Influencer and Viral Marketing: Strengthening Efforts Brand Image on Local Cosmetic Brands Somethinc

Aris Baharuddin[1], Nur Astaman Putra[2], Natasya Ananda Lili[3], Kemal Sandi[4]
[1,3] Department of Administrative, Faculty Science of Social Science and Law,
Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia
[2]Majene State Islamic College, West Sulawesi, Indonesia
[4]Faculty of Vocation, Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia
Email : aris.baharuddin@unm.ac.id[1]

ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the formation of the brand image through influencer and viral marketing on the local cosmetic brand Something. Brand image variable indicators include strength, uniqueness, and superiority or preference. The indicators of influencer variables include expertise, trust, and attractiveness. Meanwhile, indicators of viral marketing variables include product knowledge, product information clarity, and product discussion. The research method used is quantitative. The sample used is the sample formulated by Slovin, namely as many as 100 respondents, with data collection techniques through questionnaires. The data obtained were processed using data analysis techniques in the form of validity and reliability tests, classical assumption tests, multiple linear regression analysis, hypothesis testing, and the coefficient of determination. The results showed that the brand image variable, influencer, and viral marketing partially positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

Keywords: Brand Image; Influencers; Viral Marketing; Cosmetics

INTRODUCTION

The progress of this digital era is marked by the large number of internet users. From a survey conducted by the Association of Indonesian Internet Service Providers, data was obtained that Indonesian Internet users 2019 reached 132.7 million users (Purwatiningsih, 2021). However, in the second quarter of 2020, it increased to 196.7 million people, which means there was a big jump. This was triggered by the implementation of social restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic which required people to keep their distance to form a new pattern of living habits in society, namely by staying at home, avoiding physical contact, and making everything connected online indicating the rapid use of the internet in Indonesia (Farisha, 2022).

The rapid development of the use of the internet and social media is used as a momentum to make a shift in marketing. According to Kotler & Keller (2016), marketing is an organizational function and a series of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders. Furthermore, Kotler & Armstrong, (2008) provides the theory

of the marketing concept that the key to achieving organizational goals is to be more effective than competitors in integrating marketing activities to determine and satisfy the needs and wants of target markets. The basic factors of the marketing concept according to B. S. Irawan (2005) include consumer orientation and earning profits through consumer marketing, namely carrying out the best strategy which can include providing value through products and determining marketing programs so that they can influence purchasing decisions when consumers need them, as an orientation where the consumer is the determining factor for the company to earn profits. When consumers are satisfied, they tend to make repeat purchase transactions or become effective promotional media for other potential customers by sharing their satisfying experiences. So that it can be seen that marketing is based on consumers. Supported by the phenomenon of increasing internet users, marketing activities can be carried out online to enable a brand to achieve its goal of reaching wider and unlimited consumers (Tanuwijaya & Mulyandi, 2021).

Purchase decisions made by consumers will be considered by consumer perceptions of a product with a well-known brand and an image (Miati, 2020). Therefore, the company should create a strong brand image so that it becomes an advantage or added value in competing and at the same time earns affects consumer purchase decisions.

Furthermore, marketing that occurs today is mainly done online using service influencers. This is a key component for reaching target consumers on social media (Sanahuja, 2020). Influencers can establish intimacy and affective relationships with followers by sharing information about opinions and everyday life (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). An influencer is a public figure who cooperates with a brand to promote a product or brand to their large followers on social media to influence purchasing decisions (Nur Fadhillah Nasrul, 2021).

Besides influencers, there are marketing techniques online other which can be used to influence purchasing decisions is viral marketing. It is a word-of-mouth marketing technique online (EWOM)where consumers participate in promoting or spreading original and entertaining messages to encourage consumers to convey messages to other consumers (A. Irawan, 2019a). Dissemination of the marketing message behind the "virus" can make a product or brand very close to the lives of potential consumers (Ananda, 2019).

