

THE INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL BRANDING, PERSONAL SELLING AND ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH ON CONSUMER LOYALTY OF VASELINE PRODUCTS

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to find out how consumers loyalty to Vaseline goods is affected in the Kupang City neighborhood via emotional branding, human selling, and electronic word-of-mouth. The study uses an associative technique and a quantitative survey method. Data were collected with a survey table of 100 respondents of Vaseline product consumers in Kupang City. The primary data obtained were processed using the SPSS application. The technique for collecting data involved distributing questionnaires, while the method used for data analysis was multiple linear regression, with hypothesis testing conducted in conjunction with the F-test, t-test, and the coefficient of determination (R²) test. The findings showed that, while emotional branding had no discernible impact on customer loyalty, Both electronic and human word-of-mouth marketing had a favorable and considerable impact. Furthermore, it was discovered that customer loyalty was significantly impacted by the three independent variables taken together. According to the coefficient of determination (R²), consumer characteristics may be explained by the elements of digital word-of-mouth, personal selling, and emotional branding. The study's conclusions also provide valuable information for Kupang City's Vaseline product marketing plan. Companies need to focus on personal selling and electronic word of mouth because they have been proven to increase consumer loyalty. Conversely, the emotional branding strategy needs to be evaluated because it has not had a significant impact.

Keywords: *consumer loyalty, electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, personal selling, Vaseline.*

INTRODUCTION

The global cosmetics industry is currently experiencing very rapid development, including in Indonesia. There are significant differences in the appearance desired by men and women, where women tend to try to beautify themselves in order to increase their self-confidence. This phenomenon is reflected in the increasing demand for beauty products in society. The tight competition in the cosmetics industry can be seen from the many new brands that have emerged on the market, both local and imported brands. One brand that is widely known among users of beauty products is Vaseline, which is part of Unilever and has been operating since 1987 and is widely known for its various skin care products. Although Vaseline has maintained its existence in the market, Top Brand Index data shows fluctuations in consumer loyalty to the product. From 2020 to 2023, there was an increase from 11.8% to 17.1%, but decreased sharply to 12.8% in 2024 (Topbrand-award.com, 2024). This condition indicates the importance of a marketing strategy that not only focuses on product quality, but also on creating emotional relationships and overall consumer experiences. According to (Kotler, P., & Keller, 2016), consumer loyalty is an important key to business sustainability. Meanwhile, (Tjiptono, 2006) emphasized that the ability of a business to retain clients is a determinant of success in competition. One approach that has proven effective in building loyalty is emotional branding, a marketing strategy that emphasizes consumers' emotional attachment to the brand (Gobe, 2005)(Gobe, 2005). Emotional branding is believed to be able to form long-term bonds between consumers and products (McEwen. W.J., 2004) especially if the experience provided is positive and meaningful. In addition, direct marketing strategies such as personal selling also play an important role. According to (Lamb, 2010), personal selling can provide an interactive experience and increase consumer trust through direct explanations and a more personal

approach. In the digital age we live in today, additionally, electronic word-of-mouth, or eWOM, has grown in importance element that influences purchasing decisions. eWOM is informal communication through digital platforms, where consumers share their experiences with a product (Goyette et al., 2010; Yang, 2017), so that it can influence consumer perceptions and loyalty. Good customer feedback helps boost prospective customers' trust in the product's superior quality. When buyers see that many other people have bought the product and given positive evaluations, they often feel more confident. As a result, there is a kind of societal confirmation that the product is worthwhile (Riwu et al., 2024). Several previous research results show different findings. Research by (Suryani et al., 2021) and (Rizfie, 2023) stated that emotional branding, personal selling, and eWOM have a favorable impact on customer loyalty. However, this is different from the findings of (Jannah & Ningsih, 2023) It demonstrated that loyalty was not much impacted by emotional branding. The inconsistency of the research results indicates that further studies are needed in the context of different brands and regions, such as Vaseline products in Kupang City. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of emotional branding in light of this phenomena, personal selling, and eWOM on consumer loyalty of Vaseline products in Kupang City. Referring to previous theories and research, the hypotheses proposed are: (1) Emotional branding positively influences consumer loyalty, (2) Personal selling positively influences consumer loyalty, (3) electronic word of mouth (eWOM) positively influences consumer loyalty, and (4) collectively, all three factors significantly impact consumer loyalty.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer Behavior

(Kotler, P., & Keller, 2022) discuss consumer behavior by looking at how people, groups, and organizations select, purchase, use, and evaluate goods, services, concepts, or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants. From the above understanding, consumer behavior has two important components, decision-making and physical activity. All of these elements relate to how people evaluate, purchase, and use goods and services, which are influenced by the environment. According to (Kotler, P., & Keller, 2016) consumer behavior is influenced by two factors, namely: Consumer Characteristics (Cultural factors, Social factors, Personal factors) and Consumer Psychology (Consumer motivation, Consumer perception, Consumer emotions and experience).

