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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Implementation of Brand Image and Social Media Marketing on Purchasing Decisions at The Apurva Kempinski Bali

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Abstract: This study was conducted to investigate how brand image and the implementation of social media marketing effectively can increase consumer purchasing decisions on products or services in the hospitality industry. This study employed a quantitative inferential approach and was carried out at The Apurva Kempinski Bali hotel. The target population in this study includes all followers of the hotel's Instagram account and prospective consumers who want to visit the hotel. Through purposive sampling and the Slovin formula, 100 valid responses were obtained through the distribution of questionnaires. The data gathered were analyzed using multiple linear regression to determine how a strong brand image and the effective implementation of social media marketing could impact consumer choices. The results of the study reveal that a strong brand image, combined with effective social media marketing, significantly enhances consumer purchasing decisions for The Apurva Kempinski Bali's services and products. This underscores the importance of both a robust brand reputation and well-executed social media strategies in driving customer engagement and sales in the hospitality industry. This research contributes to marketing theory by highlighting both strategies influence consumer decisions. Practically, it helps The Apurva Kempinski Bali develop effective strategies for building a strong brand and using social media to attract and engage customers.

Keywords: Brand Image, Social Media Marketing, Purchase Decision

1. INTRODUCTION

Bali, a well-known tourist destination located in Indonesia, is very popular for its breathtaking natural beauty that attracting both domestic and foreign visitors. The high number of tourists coming to Bali has led to fierce competition among businesses in the tourism industry, particularly within the hotel sector. In 2020, the tourism sector experienced a significant decline in the Bali region due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Various efforts were made by tourism actors to maintain their business, but with the very difficult circumstances at that time, many tourism business actors, especially hotel accommodation, were required to close their businesses. With far fewer tourists compared to the number of hotels, competition among hotels has become extremely intense. This situation forces hotel managers and marketers to come up with innovative strategies to retain and attract guests.



Digital marketing has become a crucial strategy implemented by the hotel industry in order to survive in today's competitive market. This strategy involves promoting products through digital channels such as online platforms and social media, which are rapidly evolving (Purwana et al., 2017). Previous literature suggests that the implementation of digital marketing able to increase consumer purchasing interest significantly (Jati, 2017). A popular digital marketing tool today is social media, which involves sharing photos and videos to enhance brand awareness, recognition, and recall, and to facilitate the information search process for consumers (Gunelius, 2011).

To achieve the company's goals in maintaining or increasing consumer purchasing decisions, a company can focus on creating a strong brand image. A brand image encompasses positive attributes, values, benefits, culture and personality which are essentials for building a strong brand (Sударso et al., 2020). Findings from previous studies have successfully proven that a strong brand image will increase consumer purchasing decisions (Nayumi & Sitingjak, 2020; Muslim, 2020; Mawadah, 2020; Sutrasnawati, 2016; Fikri & Mulazid, 2018; Agustina, 2018). In this case, a strong brand image combined with effective implementation of social media marketing enhances consumer confidence and loyalty, leading to increased purchasing decision and consumer's loyalty.

The Apurva Kempinski Bali Hotel is a five-star hotel with a well-recognized brand, the 'Kempinski', which is very popular among tourists. Additionally, the hotel's annual programs featuring Nusantara culture, designed by the marketing team, effectively attract consumer interest and are promoted through various social media platforms. The Apurva Kempinski Bali is able to provide a positive impression that makes this hotel very popular with the domestic market and becomes a market leader among the five-star hotel category in the Nusa Dua area. This hotel is also often used as the main venue for prestigious events, one of which is the G20 Summit.

Table 1: Occupancy Rate of The Apurva Kempinski Bali Rooms Period 2019-2023

Month	Year			
	2019 (%)	2020 (%)	2021 (%)	2023 (%)
January	43.5	55.05	30.2	89.92
February	47.9	34	25.5	81.7
March	49.9	12.2	28.6	81.26
April	50.1	5.2	18.4	84.47
May	54.4	8	26.5	77.26
June	57.8	5.6	24.3	84.53
July	60.4	7.8	39	89.91
August	69.6	5	29.6	85.83
September	70.3	17.7	21.3	86.31
October	70.1	18.3	61.4	78.01
November	73.0	20	70.3	69.2
December	75.4	27	79.2	83.24
Average per Year	60.2	19.4	37.8	82.65

Source: The Apurva Kempinski Bali

Table 1 presents the room occupancy rate data for The Apurva Kempinski Bali hotel, which has fluctuated from year to year. Referring to the data presented, it can be shown that there was a decrease in the average occupancy rate per year in 2020 with a percentage of 19.4% from 60.2% in 2019. However, there was a significant recovery in 2023, with the average occupancy rate rising to 82.65%. Despite this improvement, the occupancy rates in May, October, and November remained below the target of 80%.

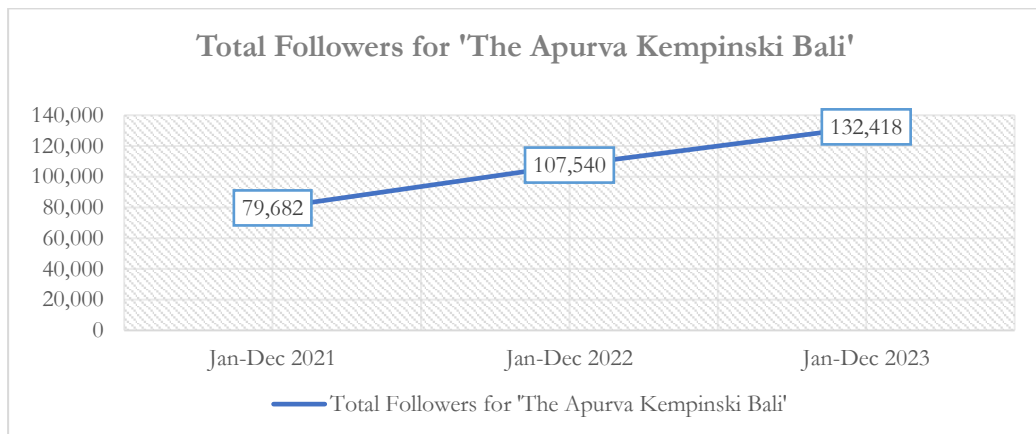


Figure 1: Total Followers Growth Year on Year 2021-2023 on Instagram Accounts The Apurva Kempinski Bali
 Source: *Socialblade*, 2024

Table 2: Comparison of Instagram Followers: The Apurva Kempinski Bali and Competitors

Hotel Name	Number of Followers
The Apurva Kempinski Bali	138.000
The Ritz-Carlton Bali	71.900
Hilton Bali Resort	44.700
The Mulia Bali	210.000

Source: Instagram (accessed on 24 February 2024)

Figure 1 shows a steady increase in the number of Instagram followers for The Apurva Kempinski Bali from 2021 to 2023. However, as indicated in Table 2, when compared to competitors, such as The Mulia Bali, The Apurva Kempinski Bali’s follower count remains significantly lower. Additionally, during a sales presentation to 153 travel agents in Bandung, approximately 15% of the agents were unfamiliar with The Apurva Kempinski Bali brand. This suggests a theoretical gap, where the current social media marketing efforts have not been fully effective, and the Kempinski Instagram account has not yet reached its target market as broadly as needed.

Table 3: Guest Online Reviews of Hotel The Apurva Kempinski Bali

Platforms	Total Review	Positive Review	Neutral Review	Negative Review
Traveloka	1.495	1.358	137	0
Trip Advisor	1.390	1.212	68	111

The results of online reviews in Table 3 show that The Apurva Kempinski Bali has received a high number of positive reviews on the Traveloka and Trip Advisor platforms. This indicates that many guests had favorable experiences and had a positive impression on hotel’s services. With this phenomenon, The Apurva Kempinski Bali hotel must pay more attention to the marketing strategy that will be carried out in the future.

Based on the background and results of previous studies, there is a theoretical gap that occurs where the perception of brand image owned by consumers towards The Apurva Kempinski Bali Hotel still has not had a maximum impact, this is not directly proportional to the marketing strategy carried out through social media marketing, number of followers, room occupancy rates and positive reviews which in this case support the purchase decision at The Apurva Kempinski Bali Hotel. To address this gap, the author plans to conduct a study to explore how the implementation of brand image and social media marketing influences consumer purchasing decisions at The Apurva Kempinski Bali Hotel, aiming to develop effective models, designs, strategies, and mechanisms for improvement.

2. Literature Review

Marketing can be described as a series of activities designed to understand customer needs and desires through the development of products and services (Darsana, 2023). This strategy has a primary goal to help companies effectively and efficiently create, promote, and sell products or services to potential consumers, which ultimately leading to business success (Ahmad, 2020; Febianti & Paramitha, 2022; Sugiyanti & Ahmad, 2023). Furthermore, marketing can be interpreted as a process carried out by businesses in generating value for customers while building strong relationships with them (Kotler & Armstrong, 2019).