Based on the above, this study examines further related to the formation of a brand image through an influencer, and viral marketing on local cosmetic brands Somethinc.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach which was carried out for three months. The location of this research is in Makassar City but it is carried out using application media followers Instagram @somethinkofficial who have purchased local brand cosmetic products Somethinc domiciled in Indonesia. The population in this study namely followers on Instagram @somethinkofficial number 1,375,492. The determination of the population is based on the assumption that followers of Instagram @somethinkofficial find information on local brand cosmetic products Somethinc that have been promoted. Based on sample calculations using the Slovin formula, the required number of samples is 100. The determination of the sample criteria was added so that it is relevant to the research being carried out, namely: (a) Following the Instagram account @somethinkofficial, and (b) Having purchased local brand cosmetic products Somethinc. Based on the predetermined sample criteria, this study uses the sampling method namely purposive sampling. Data collection techniques in this study used questionnaires and documentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The brand image variable in this study is measured through 6 statements. This variable is measured based on three indicators, namely: strength, uniqueness, and favorable. The distribution of respondents' answers regarding each indicator can be seen as follows.

1. Strength

Strength in this case depends on how the information of a brand enters the consumer's memory, which can include the physical advantages of a brand that may not be found in other brands. Thus the strength of the brand image will be recognized during intense competition and can play a role in consumer purchases. The distribution of respondents' answers on the strength indicator can be seen in Table 4.1.

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents' Answers on Strength Indicators

Statement	Number of Respondents				
	TA	A	U	D	TD
Something products can be trusted because their ingredients are proven to be halal and safe to use	51	41	8	0	0
With the quality provided, Somethinc cosmetic products have quite affordable prices	36	37	21	6	0

Notes:

TA = Totally Agree   A = Agree   U = Undecided   D = Disagree TD = Totally Disagree

Based on the table above, it was found that 51% of respondents totally agreed, 41% agreed, and 8% undecided that the product Somethinc can be trusted because the ingredients are proven to be halal and safe to use. While 37% of respondents agreed, 36% totally agreed, 21% were undecided, and 6% disagreed that with the quality provided, cosmetic products Somethinc has a fairly affordable price. This shows that the respondents agree that the product can be trusted to use although not all agree that the price has a fairly affordable price.

2. Uniqueness

Uniqueness needs to be created so that it can be a reason for a consumer when choosing a brand. In making this uniqueness, this can be done by making differentiation, including the ability of a brand to give a unique impression in product attributes that can be a differentiator from other competing brand products to achieve competitive advantage which can play a role in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. The distribution of respondents' answers to the uniqueness indicator can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2
Distribution of Respondents' Answers on the Uniqueness Indicator

Statement	Number of Respondents				
	TA	A	U	D	TD
The brand name "somethink" gives a unique and memorable impression	49	41	8	0	0
In my opinion, the ingredients in each product "somethink" as a local product are varied	42	49	9	0	0

Notes:
TA   = Totally Agree   A = Agree   U = Undecided   D = Disagree TD = Totally Disagree

Based on the table above, it was found that 49% of respondents totally agree, 41% agreed, and 8% undecided that the brand name "Somethinc" a unique and memorable impression. While 49% of respondents agreed, 42% totally agreed, and 9% undecided that the ingredients in each Somethinc product as a local product varied. This indicates that the majority of respondents agree with the uniqueness of the product Somethinc.

3. Favourable

Excellence has a role as one of the factors in forming a good brand image. This leads to the linkage of the ability of a brand to give a positive impression and is easy to remember by consumers with the brand image that the company wants to fulfill the desires or more satisfaction of consumers. The distribution of respondents' answers on indicators of excellence or favorite can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3
Distribution of Respondents' Answers to Indicators of Favourable

Statement	Number of Respondents				
	TA	A	U	D	TD
In my opinion, "somethink" products are superior compared to similar products	26	39	26	9	0
local cosmetic product brand "somethink" is well known and has a good reputation	44	47	9	0	0

Notes:
TA   = Totally Agree   A = Agree   U = Undecided   D = Disagree
TD = Totally Disagree

Based on the table above, it was found that 39% of respondents agreed, 26% totally agreed, 26% were undecided, and 9% disagree that this product Somethinc is superior to similar products. While 47% of respondents agreed, 44% totally agreed, and

9% undecided that local brand cosmetic products *Somethinc* is well known and has a good reputation. This proves excellence and good reputation for the respondents.

