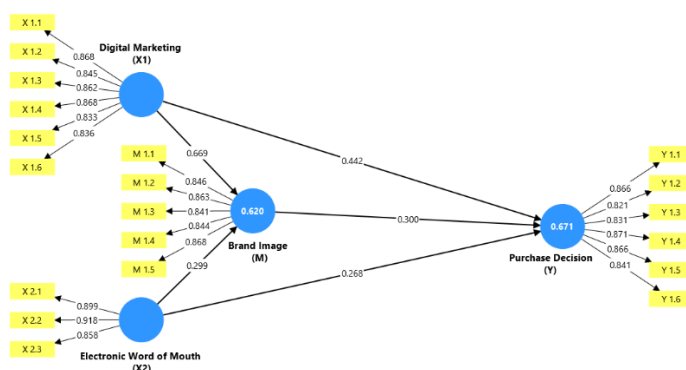


Figure 4. Outer Model Results.

**Indicator Reliability**

The reliability of the indicator is assessed through the Outer Loadings (Coefficient of Charge) value of each indicator. *Loading Factor* > 0.7 shows that the indicator has quite good reliability in reflecting its construct (Hair et al., 2020).

Table 1. Outer Loading.

| Brand Image |       | Digital Marketing |       | e-Wom |       | Purchase Decision |       |
|-------------|-------|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|-------|
| M 1.1       | 0.846 | X 1.1             | 0.868 | X 2.1 | 0.899 | Y 1.1             | 0.866 |
| M 1.2       | 0.863 | X 1.2             | 0.845 | X 2.2 | 0.918 | Y 1.2             | 0.821 |

|       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| M 1.3 | 0.841 | X 1.3 | 0.862 | X 2.3 | 0.858 | Y 1.3 | 0.831 |
| M 1.4 | 0.844 | X 1.4 | 0.868 |       |       | Y 1.4 | 0.871 |
| M 1.5 | 0.868 | X 1.5 | 0.833 |       |       | Y 1.5 | 0.866 |
|       |       | X 1.6 | 0.836 |       |       | Y 1.6 | 0.841 |

Based on the data in Table 1, all indicators show values of more than 0.70, thus, it can be concluded that all of them are reliable and feasible to apply in construct measurements.

**Convergent Validity and Construct Reliability**

Convergent validity is evaluated through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. A good AVE value is > 0.5, which indicates that the construct explains more than 50% of the variance of its indicators. Meanwhile, Construct Reliability is measured to assess the internal consistency of indicators in measuring constructs. The ideal Composite Reliability (CR) value is > 0.7 (Hair et al., 2020).

**Table 2.** Convergent Validity and Construct Reliability.

|                   | Cronbach's alpha | Composite reliability (rho_a) | Composite reliability (rho_c) | Average variance extracted (AVE) |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Brand Image       | 0.906            | 0.907                         | 0.930                         | 0.726                            |
| Digital Marketing | 0.925            | 0.925                         | 0.941                         | 0.726                            |
| e-Wom             | 0.871            | 0.875                         | 0.921                         | 0.796                            |
| Purchase Decision | 0.923            | 0.924                         | 0.940                         | 0.722                            |

Based on the data in table 2. The entire construct has an AVE value of > 0.50 and a CR > 0.70, thus the applied model is proven to be valid and reliable.

**Discriminant Validity**

The validity of the discriminant is checked to ensure that each construct is separate from the others. The evaluation was carried out using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) value, where the recommended HTMT value < 0.90 (or < 0.85 for stricter) (Hair et al., 2020).

**Table 3.** Discriminant Validity.

| Variable          | Brand Image | Digital Marketing | e-Wom | Purchase Decision |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|
| Brand Image       |             |                   |       |                   |
| Digital Marketing | 0.796       |                   |       |                   |
| e-Wom             | 0.491       | 0.228             |       |                   |
| Purchase Decision | 0.809       | 0.775             | 0.546 |                   |

Based on the information in table 3. Visualize that the entire value of the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) < 0.90, so that it can be concluded that the model is valid.

### Inner Model Analysis

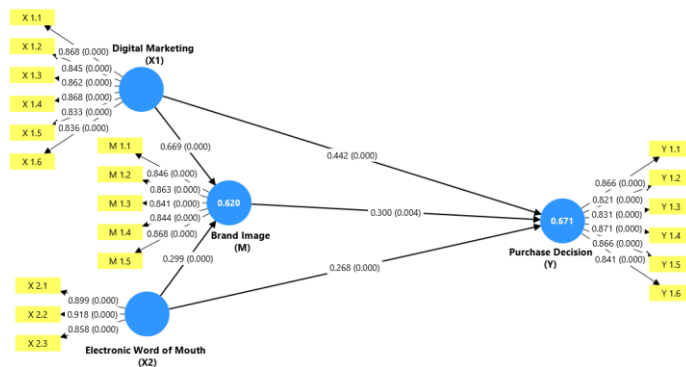


Figure 5. Inner Model Results.

### Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity Test Examined with the value of Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) on the predictor variable. The VIF value should be < 5 to ensure the model is free of significant multicollinearity issues (Hair et al., 2020).

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test.

| Variable                               | VIF   |
|--|-------|
| Brand Image -> Purchase Decision       | 2.630 |
| Digital Marketing -> Brand Image       | 1.045 |
| Digital Marketing -> Purchase Decision | 2.222 |
| E-Wom -> Brand Image                   | 1.045 |
| E-Wom -> Purchase Decision             | 1.280 |

Based on the data presented in Table 4. It indicates that all VIF values are < 5, so it can be concluded that the model is free from multicollinearity.

### Explanatory Strength Test (R<sup>2</sup>)

The explanatory test (R<sup>2</sup>) is a metric used to assess the explanatory power of a structural model. R<sup>2</sup> assesses the proportion of variability in the endogenous (dependent) construct that can be explained by the predictor construct. According to the guidelines, an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.75 is considered *substantial*, 0.50 is moderate, and 0.25 is weak (Hair et al., 2020).

Table 5. Explanatory Strength Test (R<sup>2</sup>).

| Variable          | R-square | R-square adjusted |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Brand Image       | 0.620    | 0.612             |
| Purchase Decision | 0.671    | 0.661             |

Based on the data in table 5. Showing that the R<sup>2</sup> value for Brand Image is 0.620, indicating that 62.0 variances of Brand Image are explained by Digital Marketing and e-Wom. Meanwhile, the R<sup>2</sup> for Purchase Decisions reached 0.671, which means that 67.1% of the variance was described by Digital Marketing, e-WOM, and Brand Image. Because both values are above 0.50 (the threshold of the medium category), this research model is considered to have moderate explanatory power.

### Predictive Relevance Test (Q<sup>2</sup>)

The predictive power evaluation of the model was carried out by testing the predictive relevance (Q<sup>2</sup>) using the PLSpredict/CVPAT procedure. The results of the analysis show that the model has sufficient predictive relevance if the value of Q<sup>2</sup> is > 0 for the dependent variable. The classification of predictive relevance levels, referring to the guidelines, was small (Q<sup>2</sup> > 0), medium (Q<sup>2</sup> > 0.25), and large (Q<sup>2</sup> > 0.50) (Hair et al., 2020).

**Table 6.** Predictive Relevance Test (Q<sup>2</sup>).

| Variable          | Q <sup>2</sup> predict | RMSE | MAE  |
|-------------------|------------------------|------|------|
| Brand Image       | 0.602                  | 0.64 | 0.51 |
| Purchase Decision | 0.618                  | 0.63 | 0.48 |

Based on the data in table 6. Showed strong Q<sup>2</sup> values on both endogenous variables. The Q<sup>2</sup> value for Brand Image was 0.602 and for Purchase Decision was 0.618. Since these two values exceed the > threshold of 0.50, the model is declared to have a predictive quality that is relevant.

### Hypothesis Test (Direct Effects)

Testing of direct and indirect effects between variables was carried out through the Bootstrapping mechanism using a number of 5,000 resamples, as recommended to obtain a precise estimate. The direct relationship hypothesis is accepted if the P-Value is < 0.05 and the t-statistic > 1.96 (Hair et al., 2020).

**Table 7.** Hypothesis Test (Direct Effects).

| Variable Connection                    | Original sample (O) | Sample mean (M) | Standard deviation (STDEV) | T statistics ( O/STDEV ) | P values |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Brand Image -> Purchase Decision       | 0.300               | 0.303           | 0.103                      | 2.908                    | 0.004    |
| Digital Marketing -> Brand Image       | 0.669               | 0.669           | 0.054                      | 12.438                   | 0.000    |
| Digital Marketing -> Purchase Decision | 0.442               | 0.439           | 0.096                      | 4.587                    | 0.000    |
| E-Wom -> Brand Image                   | 0.299               | 0.301           | 0.057                      | 5.206                    | 0.000    |
| E-Wom -> Purchase Decision             | 0.268               | 0.266           | 0.067                      | 3.990                    | 0.000    |

Based on the data in Table 7, the following findings were obtained from the analysis:

**Hypothesis 1 (H1)** "Digital Marketing is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on Brand Image". Based on the data in table 7. Showing that t-statistics 12,438 > 1.96 and P-Value 0.000 < 0.05, H1 is accepted, meaning that Digital Marketing is proven to have

a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. This is in line with studies conducted by (Iswara et al., 2024; Muti & Frimansyah, 2025).

**Hypothesis 2 (H2)** "Electronic word of mouth (e-Wom) is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on Brand Image". Based on the data in table 7. Showing that t-statistics  $5,206 > 1.96$  and P-Value  $0.000 < 0.05$ , H2 is accepted, which means that e-Wom is proven to have a positive and significant effect on Brand Image. This is in accordance with a study conducted by (Fazrin et al., 2024; Fietroh & Rizqi, 2025; Zain & Vania, 2024).

