

# **Analysis of Social Media Marketing Activity, Relationship Equity, and Loyalty: Studies on consumers using Indonesian beauty products, Somethinc**

## **ABSTRACT**

**Aims:** The purpose of this study was to analyze the factors that influence SMMA such as Entertainment, Interactivity, Trendy, Customization, and E-Wom on Relationship Equity and Customer Loyalty on the @somethincofficial Instagram account.

**Study Design:** This study employs a quantitative approach.

**Place and Duration of Study:** This study was conducted in Indonesia between January and February 2023.

**Methodology:** The methodology used in this study uses a quantitative approach with a purposive sampling technique. The criteria for respondents in this study were active users of Instagram social media aged 21 years and over and who had previously purchased Somethinc products. The number of respondents taken in this study was 262 respondents. Data processing uses the PLS-SEM method. The variables used in this research are Entertainment, Interactivity, Trendy, Customization, E-WoM, Relationship Equity, and Customer Loyalty.

**Results:** The results of this study indicate that entertainment has no positive effect on relationship equity. Interactivity has a positive effect on Relationship Equity. Trendy has a positive effect on Relationship Equity. Customization has no positive effect on Relationship Equity. E-WoM has a positive effect on Relationship Equity. While Relationship Equity has a positive effect on Customer Loyalty. The results of this research are expected to help related companies in developing strong relationships with customers based on the brand's social media activity.

**Keywords:** Entertainment, Interactivity, Trendy, Customization, electronic word-of-mouth (E-WoM), Relationship Equity, and Customer Loyalty.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Social media is a collection of internet-based applications that are built on Web 2.0 frameworks and technologies that allow interaction to be created within them [1]. We Are Social (2022), also reports that some working-age internet users actively visit social media platforms only to obtain information about a brand which will then be taken into consideration when buying products or services from that brand [2]. The development of social media has introduced a digital marketing form or approach that has added a new dimension to the modern marketing arena, namely social media marketing activities.

Chen & Lin (2019), define Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) as a process of positively influencing consumer buying behavior, through marketing on social media [3]. Social media marketing describes aspects of customer relations [4]. SMMA makes brands more coverage and is more effective than conventional marketing but at a lower cost [5]. One of the social media platforms that have the most

active users worldwide is Instagram. According to We Are Social, in October 2022 [2], Instagram has a total of 1.386 million users. This number puts Instagram in fourth place after Facebook, YouTube, and Whatsapp. These active users will very likely increase in number along with the convenience of the features in it and the increase in the number of people around the world.

Based on Malarvizhi et al., (2022), this study divides the SMMA into 5 dimensions, namely entertainment, interactivity, trendiness, customization, and electronic word-of-mouth [6]. Entertainment is the way that brands entertain customers by providing funny or interesting content on social media. Interactivity refers to the interaction that makes customers talking each other about the brand. Trendiness is fresh content provided by the brand. Customization refers to the personalization content on social media that make their customer feels like this is the product that they needed. While electronic word-of-mouth is the way that customers share their experiences using the product through social media.

In Indonesia itself, many brands carry out marketing activities on social media. Many have moved from conventional marketing activities to social media. One of them is Somethinc. Somethinc is a local skincare and make-up brand that offers quality so that it suits the skin of Indonesian people and the weather in Indonesia. Social media provides an opportunity for brands to be able to connect with their customers so as to strengthen communication. By creating or building relationships with customers, brands not only make customers buy the products being sold. Brands strive to build relationships that are more than just purchases, namely customer loyalty to the brand.

There are several previous studies that discuss the relationship between social media marketing activities and customer loyalty mediated by relationship equity. However, some of these studies often generalize the existing dimensions of social media marketing activities [7, 8, 9, 10, 11]. Based on Yadav & Rahman (2018) [8], which tested the effect of SMMA on the drivers of consumer equity, showed that SMMA which has five dimensions, namely interactivity, informativeness, electronic word-of-mouth, customization, and trendiness, has a positive impact on various consumer-based drivers, such as value equity, brand equity, and relationship equity. Meanwhile, Nawi et al., (2022), in their research showed that some of the dimensions of the SMMA didn't have a positive impact on relationship equity [12]. Thus, the differences in the findings and the inability of the result to represent the brand in most of the previous studies prompted the authors to further examine the dimensions of SMMA separately and their usage in increasing relationship equity and customer loyalty.