To find out the overall answer about the description of the respondent, in this case, a consumer as well followers Instagram @somethinkofficial is based on a brand image variable indicator consisting of strength, uniqueness, and favorable.

A variable influencer in this study is measured through six statements. This variable is measured based on three indicators, namely expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. The distribution of respondents' answers from each indicator can be seen as follows.

4. Expertise

Expertise in this case refers to the knowledge, skills, and experience possessed by a person influencer in advertising a product that can be used as a reference for consumers in making decisions to buy a particular product. it was found that 54% of respondents stated that they totally agreed, 45% agreed, and 1% were undecided. While 47% of respondents agreed, 46% totally agreed, and 7% were unsure about the statement *influencer* have the knowledge and skills in describing local brand cosmetic products Somethinc. This indicates that the majority of respondents believe that *influencers* have expertise when advertising.

5. Trustworthiness

Trust here refers to the honest *influencer* in advertising to be trusted. Trustworthiness is a key characteristic for the effectiveness of such messengers' *influencers.* When *influencer* considered a trusted figure and the information is not in doubt, it can be more influential in convincing others to buy the product. It was found that 46% of respondents agreed, 35% totally agreed, and 19% undecided that they could rely on the honesty of information by *influencers* in conveying advertising messages. While 53% of respondents agreed, 33% totally agreed, and 14% undecided that they trusted the *influencer* who advertises the product Somethinc so be sure to make a purchase. This indicates that *influencers* tend to gain the trust of respondents.

6. Attractiveness

Attractiveness is one of the most important factors that a person must have *influencer* cause of attractiveness which includes the characteristics, appearance, and personality of an *influencer* that can play a role in creating an effective message when it can directly attract the attention of the audience. It was found that 49% of respondents agreed, 44% totally agreed, and 7% undecided that *influencer* when advertising a product has an attractive appearance. While 48% of respondents agreed, 47% totally agreed, and 5% undecided that *influencer* who works together with Somethinc have a convincing style of speech in creating advertising messages. This indicates that the respondent agrees that *influencers* have an appeal when advertising.

To find out the overall answers regarding the description of the respondents, in this case, are consumers as well *followers of* Instagram @somethinkofficial based on variable indicators *influencer* i.e. expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. It is obtained illustrates that the percentage achievement level of the variable *influencer* is in

the very good category which is equal to 86.9%, and based on the results of measuring the characteristics of each indicator shows that all indicators support the quality of the variables *influencer*.

Variable *Viral Marketing* in this study is measured through six statements. This variable is measured based on three indicators, namely product knowledge, product information clarity, and product discussion. The distribution of respondents' answers regarding each indicator can be seen as follows.

7. Product knowledge

Knowledge about a product is the company's goal in presenting information in an advertisement and product descriptions usually contain information to educate users of the product, which can include how to use it, raw materials, and how to store it, which is expected to be understood by consumers. It was found that 59% of respondents totally agreed, 31% agreed, and 10% undecided that they knew a lot of local brand products Somethinc through advertisements on various social media, especially Instagram. While 57% of respondents totally agreed, 38% agreed, and 5% undecided that the product description Somethinc was complete and easy-to-understand information.

8. Clarity of Product Information

The clarity of this product information is an important part of a product as a marketer's effort to provide detailed knowledge about the product to be purchased by prospective customers so that they do not feel disappointed or confused about the items they have purchased. It was found that 62% of respondents totally agreed, 34% agreed, and 4% undecided that information about the product Somethinc is easy to find because it has spread well. While 52% of respondents totally agreed, 43% agreed, and 5% undecided that detailed information about the product Somethinc is clear. This indicates that respondents agree about the clarity of product information they get

9. Talking about Products

When consumers have discussed a product, it will help create credibility for a product or service being marketed because the first thing someone looks for before deciding to buy a product is consumer testimonials or reviews regarding their satisfaction with the product. It is obtained that 40% of respondents agree, 34% totally agree, 22% are undecided, and 4% disagree that they disseminate product superiority Somethinc as a local product and talk about it with the local people. While 45% of respondents totally agreed, 45% agreed, and 10% undecided that they were interested in the product Somethinc after seeing positive reviews from others.

To find out the overall answers regarding the description of the respondents in this case are consumers as well *followers* Instagram @somethinkofficial based on variable indicators of *viral marketing* namely product knowledge, clarity of product information, and talking about products. It is found that the percentage achievement level on the variable *viral marketing* is in the very good category is equal to 88.6%, and based on the results of measuring the characteristics of each indicator shows that all indicators support the quality of variables *Viral Marketing*.

Discussion

Based on the results of the study, it is known that the level of achievement of the variable percentage of local cosmetic product brand image Somethinc was in a good category, namely 84.4%. This shows that the indicators used to support the quality of brand image variables. This can be seen from the results of measuring brand image characteristics through the indicators used, namely strength, uniqueness (*uniqueness*), and superiority or preference (*favorable*). The lowest percentage is in the Excellence or Preference indicator, which is 81.7%. That means though Somethinc has a good reputation but only some consumers do favor it. Meanwhile, the highest percentage is found in the Uniqueness indicator, which is 87%. It denotes a product Somethinc including varied brand names that give a unique impression according to consumers. According to (Kotler & Keller, 2012), uniqueness in this case is the ability of a brand to give a unique impression in product attributes. The uniqueness that exists in the minds of consumers makes the brand chosen and influences purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, regarding variables *influencers* the research results show that the level of achievement is a variable percentage *influencer* local cosmetic products Somethinc is in the very good category is equal to 86.9%. This shows that the indicators used to support the quality of the variables *influencers*. This can be seen from the results of characteristic measurements *influencer* through the indicators used, namely expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. The lowest percentage is the trust indicator which is equal to 83.5%. This means that even though most consumers agree and believe, *influencers* still have to continue to increase that trust. Meanwhile, the highest percentage is found in the skill indicator, which is 89.2%. This indicates the consumer Somethinc consider *influencer to* have expertise in advertising. *Influencers* with the expertise they have when combined with supported brands will produce ads that are persuasive and more attractive to the audience to influence purchasing decisions (Nasrul, 2021).

An influencer is a public *figure* who works together with a *brand* to promote a product or brand to their large following on social media to influence purchasing decisions (Nasrul, 2021). An *influencer* acting as a source of information and liais on the *brand* with potential customers in conveying marketing messages. But each character *influencer* in carrying out marketing communication activities has different levels of credibility, which also has an impact on different levels of trust and effectiveness in influencing (Adrianto, 2021).

Besides *influencers,* there is another technique than *digital marketing* which is used to affect purchase decision is *viral marketing*. *Viral Marketing* is a form of communication that relies on consumers, where they disseminate information on a product through digital messages to other potential customers (Skrob, 2005). This "virus"-like message can spread quickly to reach a larger audience. According to (Irawan, 2019) *viral marketing* is closely related to marketing *EWOM* where a person conveys a marketing message that is entertaining or interesting and plays a role in influencing the purchase decision of potential consumers.

Based on the research results, it is known that the level of achievement is a variable percentage of *viral marketing* local cosmetic products Somethinc is in the very

good category which is equal to 88.16%. This shows that the indicators used to support the quality of the variables *viral marketing*. This can be seen from the results of characteristic measurements of *viral marketing* through the indicators used, namely product knowledge, product information clarity, and product discussion. The lowest percentage is in the indicator of discussing products, namely 83.9%. That means some consumers Somethinc in this study still have less involvement in discussing the product. Meanwhile, the highest percentage is found in the clarity of product information, which is 90.5%. This indicates that consumers consider that the Somethink product information obtained is clear enough and has been well disseminated. Clarity of product information is the delivery of information about a product where this information consumers have the opportunity to choose and make purchasing decisions (Rukmana, 2021).

Another factor that is important to note next that can be used as a differentiator and competitive advantage is the brand image. Purchase decisions made by consumers will be considered by consumer perceptions of a product with a well-known brand and an image (Miati, 2020). Therefore, the company should create a strong brand image so that it plays a role in providing superiority or added value in competing while influencing consumer purchasing decisions.

CONCLUSION

Formation of brand image through Influencer and Viral Marketing on local brand Cosmetics Somethinc can be seen in the research results of each variable. Brand image variables consisting of strengths, uniqueness, and favorable are in the very good category. The most dominant indicator with the highest score is uniqueness, while the indicator with the lowest score in this study is favorable. Meanwhile, variables influencer consisting of indicators of expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness is in the very good category. The most dominant indicator with the highest score is expertise, while the indicator with the lowest score in this study is trustworthiness. Known variable viral marketing consisting of indicators of product knowledge, clarity of product information, and product discussion are in the very good category. The most dominant indicator with the highest score is the clarity of product information, while the indicator with the lowest score in this study is talking about the product.

REFERENCES

Adrianto, R. (2021). Influencer Credibility in Building Consumer Trust in Brands.*Communication Management Research Journal*, *1*(1), 54–60.

Ananda, S. (2019).*The Influence of Viral Marketing and Customer Trust on Application-Based Online Shop Purchasing Decisions in Students of the Faculty of Economics and Business, University of North Sumatra*. The University of Northern Sumatra.

Ardani, N. T. Z. (2020). *The Effect Of Influencers' Credibility On Purchase Decisions (Survey of Consumers in the Billionaires Project in Bintaro Village)*. Bakrie University.

De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2017). Marketing through Instagram influencers: the impact of a number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, *36*(5), 798–828.

Farisha, M. (2022).*Model of Cosmetic Product Purchasing Behavior Before and During the*

COVID-19 Pandemic: Implications for Marketing. Bogor Agricultural Institute.

Hamdani, M.Y. (2018).*The Effect of Viral Marketing on Consumer Trust and Its Impact on Purchasing Decisions (Survey on Students of the Faculty of Administrative Sciences, University of Brawijaya, Class of 2015/2016 Who Have Made Online Purchases through Inst Social Media*. Brawijaya University.

Irawan, A. (2019a).*The Effect of Viral Marketing and Endorsers on Purchasing Decisions with Brand Awareness as an Intervening Variable (Study on Users of Oppo Brand Smartphone Products in Makassar City)*. Alauddin State Islamic University Makassar.

Irawan, A. (2019b).*The Effect of Viral Marketing and Endorsement on Purchasing Decisions with Brand Awareness as an Intervening Variable (Study on Users of Oppo Brand Smartphone Products in Makassar City)*. UIN Alauddin Makassar.

Irawan, B. S. (2005). Modern Marketing Management.*Yogyakarta: Liberty*.

Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2008). *Marketing principles*. Edition.

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016).*Marketing Management and Brand Management, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall*. Inc.

Miati, I. (2020). The Effect of Brand Image on Deenay Veil Purchasing Decisions (Study on Consumers of Gea Fashion Banjar).*Abiwara: Vocational Journal of Business Administration*, *1*(2), 71–83. https://doi.org/10.31334/abiwara.v1i2.795

Nugroho, F., & Rafidan. (2021).*The Relationship between Brand Image, Product Quality and Price on the Purchase Decision of Bigadventure Brand Outdoor Products (Study on the Big Family community in Jabodetabek)*. Indonesian College of Economics, Jakarta.

Nur Fadhillah Nasrul. (2021). *The Effect Of Influencers And Product Quality On Irliana Brand Purchase Decisions*. Palopo state institute of islam.

Nurullah, I. (2016). The Influence of Influencers in Increasing Brand Awareness and Consumer Purchasing Decisions (Case Study: Fashion Blogger Diana Rikasari and Brand Up Shoes).The *University of Indonesia*.

Purwatiningsih, S.D. (2021). Digital Marketing Campaign In Building Startups Through Influencers During The Covid-19 Pandemic.*Expression And Perception: Journal Of Communication Sciences*, *4*(2), 146–156.

Sanahuja, N. (2020). The Science of Influencer Marketing. *Omega Publishers*.

Skrob, J. R. (2005). Open Source and Viral Marketing. The *University of Applied Science Kufstein, Vienna, Austria*.

Tanuwijaya, J., & Mulyandi, R. (2021). The Influence of Viral Marketing and Turbo Marketing on the Decision to Purchase Skincare Somethink.*Journal of Social Science*, *1*(5), 368–373.

Wiludjeng SP, S., & Nurlela, T. S. (2013).*The Influence of Viral Marketing on Purchasing Decisions at PT "X"*.