Consumer loyalty

Consumer loyalty, also known as "customer loyalty", is a customer's commitment to a brand, store, or supplier, reflected in highly positive attitudes and consistent repeat purchasing behavior (Fandy Tjiptono, 2011). Based on the definition above, loyalty can be defined as a consumer's attitude towards a product or service and the company itself, which is accompanied by a commitment to purchase the company's products or services and recommend others to purchase the company's products or services. Several indicators of consumer loyalty according to (Fandy Tjiptono, 2000) are: 1) making consistent purchases; 2) recommending the company's products to others; 3) consumers will not switch to competitors' products.

Emotional Branding

In today's competitive business landscape, relying solely on functionality or price advantages is no longer enough. Branding has evolved from a rational approach to emotional branding. Emotional branding is an unconscious channel between a company and its products in an emotionally appealing method (Gobe, 2010).

Four indicators of emotional branding according to (Gobe, 2010): relationships, sensory experiences, imagination and vision.

Personal Selling

Face-to-face communication with one or more prospective customers for the purpose of making a presentation, answering questions and procuring orders is known as personal selling. (Cron, W. L. & Decarlo, 2010) states that personal selling is direct communication between sales representatives and prospects in a process to achieve transactions, customer satisfaction, sales development and profitable relationships. Four indicators of personal selling : Tangible, Reliability, Responsiveness and Quality Perception

Electronic Word Of Mouth (EWOM)

Viral marketing or also known as electronic word of mouth (Ewom) according to (Kotler, P., & Keller, 2016) is marketing using the internet to create a word of mouth effect to support marketing efforts and objectives. Unlike traditional WOM, which can only spread among people who know each other, eWOM communication can reach a

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much wider audience, regardless of whether these people know each other. four indicators of electronic word of mouth : Intensity, content, positive opinions and negative opinions.

METHOD

Survey research with an associative approach is the method used to analyze the connections and effects of two or more factors (Sujarweni, 2022), particularly the effects of electronic word-of-mouth, personal selling, and emotional branding on the loyalty of customers (Margono, 2004). the population is the complete subject of the study, which can include people, things, animals, plants, symptoms, test results, or events. It also includes data sources that share similar characteristics. The community of Kupang City that uses Vaseline products constitutes the population of this study. 100 responders are selected as a sample using the Lemeshow formula for sampling due to the unpredictability of the population size. Primary data gathered via questionnaires is what was used. The SPSS program is then used to examine all of the collected data. While inferential statistical analysis assesses the hypothesis, descriptive statistical analysis explains the traits of each variable and the respondents. Tests are performed using the coefficient of determination (R^2), F-test (for concurrent testing), and t-test to ascertain the degree to which the independent variable affects the dependent variable (for partial analysis).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic characteristics of respondents

Table 1 Distribution of Characteristics of Respondents Based

	Description	Frequency	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Gender	Male	35	35.0	35.0
	Female	65	65.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	
Age	16-20 years	31	31.0	31.0
	21-30 years	62	62.0	93.0
	31-40 years	3	3.0	96.0
	41-50 years	4	4.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	
Job	Student/College Student	73	73.0	73.0
	Not Yet Working	4	4.0	77.0
	Private Employee/Self-Employed/Entrepreneur	11	11.0	88.0
	PNS	3	3.0	91.0
	Housewife/Farmer/Laborer/Contractor	9	9.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	
Monthly Income	< Rp. 1.000.000	78	78.0	78.0
	Rp. 1.000.000 – Rp. 2.999.999	14	14.0	92.0
	Rp. 3.000.000 – Rp. 4.999.999	3	3.0	95.0
	Rp. 5.000.000 – Rp. 7.999.999	3	3.0	98.0
	≥ Rp. 8.000.000	2	2.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	
Use of Vaseline Products	Every day	56	56.0	56.0
	Every week	13	13.0	69.0
	1-2 times a month	15	15.0	84.0
	1-2 times in 3 months	4	4.0	88.0
	1-2 times in 6 months	12	12.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	

According to the above data, the majority of study participants were female (65%) and aged 21–30 years (62%), followed by 16–20 years (31%). Most respondents are students (73%), with a monthly income level below Rp1,000,000 (78%). In terms of Vaseline product usage, most respondents use it every day (56%), while the intensity of use per month is dominated by respondents who use it 1–2 times in six months (12%) and 1–2 times a month (15%). This shows that Vaseline products are used more by young women who are still studying and come from low to middle income groups, with a fairly routine frequency of use for daily skin care needs.

Instrument Test

Research instruments are tools used to obtain data. Instruments are facilities or equipment used to collect data that simplify processing and make work easier by producing more accurate, thorough, and systematic findings. (Arikunto, 2010). (Seran, 2020) The instrument tests used are as follows:

- Validity Test

The validity test results reveal that computed r value (Corrected Item-Total Correlation) for each statement item in the variables of Consumer Loyalty (Y), Electronic Word of Mouth (X3), Personal Selling (X2), and Emotional Branding (X1) is higher than the 0.196 r table value. Consequently, it may be said that every assertion in the survey is legitimate.

In the Emotional Branding variable (X1), there are 8 statement items with calculated r values ranging from 0.668 to 0.810, all of which are declared valid. For the Personal Selling variable (X2), all 8 items have calculated r values between 0.733 and 0.908 and are declared valid. The Electronic Word of Mouth (X3) variable has 11 items, where all the calculated r values are in the range of 0.644 to 0.888 and all are valid and the Consumer Loyalty (Y) variable has 7 statement items, with the highest calculated r value of 0.915 and the lowest of 0.772, all of which also meet the validity requirements.

- Reliability Test

Table 2 Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Criteria	Description
Emotional branding (X1)	0,894	> 0,60	Reliabel
Personal Selling (X2)	0,942	> 0,60	Reliabel
Electronic Word Of Mouth (X3)	0,941	> 0,60	Reliabel
Loyalitas Konsumen (Y)	0,941	> 0,60	Reliabel

Every variable in the above table has a Cronbach's alpha of more than 0.60 ($\alpha > 0.60$). The instrument employed in this study to measure all variables is deemed reliable since the reliability test results, which are displayed in the table, show values larger than 0.60.

Classical Assumption Test

The regression model used in the hypothesis must avoid the possibility of deviation from classical assumptions. Classical regression assumptions include:

- Normality Test

Normality tests are generally performed to evaluate ordinal, interval, or ratio scale data. A good regression model has normally distributed residual values. Normal detection is performed by spreading data (points) on the diagonal line of the graph.

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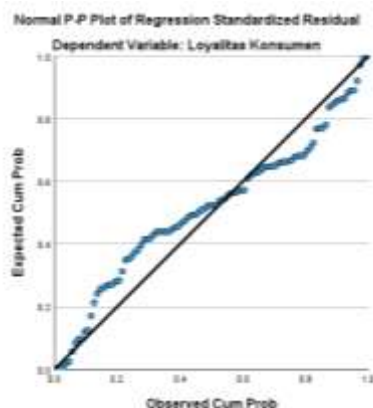


Figure 1 Normality Test Results

• Multicollinearity Test

Table 3 Multicollinearity Test Results

Model	Coefficients ^a		Collinearity Statistics		
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Tolerance	VIF	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-.578	1.640		-.353	.725
Emotional Branding	.122	.068	.136	1.804	.074
Personal Selling	.250	.085	.279	2.930	.004
Electronic Word Of Mouth	.373	.065	.527	5.709	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Loyalitas Konsumen

The tolerance value is 0.393 (>0.10), but the emotional branding variable has a VIF value of 2.546 (<10). The tolerance value for the personal selling variable is 0.246 (>0.10), while its VIF value is 4.062 (<10). The electronic word-of-mouth the variable has a VIF value of 3.819 (<10) and a tolerance of 0.262 (>0.10). The foregoing explanation clearly shows that there is no multicollinearity in the data.

• Heteroscedasticity Test

Table 4 Heteroscedasticity Test Result

Model	Coefficients ^a		Standardized Coefficients		
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	6.389	1.100		5.809	<.001
Emotional Branding	-.067	.045	-.217	-1.478	.143
Personal Selling	-.101	.057	-.328	-1.764	.081
Electronic Word Of Mouth	.025	.044	.101	.562	.575

a. Dependent Variable: Abs_RES

The significance level for the emotional branding variable is 0.143, which is greater than 0.05, as shown in Table 4. The electronic word-of-mouth and personal selling variables have significance values of 0.575 and 0.081, respectively, which are both higher than 0.05. Heteroscedasticity is therefore not present in the data.

Inferential Statistical Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis predicts the value of a dependent variable based on increases or decreases in independent variables and determines whether the relationship between them is positive or negative.

Table 5 Inferential Statistical Analysis Results

		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.578	1.640		-.353	.725
	Emotional Branding	.122	.068	.136	1.804	.074
	Personal Selling	.250	.085	.279	2.930	.004
	Electronic Word Of Mouth	.373	.065	.527	5.709	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Loyalitas Konsumen

Based on the findings of the analysis given above, it is possible to conclude that the variable that has the most dominant influence on consumer loyalty is electronic word of mouth (X3), with a standard beta value of 0.527, followed by personal selling (X2) of 0.279, and emotional branding (X1) of 0.136.

Based on Table 5, the following equation can be made:

$$Y = -0.578 + 0.122 X_1 + 0.250 X_2 + 0.373 X_3$$

Several linear regression studies show that the constant value (α) is -0.578. This means that the predicted consumer loyalty value is -0.578 if the values for electronic word of mouth (X3), personal selling (X2), and emotional branding (X1) are all 0. However, because this constant value is not significant (Sig = 0.725 > 0.05), it does not have much influence on the interpretation.

- T test

Each independent variable's unique influence the dependent variable is tested using the t-test, namely consumer loyalty.

Table 6 t-Test Results

		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.578	1.640		-.353	.725
	Emotional Branding	.122	.068	.136	1.804	.074
	Personal Selling	.250	.085	.279	2.930	.004
	Electronic Word Of Mouth	.373	.065	.527	5.709	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Loyalitas Konsumen

Based on the table 6, the calculated t of each variable can be seen as follows:

- Because $t_{\text{count}} (1.804) < t_{\text{table}} (1.985)$ and significance $(0.074) > \alpha (0.05)$ consequently, H_0 is approved while H_a is denied. This suggests that customer loyalty is not greatly impacted by emotional branding Vaseline products in the Kupang City community.

- Because $t_{\text{count}} (2.930) > t_{\text{table}} (1.985)$ and significance $(0.004) < \alpha (0.05)$, , therefore H_0 is accepted, whereas H_a is refused. This implies that personal selling has a favorable and large impact on consumer loyalty of Vaseline products in the Kupang City community.
- Because $t_{\text{count}} (5.709) > t_{\text{table}} (1.985)$ and significance $(0.000) < \alpha (0.05)$, consequently, H_0 is approved while H_a is denied. This suggests that digital word of mouth has a favorable and significant impact on consumer loyalty of Vaseline products in the Kupang City community.
- F test
The F-test is used to determine if the independent factors, taken together, have a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable.

Table 7 F-Test Results

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2699.458	3	899.819	117.435	<.001 ^b
	Residual	735.582	96	7.662		
	Total	3435.040	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Loyalitas Konsumen

b. Predictors: (Constant), Electronic Word Of Mouth, Emotional Branding, Personal Selling

Because $F_{\text{count}} (117.435) > F_{\text{table}} (2.699)$ and significance (< 0.001) If $p < 0.05$, H_0 is rejected and H_a is allowed. This indicates that the variables electronic word of mouth, emotional branding, and personal selling possess a favorable and noteworthy influence on consumer loyalty of Vaseline products in the Kupang City community.

- Coefficient of Determination Test (R^2)
The coefficient of determination reveals how well the independent factors explain fluctuations in the dependent variable.

Table 8 Determination Coefficient Results
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.886 ^a	.786	.779	2.76809

a. Predictors: (Constant), Electronic Word Of Mouth, Emotional Branding, Personal Selling

The coefficient of determination, as demonstrated in the preceding table, is 0.786, or about 1. