




## **The impact of luxury hotel experience on brand equity and electronic word-of-mouth in Jakarta's hospitality industry**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the influence of social media marketing activities on brand equity and customer response at Hotel Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni. The research investigates how social media marketing activities affect brand awareness and brand image and how these brand equity components impact electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM) and customer commitment. Using a quantitative approach with data collected from Instagram users through purposive sampling, the study employed Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) for analysis. Findings reveal that social media marketing activities positively influence brand awareness and image. Furthermore, brand awareness and image significantly affect E-WOM and customer commitment. The research model demonstrates good predictive relevance. These results highlight the strategic importance of effective social media marketing in building brand equity and fostering positive customer responses in the hospitality industry. They give hotel marketers insights to enhance their digital marketing strategies for improved customer engagement and loyalty.

**Keywords:** Social Media Marketing, Brand Equity, Electronic Word-of-Mouth, Customer Commitment, Hospitality Industry.

### **Article Information:**

Received 10/3/2025 / Revised 3/4/2025 / Accepted 1/5/2025 / Online First 19/5/2025

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**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini mengkaji pengaruh aktivitas pemasaran media sosial terhadap ekuitas merek dan respons pelanggan di Hotel Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni. Penelitian ini meneliti bagaimana aktivitas pemasaran media sosial mempengaruhi kesadaran merek dan citra merek, serta bagaimana kedua komponen ekuitas merek tersebut memengaruhi word-of-mouth elektronik (E-WOM) dan komitmen pelanggan. Menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan data yang dikumpulkan dari pengguna Instagram melalui purposive sampling, studi ini menganalisis data dengan menggunakan Structural Equation Modeling dengan Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa aktivitas pemasaran media sosial berpengaruh positif terhadap kesadaran merek dan citra merek. Selain itu, kesadaran merek dan citra merek secara signifikan mempengaruhi E-WOM dan komitmen pelanggan. Model penelitian menunjukkan relevansi prediktif yang baik. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya strategi pemasaran media sosial yang efektif dalam membangun ekuitas merek dan mendorong respons positif pelanggan di industri perhotelan. Hasil studi ini dapat memberikan wawasan kepada para pemasar hotel untuk meningkatkan strategi pemasaran digital mereka guna meningkatkan keterlibatan dan loyalitas pelanggan.

**Kata Kunci:** Pemasaran Media Sosial, Ekuitas Merek, Electronic Word-of-Mouth, Komitmen Pelanggan, Industri Perhotelan.

**1. Introduction**

In the rapidly evolving digital landscape, social media has emerged as an indispensable platform in modern marketing strategies, particularly in Indonesia, where social media penetration is among the highest globally. According to research conducted by Hootsuite in collaboration with We Are Social (2024), approximately 139 million Indonesians actively use social media, with 35.4% utilizing these platforms to search for products they intend to purchase and 80.9% of the total population of 278.7 million people using social media for brand research. The hospitality industry has witnessed a profound transformation in how consumers plan to travel, book accommodations, and purchase tickets through social media channels. Hamzah (2018) notes that choices for travel destinations, hotel bookings, and ticket purchases have become more diverse through social media and the Internet, allowing consumers to select according to their preferences while ensuring comfort and security in the booking process. This shift is further supported by Azizah (2020), who observes a rapid increase in cases where travel plans are arranged, tickets purchased, and hotel rooms reserved through various travel information communicated via social media. The social media landscape in Indonesia is dominated by platforms like Instagram, which, according to Hootsuite's 2024 research, ranks second with a penetration rate of 85.3% among Indonesians. Instagram's ability to share visually appealing content enables brands to tell their stories more personally and engagingly (Abby & Irwansyah, 2021), a critical aspect in today's digital era where consumers seek more emotional connections with their chosen brands.

Developing a business brand, whether for goods or services, requires considerable time (typically 3-5 years) and significant financial investment, ranging from hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars, depending on market scope (Rizki Putra Muhammad et al., 2022). Many brands employ strategies to remain relevant and memorable to the public and maintain leadership in their respective categories over extended periods. The recognition and awareness

of a brand are attributed to communication activities known as branding, which gives rise to various concepts, one of which is brand equity. Kotler, P., & Armstrong (2018) define brand equity as the added value given to products and services, which causes consumers to prefer one product over another. The stronger a product's brand equity, the greater its attractiveness to consumers, ultimately increasing profits for the company company (Muanzir & Siregar, 2023). Brand equity becomes a key factor in a brand's long-term success (Rifani, 2024), with brand awareness and brand image being essential components. Aaker (2018) defines brand awareness as a concept representing the extent to which consumers perceive a brand differently from other brands while explaining it as the ability of potential customers to recognize and recall a specific brand within a product category. Brand image, on the other hand, is the perception held by consumers about a brand, whether in the form of positive or negative feelings, trust in the brand, or the consumer's psychological structure, defined as a set of beliefs held by consumers about the brand (Sugiat & Silalahi, 2022).

The emergence of Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) as a new cultural phenomenon is closely linked to the remarkably rapid development of the internet. This new media is characterized by media convergence, enabling high interactivity among users to exchange information (Syukur, 2024). As brands establish their digital presence, online interactions increasingly shape consumer perceptions, transforming traditional word-of-mouth into its digital counterpart. E-WOM, a critical component of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA), often occurs through social media, either through product reviews, recommendations to other consumers, or simply sharing experiences. Recommendations from other consumers are usually considered more trustworthy than promotions from companies and can significantly influence others' decisions, potentially affecting brand equity and customer loyalty levels. In Indonesia's hospitality sector, hotels actively utilize social media for their marketing activities, with Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni leading in follower count on Instagram with 14.2 thousand followers, according to the author's analysis using the Phlanx application (2024). SMMA can effectively and efficiently communicate with consumers, helping companies develop their brand image. The number of followers of Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni on social media can indicate increased brand awareness and brand image, as SMMA encompasses entertainment, trendiness, customization, and perceived risk (Seo & Park, 2018). However, despite having the highest average comments per post, Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni only ranks second in average engagement compared to other hotels, raising questions about the relevance of the model proposed by Seo and Park for countries like Indonesia, specifically for Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni.

Despite significant growth in research on SMMA in Indonesia, several important gaps remain unexplored. The study conducted by Moslehpour et al. (2021) investigated the influence of SMMA on purchase intention on the GO-JEK platform; however, this research was limited to the online transportation sector and did not consider the specific dynamics of the hospitality industry, which has distinct characteristics in terms of customer experience and long-term interaction. Another gap that requires attention is the discussion regarding integrating SMMA with traditional marketing strategies in the Indonesian hospitality industry, particularly international hotels operating with global standards yet needing to adapt to local preferences. Dewindaru et al. (2022) explored millennial customer responses to social media marketing efforts in conventional banking; however, there has been no comprehensive research

addressing how demographic segmentation influences the effectiveness of SMMA in five-star hotels in Jakarta with diverse customer characteristics.

Ningrum and Roostika's (2021) research discussed the influence of SMMA on consumer engagement and brand knowledge in the culinary business in Indonesia, demonstrating that SMMA effectively increases consumer engagement. However, this study did not consider how factors such as competition level, strategic location, and prior reputation moderate the effectiveness of SMMA in the context of premium hospitality businesses in metropolitan cities. Although hundreds of studies in Indonesia have addressed SMMA, there remains a significant gap in understanding how SMMA interacts with specific contextual factors such as local culture, government regulations on social media, and the unique characteristics of the Indonesian hospitality industry. This research will fill these gaps by analyzing how Hotel Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni can optimize its SMMA strategy to enhance brand equity and customer response in the dynamic Indonesian market.

## **2. Theoretical background and hypothesis**

### **Social media marketing activities (SMMA)**

Social media marketing is a form of marketing that utilizes social media platforms to directly reach consumers, enabling more personal and deeper interactions between companies and consumers. Explain that social media marketing is implemented to engage consumers on online social platforms where consumers naturally spend their time (Kurnaz, H. E. & Şentürk, 2022). This marketing approach aims to introduce products or services to consumers and build sustainable relationships with them.

According to Seo & Park (2018), social media marketing activities encompass five essential characteristics: entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and perceived risk. Entertainment elements on social media platforms generate positive emotional responses, enhance participation, and influence both pre-purchase and post-purchase intentions, with engaging content encouraging consumer sharing and creating business advantages (Kang, 2005; Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015). Social media facilitates interaction by providing spaces for consumers to exchange ideas, gain product insights, and connect with other consumers, ultimately contributing to information-seeking behaviors, attitude formation, and brand visualization (Muntinga et al., 2015). Meanwhile, trendiness ensures that brands remain current amid rapid lifestyle changes, offering up-to-date information that satisfies consumers' supervision and knowledge motivations (Godey et al., 2016).

### **Brand equity**

According to Kotler & Armstrong (2018), brand equity is the difference in influence that emerges when consumers recognize a brand name in their response to the product and its marketing strategy. Brand equity can also be understood as the value attached to a brand, resulting from consumer perceptions of the brand. When consumers recognize and have positive impressions of a brand, they tend to be more responsive to products and promotions associated with that brand.

### **Brand awareness**

Brand awareness refers to the ability of potential buyers to recognize or recall a brand in the context of a particular product category. It is an important element in marketing that directly relates to how consumers recognize and identify brands (Gunardi, 2024). Consumers tend to choose or buy already-known brands because they feel more comfortable with familiar things.

Brand awareness is a fundamental dimension of brand equity and is often considered one of the important prerequisites in the consumer purchasing decision-making process. Brand awareness is critical in influencing purchasing decisions because known brands often become the main priority in consumer considerations (Mahardika & Tjahyadi, 2022).

### **Brand image**

Brand image is the perception formed in consumers' minds about a product, which is shaped by the information they receive through direct experience with the product. Keller (2013) states that brand image is the consumer's response to a brand based on their recall of positive or negative impressions. According to Kotler & Armstrong (2012), an effective brand image should reflect three main aspects: creating a clear product identity with significant added value, conveying the product's characteristics in a distinctive way to differentiate it from competitors, and providing emotional strength that supports its rational attributes.

### **Customer response**

Customer response in the context of this study is divided into two dimensions: behavioral response and emotional response. In identifying variables mediated by brand equity variables in the airline industry, E-WOM serves as a behavioral response. In contrast, commitment is an emotional response (Seo & Park, 2018).

### **Electronic word-of-mouth (E-WOM)**

E-WOM is a marketing tool that is very influential for consumers because before purchasing a product or using a service, consumers always go through the stage of searching for information related to products and services that can be obtained online through posts and comments from consumers after purchases who have provided information reviews or preferences related to these products and services to eliminate anxiety (Seo & Park, 2018).

Kotler and Armstrong (2018: 515) in Jundrio et al. (2024) explain that e-WOM adapts word-of-mouth advertising to the digital world. E-WOM involves various communication channels such as websites, advertisements, mobile applications, online videos, emails, blogs, and social media. All these channels are designed to attract consumers' attention and encourage them to share existing content.

### **Commitment**

Commitment is a response and desire consumers make to continuously maintain interaction and relationship with the brand in an internal psychological state related to other people or objects. Companies categorize consumers who commit to a brand product and service as more important because these consumers share the company's values and resources (Seo & Park, 2018).

Barnes (2003) and Mujahidin et al. (2022) suggest that commitment is a psychological condition that describes dependence in a relationship. This is not just a temporary feeling but

an attitude that reflects long-term intentions to maintain the relationship. Commitment emerges when individuals feel that the relationship has significant value and provides valuable benefits.

### **Previous research**

Several studies have explored the relationships between social media marketing activities, brand equity, and customer responses, providing a foundation for our research hypotheses. Kim and Ko (2012) examined luxury fashion brands. They found that five attributes of SMMA (entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and WOM) significantly and positively influence value equity, relationship equity, and brand equity, subsequently impacting purchase intention. Based on these findings, we hypothesize that social media marketing activities at Hotel Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni will positively influence brand equity components (H1: SMMA positively influences brand awareness; H2: SMMA positively influences brand image).

Seo and Park's (2018) research in the airline industry demonstrated that SMMA (entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, perceived risk) significantly influence brand awareness and brand image. Both brand equity components subsequently affect commitment, while brand image significantly influences e-WOM. These findings inform our subsequent hypotheses regarding customer response (H3: Brand awareness positively influences e-WOM; H4: Brand image positively influences e-WOM; H5: Brand awareness positively influences customer commitment; H6: Brand image positively influences customer commitment).

Further supporting our hypothetical framework, Godey et al. (2016) found that SMMA positively and significantly influences brand equity and its two dimensions: brand awareness and brand image. Their research also established that SMMA (entertainment, interaction, trendiness, customization, and WOM) influences brand preference, price premium, and loyalty. It provides additional theoretical support for our proposed relationship between SMMA, brand equity components, and subsequent customer responses in the hospitality context. These consistent findings across multiple industries suggest that practical social media marketing activities can be a powerful tool for Hotel Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni to build brand equity and foster positive customer responses.

### **Hypothesis**

Various efforts in SMMA on social media for prominent brands have shown that these efforts significantly influence brand awareness (Godey et al., 2016). This relationship is explained by the increased visibility and recognition that strategic social media content provides to consumers across multiple touchpoints. Other research supports this, finding that SMMA in luxury brands significantly affects brand awareness through consistent and engaging digital presence (Kim & Ko, 2012).

H1: Social media marketing activities have a significant positive impact on brand awareness.

Studies have demonstrated that SMMA significantly influences brand image by shaping consumer perceptions through carefully curated content and interactions (Godey et al., 2016; Kim & Ko, 2012). The various elements of SMMA including entertainment value, trendiness, and

personalization contribute to forming positive brand perceptions in consumers' minds, creating distinctive associations that differentiate the brand from competitors.

H2: Social media marketing activities have a significant positive impact on brand image.

Research has found that brand equity can influence increasing E-WOM through behavior toward the brand (Seo & Park, 2018). The quality of brand awareness can positively influence E-WOM by providing consumers with recognizable reference points that they can confidently share with others (Mehr et al., 2018). In line with other research, brand awareness significantly and positively influences E-WOM by enabling consumers to recall and recommend brands they recognize (Adriana & Widodo, 2019).

H3: Brand awareness has a significant positive impact on e-WOM.

When consumers have recognized, purchased, used, and experienced a brand and interacted with it, they tend to develop stronger commitment due to reduced perceived risk and increased familiarity (Seo & Park, 2018). Research shows that brand awareness significantly influences consumer commitment by establishing the foundation for ongoing brand relationships (Mehr et al., 2018).

H4: Brand awareness has a significant positive impact on consumer commitment.

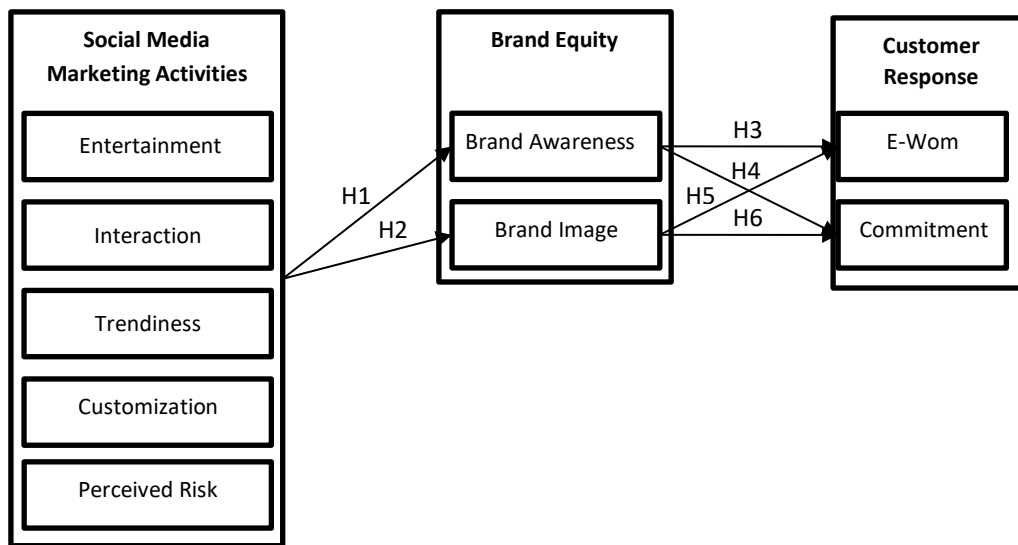
Studies have shown that brand image significantly and positively influences E-WOM through the psychological mechanism of social validation (Adriana & Widodo, 2019). A positive brand image encourages consumers to share their experiences and recommend the brand to others, as it reinforces their own identity and social standing when associated with positively perceived brands.

H5: Brand image has a significant positive impact on e-WOM.

With a positive brand image, consumers feel more connected and loyal to the brand as it aligns with their self-concept and aspirational values (Adriana & Widodo, 2019). As stated in previous research, brand image plays an important role in forming strong commitment by creating emotional bonds that transcend functional benefits and foster long-term relationship development.

H6: Brand image has a significant positive impact on consumer commitment.





**Figure 1.** Research model  
 Sumber: Seo & Park (2018)

### 3. Method

This study aims to analyze and describe the influence of social media marketing activities on consumer perceptions, especially regarding brand awareness, brand image, e-WOM, and consumer commitment at the Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni Hotel. The research method used is descriptive quantitative. Data collection was conducted through a purposive sampling technique, which allowed researchers to select respondents who understood the impact of this hotel's social media marketing activities (Sugiyono, 2017). The purposive sampling technique was chosen to obtain more specific and in-depth data in analyzing the effect of social media marketing strategies on various aspects of consumer perception.

#### Sample and procedures

This study employs a descriptive quantitative research design to analyze the influence of social media marketing activities on brand awareness, brand image, e-WOM, and consumer commitment at Hotel Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni during January-March 2025. The population comprises Instagram users aged 18 years and above who follow or interact with Hotel Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni's Instagram content.

Using a purposive sampling technique based on specific criteria (minimum age of 18, Instagram user, hotel Instagram follower, potential customer, and consumer who has interacted with hotel marketing content), the sample size was calculated using the Bernoulli formula with a 95% confidence level and 5% error margin, resulting in a minimum of 385 respondents. Data collection was conducted through online (Google Form) and offline questionnaires to ensure effective and efficient data gathering, with physical questionnaires being available for respondents who preferred filling them offline, enabling a comprehensive analysis of consumer responses to the hotel's social media marketing activities.



## Measurement

The measurement of variables in this study utilizes a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to Agree 5=Strongly) administered via questionnaires. The independent variable, SMMA, is measured through five dimensions adapted from Seo. & Park (2018) entertainment (content enjoyment and attractiveness), interaction (engagement with content and participation in online activities), trendiness (trend relevance and up-to-date content), customization (product satisfaction and personalization), and perceived risk (minimizing concerns about services and facilities). These SMMA measurement items were adapted explicitly from the validated scales developed initially by Kim & Ko (2012) and further refined by Godey et al. (2016) for luxury brand contexts. The intervening variables include Brand Awareness (measured by advertisement reach and logo recognition) and Brand Image (measured by hotel character representation and positive image perception), with measurement items adapted from Aaker's (1991) brand equity model and (Keller's (1993) customer-based brand equity framework.

The dependent variables encompass e-WOM, measured by visibility and influence of positive reviews using scales from Jalilvand & Samiei (2012) and Commitment measured by loyalty and recommendation behavior adapted from the consumer commitment scales developed by Morgan & Hunt (1994) and refined by Moorman et al. (1992) before full implementation; the questionnaire was pre-tested with 30 respondents to ensure validity and reliability, with validity being evaluated through Convergent Validity (Loading Factor  $>0.7$ ), Discriminant Validity (cross-loading analysis), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE  $>0.5$ ), while reliability was assessed through Indicator Reliability (outer loadings) and Internal Consistency Reliability (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability).

## Data analysis technique

The data analysis technique in this study employs both descriptive analysis and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Smart Partial Least Squares (PLS) software version 3. The descriptive analysis provides an overview of respondent characteristics and variable assessments based on a 5-category classification scale (Not Good: 20%-36%, Less Good: 36%-52%, Good Enough: 52%-68%, Good: 68%-84%, Very Good: 84%-100%), with percentages calculated from respondents' responses across all questionnaire items.

The SEM-PLS analysis evaluates both measurement (outer) and structural (inner) models; the outer model tests validity and reliability through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and internal consistency reliability, while the inner model examines the relationships between variables through several criteria: Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ ) to assess how many independent variables explain dependent variables, Predictive Relevance ( $Q^2$ ) to evaluate model predictive capability, Effect Size ( $F^2$ ) to measure the impact of predictor variables on endogenous variables (with values of 0.2, 1.5, and 3.5 indicating small, medium, and large effects respectively), Path Coefficients to assess relationships between constructs, and Bootstrapping to test statistical significance through T-statistics, enabling comprehensive examination of both direct and indirect relationships among SMMA, brand equity components, e-WOM, and consumer commitment.

## 4. Results and discussion

### Respondent Characteristics

The data collection resulted in 385 respondents who met the criteria as Instagram users aged 18 years and above who follow or interact with Hotel Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni's Instagram content. The respondent characteristics are presented in Tables 1

**Table 1.** Respondent Characteristics by Age

Demographic categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	209	54.3
Female	176	45.7
Age		
<18 years	0	0.0
18-24 years	107	27.8
25-34 years	143	37.1
35-49 years	105	27.3
>50 years	30	7.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100.0</b>

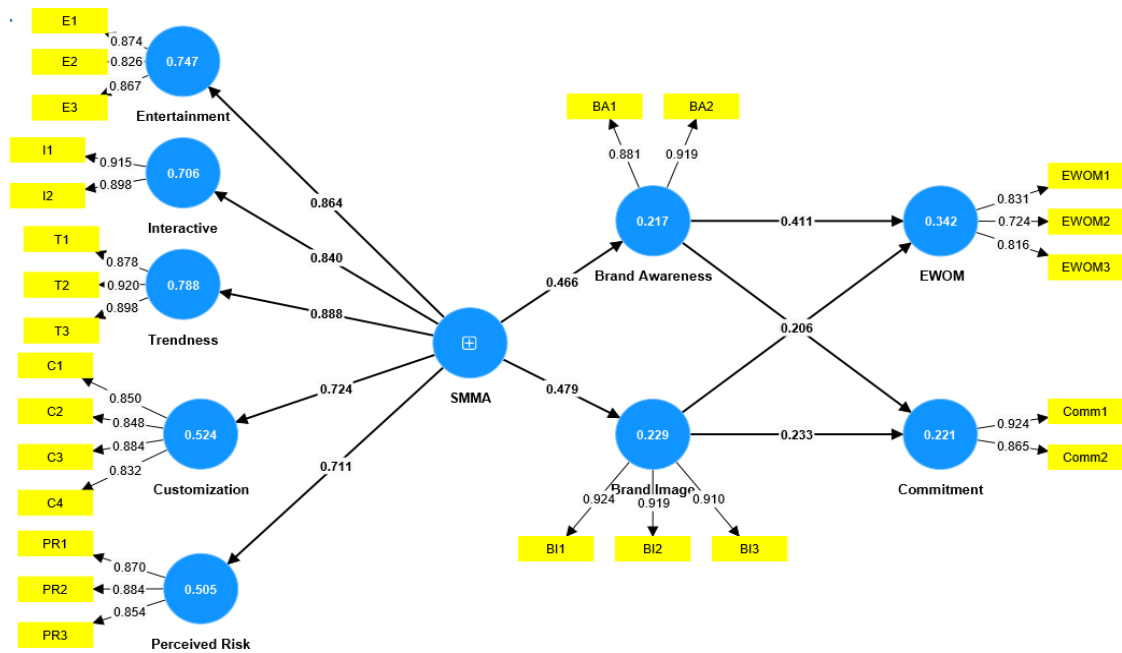
Source: Primary Data Processed (2024)

Based on the demographic data, most potential and actual customers of Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni in this study are male (54.3%), while female customers account for 45.7%. This indicates that men use Instagram more frequently than women, which aligns with research by Saputra (2019), which states that males are more dominant in using Instagram and YouTube, while females prefer WhatsApp. Men use social media for communication, information seeking, and social interaction/friendship.

Regarding age distribution, the most significant proportion of respondents falls within the 25-34 age group (37.1%), followed by the 18-24 age group (27.8%) and the 35-49 age group (27.3%). The smallest percentage comes from those over 50 (7.8%), while there were no respondents under 18 (0.0%). This age distribution reflects the typical demographic profile of luxury hotel customers and active Instagram users, concentrating on the young adult to middle-aged categories.

### Convergent Validity (Outer Loading)

Convergent validity aims to test each construct from the unidimensionality model by examining each construct indicator's convergent validity (outer loading). An indicator is considered to have good convergent validity if its value is greater than 0.5. Based on these criteria, indicators with loading factor values less than 0.50 are excluded from the analysis.



**Figure 2.** Results of construct validity analysis

Based on Figure 2, it can be seen that all loading factors are above 0.5, and no indicator has a loading below 0.5. Thus, no indicator is issued in the model. The results of the Test Convergent Validity (outer loading) are described in the Table 2.

Table 2 demonstrates the measurement model's robust validity and reliability. All indicators show significant outer loadings (ranging from 0.724 to 0.924) with p-values of 0.000, confirming their validity. The measurement model exhibits excellent reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values between 0.704 and 0.907 and Composite Reliability (CR) values between 0.834 and 0.941, all exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7. Additionally, all constructs demonstrate satisfactory convergent validity, with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranging from 0.627 to 0.842, well above the 0.5 benchmark.

Table 3 confirms the strong discriminant validity of the model, as the square root of AVE for each construct (shown in bold on the diagonal) exceeds the correlation coefficients with other constructs. This indicates that each construct captures more variance in its associated items than it shares with other constructs in the model. Notable correlations include the relationship between Brand Awareness and Brand Image (0.769) and EWOM and Commitment (0.678), suggesting important theoretical connections while maintaining distinct constructs.

The hypothesis testing results in Table 4 reveal significant positive relationships across all proposed pathways. SMMA substantially influences Brand Awareness ( $\beta=0.466$ ,  $t=9.430$ ) and Brand Image ( $\beta=0.479$ ,  $t=9.468$ ). Both Brand Awareness and Brand Image significantly impact EWOM ( $\beta=0.411$ ,  $t=6.455$ ;  $\beta=0.206$ ,  $t=3.201$  respectively) and Commitment ( $\beta=0.267$ ,  $t=4.091$ ;  $\beta=0.233$ ,  $t=3.487$  respectively). With all t-statistics exceeding the critical value of 1.96 and p-values below 0.05, these findings provide strong empirical support for all research hypotheses, confirming the theoretical framework's validity in explaining the relationships between social media marketing activities, brand equity components, and customer responses.

**Table 2.** Outer loadings indicator test table

No	Variable	Indikator	Outer Loading	t hitung	p-value	Description	CA	CR	AVE
1	Entertainment	E1	0.874	50.094	0.000	Valid	0.818	0.892	0.733
2		E2	0.826	31.499	0.000	Valid			
3		E3	0.867	43.287	0.000	Valid			
4	Interactive	I1	0.915	99.001	0.000	Valid	0.783	0.902	0.821
5		I2	0.898	55.564	0.000	Valid			
6	Trendness	T1	0.878	48.379	0.000	Valid	0.881	0.926	0.807
7		T2	0.920	92.919	0.000	Valid			
8		T3	0.898	71.348	0.000	Valid			
9	Customization	C1	0.850	36.608	0.000	Valid	0.876	0.915	0.729
10		C2	0.848	40.093	0.000	Valid			
11		C3	0.884	59.544	0.000	Valid			
12		C4	0.832	35.665	0.000	Valid			
13	Perceived Risk	PR1	0.870	54.295	0.000	Valid	0.838	0.903	0.755
14		PR2	0.884	45.226	0.000	Valid			
15		PR3	0.854	45.410	0.000	Valid			
16	Brand Awareness	BA1	0.881	46.557	0.000	Valid	0.768	0.895	0.810
17		BA2	0.919	102.831	0.000	Valid			
18	Brand Image	BI1	0.924	89.760	0.000	Valid	0.907	0.941	0.842
19		BI2	0.919	66.975	0.000	Valid			
20		BI3	0.910	62.864	0.000	Valid			
21	EWOM	EWOM1	0.831	41.574	0.000	Valid	0.704	0.834	0.627
22		EWOM2	0.724	20.120	0.000	Valid			
23		EWOM3	0.816	25.889	0.000	Valid			
24	Commitment	Comm1	0.924	84.558	0.000	Valid	0.756	0.890	0.801
25		Comm2	0.865	46.097	0.000	Valid			

Source: Primary Data Processed (2024)

**Table 3.** Discriminant validity with root AVE and correlation

	Brand Awareness	Brand Image	Commitment	EWOM	SMMA
Brand Awareness	0.900				
Brand Image	0.769	0.918			
Commitment	0.446	0.438	0.895		
EWOM	0.570	0.523	0.678	0.792	
SMMA	0.466	0.479	0.431	0.524	0.714

Description: \* Ave root value

Source: primary data processed by SMARTPLS 4.01 (2024)

**Table 4.** Pengujian hipotesis

Hypothesis	Original Sample	T-Statistics	P Values	T-Tabel	Description
SMMA -> Brand Awareness	0.466	9.430	0.000	1.96	Significant Positive
SMMA -> Brand Image	0.479	9.468	0.000	1.96	Significant Positive
Brand Awareness -> EWOM	0.411	6.455	0.000	1.96	Significant Positive
Brand Awareness -> Commitment	0.267	4.091	0.000	1.96	Significant Positive
Brand Image -> EWOM	0.206	3.201	0.001	1.96	Significant Positive
Brand Image -> Commitment	0.233	3.487	0.000	1.96	Significant Positive

Source: Primary Data Processed (2024)

## Discussion

### *The impact of SMMA on brand awareness*

The test results with SEM please analysis proved that  $H_0$ 1 was rejected and  $H_a$ 1 was accepted, where the path coefficient value was 0.466 with a t count of 9.430 with a probability of  $0.000 < 0.05$ ; it can be concluded that there is a significant influence between SMMA on brand awareness. Thus, the hypothesis that says"  $H_1$ : Social media marketing activities have a significant positive impact on brand awareness is accepted.

SMMA has allowed consumers to talk to hundreds or even thousands of other consumers worldwide, but the company is no longer the only source of brand communication. In addition, consumers are turning away from traditional media such as TV, radio, or magazines and are increasingly using social media to find information. They consider social media a more trustworthy information source than the traditional marketing communications instruments companies use. In the discussion of social media, marketing activities can increase the value of equity based on customers (Kim & Ko, 2012). Value Equity is a form of objective customer assessment of the usefulness of a brand based on the perception of what is given and received in terms of quality, price, and convenience of a product. The high brand valuation at the Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni Hotel makes it easier for consumers to remember this brand when discussing hotel services. Better marketing through social media will create brand awareness, which is a strategic step in promoting products to new consumers and reminding them of old consumers.

The results support research conducted by Kim & Ko (2012), which found that SMMA on luxury brands significantly affect brand awareness. Likewise, research by Khosasih Halim (2021) found that the higher the use of social media as a marketing tool, the higher the company's perceived value will be in remuneration, namely, what value will be obtained from the use of the product or service.

*The impact of SMMA on brand image*

The results of testing with SEM PLS found that SMMA variables on brand image obtained a path coefficient of 0.479 with a t count of 9.468 with a probability of  $0.000 < 0.05$  so that the research hypothesis" H2: Social media marketing activities have a significant positive impact on brand image" is supported, which means SMMA has a significant and positive effect on Brand Image. When viewed from the value of the weight of the direct influence of a positive value, it indicates that the increasing perception of respondents in SMMA is the increasing brand image perceived by respondents.

Brand messages or information conveyed through social media can affect customer perceptions of brand equity. Through marketing activities, the company tries to create a positive brand evaluation by developing an accessible brand attitude and a consistent brand image to create the maximum impact on purchasing behavior. Understanding consumer buying behavior is essential for a company to attract and retain its customers. Marketers build a brand with a mature concept and use it to the maximum in marketing actions. Forming a good brand image is one way to create a strong brand. A good image will add value to a product and services, leading to increased consumer purchase desire (Damayanti et al., 2021). According to Kotler & Keller (2016), brand image is the consumer's perception of a brand, as reflected by the brand associations in the consumer's memory. Brand associations are information connected to memory and contain the brand's meaning for the consumer. Associations come in many forms and can reflect Product Characteristics or aspects.

Instagram marketing is done using the Instagram account @grandmercurejakartaharmoni. Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni makes content offerings of product and service packages and facilities provided by Grand Mercure Jakarta Harmoni. The diversity of content shared is made as attractive as possible but still easy to understand for followers. Respondents' responses to social media marketing on followers of the Instagram social media account @grandmercurejakartaharmoni have been classified as good, with the highest percentage being in the dimension of content sharing. This is in line with Gunelius (2011), who states that sharing content can lead to direct sales, while the latter can result in improved brand image and loyalty, leading to indirect sales. This can mean that content sharing poses a good chance of getting noticed and remembered by online viewers, leading to indirect and direct sales. The results are in line with research conducted by Kim & Ko (2012), which found that SMMA on luxury brands significantly affect brand image.

*The impact of brand awareness on E-WOM*

The results of testing with SEM PLS proved that Ho3 rejected and Ha3 accepted obtained a path coefficient value of 0.411 with a t count of 6.455 with a probability of  $0.000 < 0.05$  so that the research hypothesis" H3: Brand awareness has a significant positive impact on e" WOM" supported, which means Brand Awareness has a substantial and positive effect, then the increasing EWOM perceived respondents. As already explained, brand awareness is consumer awareness about the brand of goods, services, or services offered. This means that consumers can spontaneously recognize or remember the brand even in different situations only after being stimulated with several stimuli. Many companies have used various marketing efforts, including brand equity. The findings can be obtained that brand equity can affect increasing E-

WOM through behavior on the brand (Seo & Park, 2018). Quality in brand awareness can positively influence E-WOM (Mehr et al., 2018).

Social media marketing allows companies to communicate with consumers easily and quickly. From the company's perspective, their participation in social media produces as much positive influence as conventional product advertising programs. Interaction with potential and existing customers allows companies to communicate positive brand awareness. In addition, product and social media can trigger WOM marketing and an influx of new customers, which means that social media is a powerful communication tool (Seo & Park, 2018). The results of Seo and Kim's (2003) research show that brand equity significantly influences the consequences of WOM.

#### *The impact of brand awareness on engagement*

The results of testing with SEM PLS obtained a path coefficient value of 0.267 with a t count of 4.091 with a probability of  $0.000 < 0.05$  so that the research hypothesis "H5: Brand awareness has a significant positive impact on consumer commitment" is supported, which means Brand Awareness has a significant and positive effect on Commitment. When viewed from the value of the weight of the direct influence of a positive value, it indicates the increasing perception of respondents on brand awareness, followed by the increasing Commitment felt by respondents.

Consumers usually own the Brand Awareness variable. This variable, because consumer brand awareness can determine whether consumers know the product, can provide insight into consumer behavior that causes Commitment to the product. The influence of brand awareness has been proven by Seo & Park (2018), who concluded that brand awareness has a strong relationship with consumer commitment. Consumer brand awareness is an important part of determining consumer behavior decisions. The results also support the study Mehr et al. (2018) that the correlation between brand awareness and consumer commitment was significant at a 95% confidence interval. In addition, the value of the path coefficient between these two variables is positive, indicating that brand awareness positively influences consumer commitment. In other words, a change in brand awareness leads to increased consumer commitment. This shows that brand awareness is directly correlated with consumer commitment.

#### *The impact of brand image on E-WOM*

The test results with SEM PLS proved that Ho4 was rejected and Ha5 was accepted, where the path coefficient value of 0.206 with t count of 3.201 with a probability of  $0.001 < 0.05$  so that the research hypothesis "H4: Brand image has a significant positive impact on e-WOM", supported, which means Brand Image has a significant and positive effect on EWOM. When viewed from the value of the weight of the direct influence of a positive value, it indicates that the increasing perception of respondents on the brand image is the increasing EWOM perceived respondents.

According to Kotler & Keller (2016), brand image or brand image is a perception and belief that exists in the minds of consumers who are reflected from the associations formed in their memories. A strong Brand image provides significant competitive advantages, including the potential to create a competitive advantage in the marketplace. This shows that the strength of a brand is highly dependent on the experience and information received by consumers.



According to Kotler & Keller (2016), brand image or brand image is a perception and belief that exists in the minds of consumers who are reflected in the associations formed in their memories. A strong Brand image provides significant competitive advantages, including the potential to create a competitive advantage in the marketplace. This shows that the strength of a brand is highly dependent on the experience and information received by consumers. With a good brand image, companies can create clear differentiation and build solid long-term relationships with consumers, contributing to the brand's success and growth. This causes the consumer response to products and services to be stronger, which is shown by word-of-mouth marketing communications through online media (E-Wom). The study's results Mehr et al. (2018) found that brand image has a positive and significant effect on E-Wom.

#### *Latest brand image commitment*

The results of testing with SEM PLS obtained a path coefficient value of 0.233 with a t count of 3.487 with a probability of  $0.000 < 0.05$  so that the research hypothesis" H6: Brand image has a significant positive impact on consumer commitment", supported which means Brand Image has a significant and positive effect on Commitment. When viewed from the value of the weight of the direct influence of a positive value, it indicates that the increasing perception of respondents on the brand image, the more the perceived Commitment of respondents. In recent years, many companies have been investing in creating a brand image for both products or services and brand image for the company. It is aimed at increasing consumer interest in purchases. In general, consumers have a sense of liking for a brand due to the positive response from other consumers that forms a brand image for the better and causes consumer commitment to buy the product (Ranti & Setiyaningrum, 2022). Brand image is important in generating consumer trust; good trust will deliver consumer commitment.

Brand image is crucial in shaping consumer commitment to a brand (Seo & Park, 2018); when consumers have known, bought, used, and experienced a brand and interacted with it, they tend to develop a more substantial commitment. This process shows that the ongoing interaction between consumers and brands strengthens their relationship, thus increasing Commitment. Thus, the brand image not only affects consumers' perception but also contributes significantly to forming a deep commitment to the brand. Brand image is an important factor that can increase consumer commitment to a brand. When consumers have recognized and know the brand well, they are more likely to trust and commit to it. This is supported by research showing that brand image significantly influences consumer commitment (Mehr et al., 2018). In addition, brand image, which reflects consumer perceptions of quality and brand image, also plays an important role in forming a firm commitment. The study's results also found that brand image has a positive and significant effect on Commitment.

## **5. Conclusion**

### **5.1. Conclusion**

The empirical results demonstrate a comprehensive model of influence flowing from social media marketing activities through brand perceptions to customer behaviors in the luxury hotel context. Social media marketing activities significantly enhance brand awareness and image,

establishing strong mental representations of the brand in consumers' minds. These strengthened brand perceptions, in turn, drive positive electronic word-of-mouth behaviors, with consumers more likely to share and recommend the brand online as their recognition and favorable associations increase. Additionally, the findings confirm that brand awareness and image significantly contribute to consumer commitment, indicating that their loyalty and dedication increase as customers develop stronger recognition and positive impressions of the brand. The model's robust measurement properties and apparent discriminant validity further validate these relationships, providing hotel marketers with valuable insights into how strategic social media activities can build brand equity and foster positive customer responses in today's digital landscape. These findings highlight the strategic importance of effective social media marketing in building brand equity and fostering positive customer responses in the hospitality industry, particularly for luxury hotels seeking to enhance their digital presence and customer engagement.

## 5.2. Limitations

This research acknowledges certain methodological constraints when interpreting the findings and designing future studies. The data collection process faced challenges related to response validity, as questionnaire responses may not always accurately reflect respondents' actual experiences or opinions due to variations in individual interpretation, understanding, and honesty when completing the survey instruments. Additionally, the scope of the investigation was limited to Instagram as the sole social media platform, which may not capture the full spectrum of social media marketing activities and their impacts across the diverse digital landscape. Future research could expand the examination to include multiple social media platforms to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how different digital channels contribute to brand equity and electronic word-of-mouth in the hospitality sector.

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## Declarations

### **Funding**

*The authors received no financial support for the research and publication of this article.*

### **Conflicts of interest/ Competing interests:**

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

### **Data, Materials and/or Code Availability:**

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.

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