This study aims to examine the relationship of entertainment, interactivity, trendiness, customization, and electronic word-of-mouth variables to cosmetic products in order to increase their relationship equity and customer loyalty. So it is expected to be able to answer the following research questions regarding the dimensions of SMMA separately and its relationship with customer loyalty.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. The S-O-R Model**

This research is built on the theory of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) which was later updated by Jacoby (2002)[13, 14]. According to Donovan and Rossiter (1982), this model supports that certain stimuli will evoke a customer's cognitive and emotional state, which results in some of the customer's behavioral responses [15]. In this study, the stimulus is manifested by SMMA dimensions that are felt by customers. Furthermore, the cognitive and emotional states in this study are manifested by customer equity, in this case, Relationship Equity. Meanwhile, customer behavior responses are realized through customer loyalty as a result or consequence of the influence of these stimuli.

### **2.2. Social Media Marketing Activities**

Previous studies stated that SMMA is described in five dimensions including entertainment, interactivity, trendiness, customization, and electronic word-of-mouth [6]:

#### **2.2.1. Entertainment**

Entertainment is one aspect that provides pleasure derived from using social media [16]. According to Muntinga (2011), customers use the brand to have interesting entertainment, including taking a rest, relieving stress, or just killing time [17]. Entertaining content on social media has become an important component in creating brand relationships with customers. Aggarwal & Mittal (2022), said that social media marketing activities have a positive impact on relationship equity [11].

#### **2.2.2. Interactivity**

Interactivity has become an important concept in online marketing communication. According to McMillan (2002), Interaction refers to communication between customers and producers, and between customers and advertisers [18]. A constant and continuous interaction through social media can build long-term relationships (Taylor et al., 2001), enhancing and strengthening brand relationships with customers [7, 19].

#### **2.2.3. Trendiness**

Godey et al., (2016) define a trend as providing the latest information about a product or service offered by a company through social media [21]. According to Naaman et al., (2011), social media is the primary search platform that leads to the latest information [20].

#### **2.2.4. Customization**

A brand uses its social media to give information about customers' favorite products that can build value and trust [22]. According to Yadav & Rahman (2018), customization can fulfill customer preferences, so they feel they have a very close relationship with the brand [4]. Seo & Park (2018) stated that customization measures how far a product can meet customer needs and preferences [23].

#### **2.2.5. Electronic Word-of-Mouth**

Buttle (1998), stated that Electronic Word-of-Mouth is a major influence on customer knowledge, feelings, and behavior [24]. E-WoM takes many forms including online reviews, ratings, and comments on social media or review websites. Therefore, customers can have a certain relationship with a product or brand when they provide an online review on social media.

#### **2.2.6. Relationship Equity**

Relationship equity refers to a strong relationship between a brand and a customer that ensures customer loyalty to the brand. This is in line with Yadav & Rahman's (2018) research which states that companies must develop their relationships with customers so that they can create a positive association between relationship equity and customer loyalty [4].

#### **2.2.7. Customer Loyalty**

Customer loyalty is defined by Alghesheimer et al., (2005) as a customer's willingness to buy a product repeatedly which shows how committed the customer is to the brand [25]. According to Wollan et al., (2017), recent industry research shows that around 57% of 25,426 customers in 33 countries will buy more of a product from a brand they are loyal to. Customers will also voluntarily review the products they like on social media [26].

### **3. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

#### **3.1. Measurement**

The data collection technique in this study was carried out using a questionnaire and distributing it directly via Google Forms.