Social media marketing is a key digital marketing strategy or activity that utilizes social media platforms to introduce and promote products, and also engage with customers (Nur & Pasca Arnu, 2021). According to Rayat et al. (2017), consumer loyalty will be formed positively if the company can provide promotional benefits, relevant content, and popular material across all social media channels. Additionally, Luo et al. (2013) suggests that social media marketing is a system that involves consumer interaction and participation in assessing and providing product feedback so that market trust is created. In other words, social media marketing is one form of implementation of the use of online networks as a strategy to engage, interact and collaborate with customers with the aim of developing market share and adding new consumers. This is in line with Gunelius' statement in Mileva and DH (2018) where social media marketing carried out by a business can shape individual opinions and has the potential to influence a broader audience's thoughts before they make purchasing decisions.

Brand image can be illustrated as a view that arises in the minds of consumers or a perception and impression that consumers have of a brand when they think about it (Daga, 2017; Indrasari, 2019; Dwi et al., 2020). Furthermore, brand image can be defined as a name, term, symbol, sign, design, or a combination of these elements that distinguishes a product or service from its competitors (Iswanto, 2017; Sudarso et al., 2020). In essence, brand image is the collection of beliefs and perceptions that consumers hold about a brand. It reflects how consumers view the brand and is influenced by the brand's ability to shape their perceptions. Brand image serves as a key factor in determining whether the brand name resonates with customers and how effectively it differentiates products and marketing efforts (Sano, 2015).

Brand image serves as a crucial source of added value, highlighting its role in enhancing product value and shaping consumer experiences. A positive brand image helps consumers easily accept and appreciate a product, leading to greater satisfaction. According to Kotler, as cited by Prasetya et al. (2018), an effective brand image accomplishes three key things: it builds the product's character and offers appropriate value, distinguishes the product from competitors with a unique character, and provides emotional appeal in addition to rational benefits. The value of the product or brand, as perceived by consumers, significantly influences their purchasing decisions.

The consumer purchasing decision-making process is a critical aspect of buying products (Engel, as cited in Firmsanyah, 2019). A purchasing decision can be defined as the final choice a consumer makes to buy a product or service after considering various factors. It involves a series of steps that consumers go through before making a purchase, including evaluating different options (Kusuma et al., 2021; Yuniar et al., 2021). Essentially, a consumer's purchase decision is the outcome of their mental process in assessing and choosing among alternatives within a product category.

This study was conducted to investigate the role of brand image and social media marketing strategy and its relationship to consumer purchasing decisions at The Apurva Kempinski Bali hotel. This study is based on the following hypotheses:



- H1: A strong brand image significantly impacts purchasing decisions positively.
- H2: Effective social media marketing significantly impacts purchasing decisions positively.
- H3: Both a strong brand image and effective social media marketing significantly impact purchasing decisions positively.

3. Research Method and Materials

Current research was conducted at The Apurva Kempinski Bali Hotel located at Jl. Raya Nusa Dua Selatan, Benoa, Kec. Kuta Sel., Badung Regency, Bali 80361, focusing on understanding the role of brand image and effective implementation of social media marketing in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. The target population in this study includes all active followers of the hotel's Instagram account, @TheApurvaKempinskiBali, and prospective consumers who planning to stay at The Apurva Kempinski Bali Hotel. Using a purposive sampling method and calculating the sample size with the Slovin formula, a total of 100 respondents were selected for participation. Empirical data were gathered through questionnaires employing a 5-point Likert scale to measure various variables. Each variable can be measured through indicators adopted from previous research. Specifically, the brand image variable was evaluated using three indicators: corporate image, user image, and product image. For the social media marketing variable, several indicators were considered, including online communities, interaction, content sharing, accessibility, and credibility. The purchasing decision variable was assessed through five indicators: product choice, brand choice, distributor choice, purchase timing, and purchase amount. The data in this study are sourced from respondents' responses to the questionnaire statements, along with additional information obtained from the hotel's department of The Apurva Kempinski Bali. The data were then analyzed using multiple linear regression techniques with SPSS software. This comprehensive approach allowed for an in-depth examination of how brand image and social media marketing strategies impact consumer decision-making processes at The Apurva Kempinski Bali Hotel.

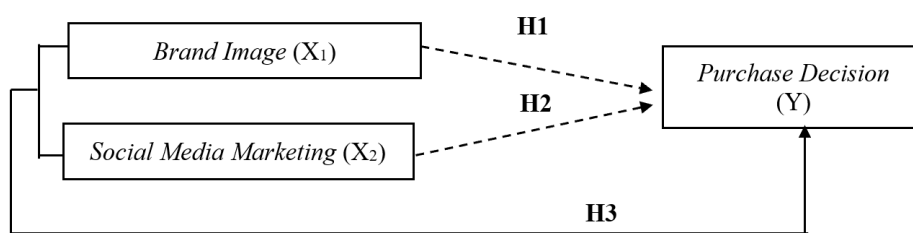


Figure 2: Hypothesis Path Framework

4. Results and Discussion

This study was conducted to explore the role of brand image and the implementation of social media marketing on consumer purchasing decisions at The Apurva Kempinski Bali hotel. The data distribution procedure through a questionnaire successfully obtained valid data from 100 respondents. Table 4 shows that most of the respondents who participated were followers and potential consumers of The Apurva Kempinski Bali, male (52%), aged 26-40 years (36%), and working as entrepreneurs (35%).

Table 4: Demographic Profile



Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Gender		
Male	52	52%
Female	48	48%
Age:		
17 – 25 years	33	33%
26 – 40 years	36	36%
41 – 50 years	23	23%
> 50 years	8	8%
Occupation:		
Students	19	19%
Private Employee	27	27%
Civil Servant	9	9%
Entrepreneur	35	35%
Others	10	10%
Total	100	100%

The results of the instrument test, detailed in Table 5, demonstrate that the overall research data has been proven valid and can be considered consistent or reliable. This conclusion is supported by several key metrics, such as the positive correlation values obtained were consistently above the minimum requirement of 0.30, indicating that the measurements used are appropriately aligned with the variables being studied. Moreover, the Cronbach's alpha values obtained were above the rule of thumb of 0.60 which reflects that the data has a high level of internal consistency and reliability.

Table 5: Instruments Test

Variable	Indicators	Correlations	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Image	X1.1	0.844	0.914
	X1.2	0.880	
	X1.3	0.855	
	X1.4	0.840	
	X1.5	0.823	
	X1.6	0.810	
Social Media Marketing	X2.1	0.839	0.941
	X2.2	0.832	
	X2.3	0.861	
	X2.4	0.833	
	X2.5	0.812	
	X2.6	0.756	
	X2.7	0.829	
	X2.8	0.845	
	X2.9	0.748	
	X2.10	0.748	
Purchase Decision	Y.1	0.812	0.951
	Y.2	0.804	
	Y.3	0.805	
	Y.4	0.885	
	Y.5	0.856	
	Y.6	0.806	
	Y.7	0.861	
	Y.8	0.838	
	Y.9	0.863	
	Y.10	0.833	

The results of the classical assumption test, summarized in Table 6, reveal that the data meets key statistical assumptions for regression analysis. The result confirms that the data has been proven to have a normal distribution supported by the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) values obtained exceeding 0.05. Additionally, the research data further shows that there is no correlation

between the independent variables, as the VIF values are below 10 and the tolerance values exceed 0.10. Table 6 also confirms that there is no heteroscedasticity problem in the regression model, which is indicated by a significance value above 0.05 for each variable. Finally, the deviation from linearity values for both independent variables exceeded a score of 0.05, confirming a linear relationship between each independent variable and the purchasing decisions.

Table 6: Classic Assumption Test

Classic Assumption Test		Score
Normality Test		
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0.200
Multicollinearity Test		
VIF		1.662
Tolerance		0.602
Heteroscedasticity Test		
Brand Image (Sig.)		0.567
Social Media Marketing (Sig.)		0.620
Linearity Test (Deviation from Linearity)		
Brand Image → Purchase Decision		0.138
Social Media Marketing → Purchase Decision		0.496

The multiple linear regression equation obtained is as follows:

$$Y = 6.359 + 0.687X_1 + 0.426X_2 + e$$

Table 7: Multiple Regression Analysis Result

Variables	Unstandardized		
	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	6.359	2.472	0.015
Brand Image	0.687	5.647	0.000
Social Media Marketing	0.426	5.225	0.000

Based on the regression equation obtained from the analysis, it can be shown that all variables have a positive impact on purchasing decision, which is supported by the positive coefficient value obtained. First, the positive constant value of 6.359 suggests that when all independent variables are held at zero, the purchasing decision is predicted to decrease by 6.359 percent. Secondly, the brand image variable shows a positive coefficient of 0.687 which implies that for every one-unit increase in brand image, purchasing decisions are expected to rise by 0.687 units, assuming other variables remain unchanged. Lastly, the regression coefficient for social media marketing is 0.426 which indicates that for every one-unit increase in social media marketing efforts, purchasing decisions are projected to increase by 0.426 units, provided that other variables do not change. These results highlight the significant positive effects of a strong brand image and effective social media marketing implementation on consumer purchasing decisions.

Table 8: Coefficient Determination Test

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.789	0.623	0.615	4.159



Referring to table 8 above shows the R value of 0.789, where the value is between 0.71 - 0.99 and is categorized as very strong. This indicates that the brand image and marketing through social media have a very strong relationship to purchasing decisions. Furthermore, the results of the analysis revealed that the R Square value of 0.623 indicates that 62.3% of the variation in purchasing decision variables can be explained by variations in the two independent variables of brand image, social media marketing, while the rest (100% - 62.3%) = 37.7% is explained by other factors not accounted for by these two independent variables.

Table 9: Hypothesis Test Result

Variables	Unstandardized		
	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	6.359	2.472	0.015
Brand Image	0.687	5.647	0.000
Social Media Marketing	0.426	5.225	0.000

F-Test (Sig.) = 0.000
F-Test (F-count) = 80.156

Table 9 provides a summary of the research hypothesis test result. Referring to Table 9, it can be confirmed that brand image and the implementation social media marketing significantly influence purchasing decisions, both partially and simultaneously. First, it was found that brand image achieved a t-count value of 5.647 ($>$ t-table 1.660) and a significance level of 0.000 ($<$ 0.05). This result indicates that brand image has a statistically significant effect on purchasing decisions. This finding is consistent with previous research (Desi, 2022), which suggests that an enhanced brand image positively impacts consumer purchasing decisions at The Apurva Kempinski Bali Hotel. Brand image plays a crucial role in influencing purchasing decisions because a strong and favorable brand image makes a company more appealing to consumers, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase (Daga, 2017; Indrasari, 2019). Sano (2015) highlights that brand image is a key factor in determining how well a brand resonates with customers and impacts their product and marketing responses.

Second, the social media marketing variable successfully obtained a t-value of 5.225 ($>$ t-table 1.660) with a significance level of 0.000 ($<$ 0.05). This indicates that social media marketing has a significant effect on purchasing decisions. This finding is supported by Iskandar (2020), who found that effective social media marketing enhances purchasing decisions at The Apurva Kempinski Bali Hotel. Social media marketing focuses on using social media platforms to disseminate marketing information and engage with potential customers. When executed effectively, it enables the company to promote its offerings more broadly and attract a larger audience interested in making purchases (Mileva & DH, 2018). This enhanced reach and engagement through social media marketing contribute to increased consumer interest and purchasing behavior.

Simultaneously, the analysis reveals that the F-count value obtained is 80.156 ($>$ F-table 3.09) with a significance level of 0.000 ($<$ 0.05), indicating that both variables are proven to have a simultaneous influence on purchasing decisions. This result is consistent with the research conducted by Dewi et al. (2020) and Annissa (2021), which suggests that improvements in both brand image and marketing through the use of social media lead to increased purchasing decisions at The Apurva Kempinski Bali Hotel. This evidence supports the notion that enhancing both brand image and social media marketing efforts can effectively boost consumer purchasing decisions.

5. Conclusion



This study focuses on examining the influence of brand image and social media marketing on consumer purchasing decisions on The Apurva Kempinski Bali hotel services and products. This study was conducted by involving 100 respondents who were followers of the hotel's Instagram account and potential consumers of The Apurva Kempinski Bali. The results of the research hypothesis test successfully proved that the two variables, namely brand image and social media marketing, are two elements that are pivotal to the company's success. The findings indicate that a strong brand image, reflecting a positive company reputation, along with effective social media marketing strategies, are essential in enhancing consumer purchasing decisions. This underscores the importance of cultivating a favorable brand perception and leveraging social media as key strategies to boost consumer interest and drive purchasing behavior for the products and services offered by the hotel.

The following recommendations are suggested for The Apurva Kempinski Bali to enhance its performance and consumer engagement. Firstly, the hotel is expected to evaluate the services offered, so that later it can provide services that are in accordance with the budget and needs of consumers. Furthermore, The Apurva Kempinski Bali is expected to provide training to social media admin staff, so that social media human resources are able to interact well with consumers. The Apurva Kempinski Bali hotel is expected to always maintain its image and implement social media marketing well. Since this study had some limitations, future research should explore other factors that influence purchasing decisions beyond brand image and social media marketing. This can help identify additional strategies to improve customer decisions and enhance the hotel's success.

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