**Hypothesis 3 (H3)** "Digital Marketing is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions". Based on the data in table 7. Showing that t-statistics  $4,587 > 1.96$  and P-Value  $0.000 < 0.05$ , H3 is accepted, which means that Digital Marketing is proven to have a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions. This is in line with research conducted by (Arrianda et al., 2024; Virariani et al., 2023; Yusuf et al., 2023).

**Hypothesis 4 (H4)** "Electronic word of mouth (e-Wom) is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions". Based on the data in table 7. Showing that t-statistics  $3,990 > 1.96$  and P-Value  $0.000 < 0.05$ , H4 is accepted, which means that e-Wom is proven to have a positive and significant effect on the Purchase Decision. This is in line with research conducted by (Changreani et al., 2023; Maulidya et al., 2025).

**Hypothesis 5 (H5)** "Brand Image is suspected to have a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions". Based on the data in table 7. Showing that t-statistics  $2.908 > 1.96$  and P-Value  $0.004 < 0.05$ , H5 is accepted, which means that Brand Image is proven to have a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions. This is in line with research conducted by (Muti & Frimansyah, 2025; Reynaldi & Nuvriasari, 2024; Rizky et al., 2025)

#### Mediation Effect Test (Indirect Effect)

The role of mediation in influencing the relationship between *Exogenous Variables* and *Endogenous Variables* was tested by analyzing the significance of *Specific Indirect Effects*. If the *P-Value for Indirect Effect is  $< 0.05$  and the t-statistic  $> 1.96$* , then the mediation is significant. The type of mediation (*partial or full mediation*) is determined based on the significance of direct effects and indirect effects (Hair et al., 2020).

**Table 8.** Mediation Effect Test (Indirect Effect).

| Variable Connection                                   | Original sample (O) | Sample mean (M) | Standard deviation (STDEV) | T statistics ( O/STDEV ) | P values |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Digital Marketing -> Brand Image -> Purchase Decision | 0.201               | 0.204           | 0.075                      | 2.683                    | 0.007    |
| E-Wom -> Brand Image -> Purchase Decision             | 0.090               | 0.091           | 0.035                      | 2.579                    | 0.010    |

Based on the data in Table 8, the findings from the analysis are as follows:

**Hypothesis 6 (H6)** "Brand Image is suspected to mediate the influence of Digital Marketing on Purchase Decisions". Based on the data in table 8. Showing that t-statistics 2.683 > 1.96 and P-Value 0.007 < 0.05, H6 is accepted, which means that Brand Image is proven to be positively and significantly able to mediate the influence of Digital Marketing on Purchase Decisions. This is in line with research conducted by (Muti & Frimansyah, 2025).

**Hypothesis 7 (H7)** "Brand Image is suspected to mediate the influence of Electronic word of mouth (e-Wom) on Purchase Decisions". Based on the data in table 8. Showing that t-statistics 2.579 > 1.96 and P-Value 0.010 < 0.05, H7 is accepted, which means that Brand Image is proven to be positively and significantly mediating the influence between Electronic word of mouth (e-Wom) on Purchase Decisions. This is in line with research conducted by (Fietroh & Rizqi, 2025).

## 5. Conclusion

This research reveals that the combination of digital marketing strategies and electronic word of mouth (e-Wom) plays an essential role when shaping brand image and driving consumer purchase decisions at Fore Coffee Surabaya. Key findings confirm that:

1. Digital Marketing has been proven to have a positive and significant effect on Brand Image and Purchase Decisions. Informative, credible, interactive, and accessible content makes consumers view Fore as a relevant, modern, and trusted brand.
2. e-WOM has been proven to have a positive and significant influence on Brand Image and Purchase Decisions. Positive reviews, consumer experience content, and digital recommendations are proven to strengthen consumer perceptions of brands and encourage consumers to make purchasing decisions.
3. Brand Image has been proven to have a positive and significant effect on Purchase Decisions. A strong brand image acts as a "psychological bridge" that makes consumers more confident in choosing Fore products.
4. Brand Image is proven to mediate the influence of Digital Marketing and e-WOM on Purchase Decisions. The role of mediation is partial, because the influence of Digital Marketing and e-WOM remains significant even though Brand Image is involved as an intermediary. Thus, brand image serves to strengthen the impact of digital strategies and communication between consumers, but is not the only path that determines purchasing decisions.

Overall, the research model was able to explain 67.1 percent of the variation in purchasing decisions, which shows that Fore Coffee can strengthen its business performance by optimizing digital marketing, managing e-WOM, and maintaining a sustainable brand image.

Based on the results of the research, Fore Coffee is advised to continue to strengthen its digital marketing strategy by presenting informative, interesting, and interactive content in order to maintain positive consumer perceptions. The management of e-Wom also needs to be done more proactively through quick responses to reviews and encouragement for consumers to share their positive experiences. Because brand image mediation is partial, strengthening brand image needs to be done in conjunction with optimizing digital marketing and e-WOM, accompanied by efforts to maintain consistent product and service quality, considering that brand image has proven to be an important link between digital marketing activities and purchase decisions. For further research, it is recommended to add other variables, as well as expand the research area so that the results are more comprehensive and generalizable.

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