Furthermore, this study uses the Summated Scale technique using a Likert Scale. Summated Scale is a scale that utilizes an item analysis approach that is evaluated based on how well these items distinguish between high scores and low scores [27]. Some of the previous studies that used this scaling technique used a Likert Scale, so this study used a Likert Scale in its collection technique. The Likert Scale consists of six degrees, namely strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), slightly disagree (3), slightly agree (4), agree (5), and strongly agree (6).

Finally, hypothesis testing is achieved to test the significance of the relationship between the two variables. The hypothesis will be conducted by P value based on their significance level of 95% and T-statistic value of 1.96 as a reference. The hypothesis will be accepted if the T-statistic value exceeds the reference table. The hypothesis proposed in this study:

- H1:** Entertainment has a positive impact on relationship equity
- H2:** Interactivity has a positive impact on relationship equity
- H3:** Trendiness has a positive impact on relationship equity
- H4:** Customization has a positive impact on relationship equity
- H5:** Electronic word-of-mouth has a positive impact on relationship equity
- H6:** Relationship equity has a positive impact on customer loyalty

### **3.2. Sampling and Data Collection**

The type of data in this study uses primary data. Primary data can be obtained directly from certain sources for specific purposes [28]. Primary data in this study is data derived from respondents' answers to the question items on the questionnaire distributed online. Respondents should be Indonesian Instagram users that familiar with the Somethinc brand.

### **3.3. Data Analysis Techniques**

The analysis technique used in this study is PLS-SEM, considering that this technique can perform statistical calculations more quickly. PLS-SEM specifically overcomes the dichotomy in confirmatory and predictive research, so research should have high prediction accuracy [29].

## **4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1. Respondent Characteristics**

The respondents' profile analysis, classified by gender, age, occupation, the average income in a month, and education can be seen in the following demographic data (Table 1).

Based on Table 1, the respondents of this research were dominated by female respondents (53%). In addition, questionnaire fillers were dominated by respondents with an age range of 21-25 years old with a total of 166 people (64%) working as students/college students (49%) and had an average income of less than IDR 2,000,000 per month (39%).

### **4.2. Measurement Model: Validity and Reliability**

#### 4.2.1. Convergent Validity Testing

Convergent validity can be used to measure a construct correlation between variables. According to Wong (2013), validity is indicated as positive if all constructs get an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of greater than 0.5. However, some experts still tolerate a value of 0.4 [30].

Based on table 2, it can be seen that all loading factors are above 0.5. Therefore, all indicators on the variables RE, ENT, INT, TRE, CST, E-WOM, and CLT, can be declared valid.

#### 4.2.2. Discriminant Validity Testing

According to Fornell & Larcker (1981), to assess discriminant validity it is sufficient to simply measure the square root of each AVE per variable [31]. According to Shiu et al., (2011) stated that Fornell & Larcker's (1981) procedure assessed discriminant validity not based on the highest value of unity in the correlation, so the authors could take a random sample from a correlation population [32]. In addition, Fornell & Larcker (1981) provides an assessment of a specific sample that does not allow judgments to be made based on constructs at the population level [31, 32]. This facilitates research using random samples in a population.

Based on table 3, it can be seen that the related  $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$  construct has a greater correlation with the latent construct. Therefore, all items in this study have good variable structure discriminantly and can be declared valid.

#### 4.2.3. Composite Reliability Testing

Composite Reliability is a form or index that reflects the impact of errors on a scale [33]. Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha interpretations are declared reliable if the values of the two components are  $\geq 0.7$ . According to Utomo (2022), the greater the diversity in the variables contained in the latent construct, the greater the representation of the latent construct [34].

Based on table 2, Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for all variables are  $> 0.70$ . So it can be concluded that all variables are declared reliable so that they can proceed to the next step.

### 4.3. Structural Equation Model Analysis

Table 1. Respondents' demographic characteristics

Category	Frequency	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	122	47
Female	140	53
<b>Age group</b>		
21-25 years	166	64

25-30 years	64	24
31-35 years	27	10
36-40 years	0	0
≥ 41 years	6	2
<b>Average monthly outcomes</b>		
< 2.000.000 IDR	101	39
2.000.000 IDR - 4.000.000 IDR	90	34
4.000.000 IDR - 6.000.000 IDR	55	21
6.000.000 IDR - 8.000.000 IDR	13	5
> 8.000.000 IDR	3	1
<b>Education</b>		
Students/College students	129	49
Diploma/Bachelor Degree	124	47
Master's Degree	9	4
Doctoral Degree	0	0
<b>Last purchase of Somethinc Products</b>		
< 1 month ago	95	36
1 month ago	72	28
2 months ago	51	19
> 3 months ago	44	17

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

**Table 2. The validity convergent and reliability test results**

Construct	Item scale	loadings	CA	CR	AVE
Entertainment	ENT1	0,870	0.897	0.924	0.711
	ENT2	0,850			
	ENT3	0,909			
	ENT4	0,824			
	ENT5	0,754			
Interactivity	INT1	0.850	0.920	0.939	0.756

	INT2	0.854			
	INT3	0.892			
	INT4	0.877			
	INT5	0.874			
Trendiness	TRE1	0.846	0.906	0.930	0.726
	TRE2	0.807			
	TRE3	0.862			
	TRE4	0.871			
	TRE5	0.872			
Customization	CST1	0.865	0.935	0.951	0.794
	CST2	0.870			
	CST3	0.914			
	CST4	0.912			
	CST5	0.893			
Electronic Word-of-Mouth	E-WOM1	0.790	0.846	0.890	0.618
	E-WOM2	0.751			
	E-WOM3	0.796			
	E-WOM4	0.792			
	E-WOM5	0.802			
Relationship Equity	RE1	0.893	0.828	0.897	0.745
	RE2	0.901			
	RE3	0.792			
Customer Loyalty	CLT1	0.854	0.837	0.902	0.754
	CLT2	0.876			
	CLT3	0.874			

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

**Table 3. Fornell-Larcker criterion**

	ENT	INT	TRE	CST	E-WOM	RE	CLT
ENT	0,843						

INT	0,635	0,870					
TRE	0,566	0,723	0,852				
CST	0,343	0,416	0,298	0,891			
E-WOM	0,569	0,484	0,493	0,463	0,786		
RE	0,469	0,488	0,427	0,787	0,512	0,863	
CLT	0,445	0,500	0,418	0,716	0,535	0,718	0,868

\*Notes: ENT: Entertainment, INT: Interactivity, TRE: Trendiness, CST: Customization, E-WOM: Electronic Word-of-Mouth, RE: Relationship Equity, CLT: Customer Loyalty  
Source: Primary data processed (2023)

**Table 4. The results of R-square and Q-square**

Variable	R-square	R-square Adjusted	Q-square
Customer Loyalty	0.516	0.514	0.378
Relationship Equity	0.678	0.672	0.493

Source: Primary data processed (2023)

**Table 5. Estimation results in SEM**

Variable Relation	Hypothesis	$\beta$	P Values	T Statistics	Conclusion
ENT → RE	H1	0,129	.014	2.201	Supported
INT → RE	H2	0,013	.421	0.200	Rejected
TRE → RE	H3	0,111	.029	1.903	Supported
CST → RE	H4	0,674	.000	15.099	Supported
E-WOM → RE	H5	0,065	.118	1.188	Rejected
RE → CLT	H6	0,718	.000	20.374	Supported

\*Notes: ENT: Entertainment, INT: Interactivity, TRE: Trendiness, CST: Customization, E-WOM: Electronic Word-of-Mouth, RE: Relationship Equity, CLT: Customer Loyalty  
Source: Primary data processed (2023)

#### 4.3.1. Effect of Entertainment on Relationship Equity

The Effect of Entertainment (ENT) on Relationship Equity (RE) obtained a path coefficient value of 0.129 and a T Statistics of 2.201 ( $t > 1.96$ ) and a probability of 0.014 ( $p < 0.05$ ). So it can be concluded that Entertainment (ENT) has a significant effect on Relationship Equity (RE). This indicates that entertainment content on brand social media accounts has a role in increasing customer

relationship equity. The results of this study are corroborated by the research of Natiqa et al., (2022) which states that attributes in SMMA (in this case entertainment) have a positive influence on increasing customer relationship equity in luxury clothing brands [35]. The results of previous research that included entertainment as a variable in one dimension of SMMA also had a positive effect on relationship equity [7, 9, 11]. Based on the analysis, this is because customers feel that they need entertaining content to improve their relationship with the brand. Cosmetic brands will focus their social media on interesting entertainment content so as to build positive customer emotions.

On the other hand, these findings are refuted by previous research conducted by Nawi et al., (2022), which states that the entertainment variable has no significant effect on relationship equity [12].

#### **4.3.2. Effect of Interactivity on Relationship Equity**

The influence of Interactivity (INT) on Relationship Equity (RE) obtained a path coefficient value of 0.014 and a T Statistics of 0.200 ( $t < 1.96$ ) and a probability of 0.421 ( $p > 0.05$ ). So it can be concluded that Interactivity (INT) has no significant effect on Relationship Equity (RE). This indicates that interactions such as discussing and sharing opinions that occur on-brand social media accounts have not been able to form brand relationships with their customers. This finding is in line with the research of Nawi et al., (2022) which states that brand interactions such as commenting and liking on-brand social media cannot help improve their relationships with customers [12]. Based on the analysis, this is because customers do not have a tendency to build relationships with brands only based on their intensity in interacting on social media.

Nonetheless, these findings are inversely proportional to the results of the study by Yadav & Rahman (2018), which shows that interactivity as a dimension of SMMA has a positive and significant effect on relationship equity in the e-commerce industry [4]. The differences in these findings indicate that the interactivity relationship with relationship equity has different effects with different research objects and places.

#### **4.3.3. Effect of Trendiness on Relationship Equity**

Trendy Effect (TRE) on Relationship Equity (RE) obtained a path coefficient value of 0.111 and a T Statistics of 1.903 ( $t > 1.96$ ) and a probability of 0.029 ( $p < 0.05$ ). So it can be concluded that Trendy (TRE) has a significant influence on Relationship Equity (RE). This indicates that the latest content or information on social media accounts can form brand relationships with customers. This finding is reinforced by previous research by Nawi et al., (2022) which stated that the trendy variable has a relatively high influence on relationship equity among young mobile phone brand customers in Malaysia [12]. Yadav & Rahman's research (2018) shows that trendy variables included in one of the SMMA dimensions have a positive and significant effect on relationship equity [4]. The findings of Aggarwal & Mittal, (2022) also say that SMMA (trendy in it) has a significant influence on all drivers of customer equity such as value equity, brand equity, and relationship equity [11]. Based on the analysis, this happens because customers tend to build bonds directly with the latest trends on social media.

#### **4.3.4. Effect of Customization on Relationship Equity**

The Effect of Customization (CST) on Relationship Equity (RE) obtained a path coefficient value of 0.674 and a T Statistics of 15.099 ( $t > 1.96$ ) and a probability of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). So it can be concluded that Customization (CST) has a significant effect on Relationship Equity (RE). This indicates that customized

content on brand social media accounts has an influence on improving customer relationships. This finding is reinforced by previous research which states that the customization variable has a strong and significant influence on relationship equity in purchases on e-commerce channels [4]. The results of Aggarwal & Mittal's study, (2022) show that customization (in this finding it is called personalization) has a positive influence on driving consumer equity in cellphone brands [11]. Based on the analysis, this is because cosmetic brand customers tend to choose a product that suits their skin type. Content that contains customization, will make it easier for customers to build relationships with brands.

Nonetheless, the findings of Nawi et al., (2022) show that customization has no significant effect on relationship equity for mobile phone brand consumers aged 18-40 years in Malaysia [12]. This indicates that there are differences in results for different types of objects and research sites.

#### **4.3.5. Effect of Electronic Word-of-Mouth on Relationship Equity**

The effect of Electronic Word-of-Mouth (E-WoM) on Relationship Equity (RE) obtained a path coefficient value of 0.065 and T Statistics of 1.188 ( $t < 1.96$ ) and a probability of 0.118 ( $p > 0.05$ ). So it can be concluded that Electronic Word-of-Mouth (E-WoM) has no significant effect on Relationship Equity (RE). This indicates that word-of-mouth marketing has not been able to assist brands in forming relationships with customers. The results of these findings are in line with previous research which states that Electronic Word-of-Mouth has a weak and not significant effect on relationship equity in online cell phone purchases [12, 36]. Based on the analysis, this is because customers tend not to pay attention to other people's online reviews on social media. Online reviews on social media are a person's experience, so they cannot be used as a basis for making customer decisions because everyone has different facial skin.

Nonetheless, these findings are inversely proportional to the findings of Godey, B., et al., (2016) which state that social media marketing activities including e-WoM have a positive effect on relationship equity among consumers of luxury clothing brands [21]. This indicates that there are differences in results for different types of objects and research sites.

#### **4.3.6. Effect of Relationship Equity on Customer Loyalty**

The effect of Relationship Equity (RE) on Customer Loyalty (CLT) obtained a path coefficient value of 0.718 and T Statistics of 20.374 ( $t > 1.96$ ) and a probability of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). So it can be concluded that Relationship Equity (RE) has a significant influence on Customer Loyalty (CLT). The results of this finding were also reinforced by previous research conducted by Yadav & Rahman (2018) which tested customer loyalty in e-commerce. The results of this study state that the relationship equity variable positively supports customer loyalty in e-commerce [4]. This indicates that if the brand builds a good relationship with the customer, then the customer will be loyal to the brand. Research by Ramaseshan, B., et al., (2013) states that the stronger the brand relationship that is built with customers in the long term, the more customer loyalty will increase [37].

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The findings from the analysis supported the various conclusions. First, entertainment as part of SMMA dimensions has significantly and positively influenced relationship equity. These findings are supported by various prior studies [7, 9, 11]. Second, interactivity as part of SMMA dimensions has not significantly influenced relationship equity. These findings are supported by

Nawi et al., (2022). Third, trendiness as part of SMMA dimensions has significantly and positively influenced relationship equity [12]. Fourth, customization as part of SMMA dimensions has significantly and positively influenced relationship equity. These findings are in line with Yadav & Rahman, (2018) and Aggarwal & Mittal's study, (2022) [4, 11]. Fifth, electronic word-of-mouth has not significantly influenced relationship equity. These findings are supported by Nawi et al., (2022) and Yunita, O. V. N, et al., (2022) [12, 36]. Sixth, relationship equity has significantly and positively influenced customer loyalty. These findings are in line with a prior study by Yadav & Rahman, (2018) [4].

Overall, the findings highlight the relationship between SMMA and relationship equity that leads to customer loyalty. It indicates that not all SMMA dimensions can improve the relationship equity of a cosmetic brand. Various brand activities on brand social media accounts are part of the brand strategy for increasing company sales, especially for Somethinc. Brands should pay attention to how customers can repeat purchases by involving activities on Instagram social media such as producing entertainment content in order to engage customers and increase sales. Entertaining content will certainly encourage customers to get a variety of interesting entertainment, including diverting their minds from daily routines, relieving stress, or just killing time [17].

Furthermore, Somethinc social media marketing management should increase the production of personalized content so that customers have a bond with the brand. This content makes customers believe that the products in the cosmetic brand match the customer's facial skin.

#### COMPETING INTERESTS DISCLAIMER:

Authors have declared that they have no known competing financial interests OR non-financial interests OR personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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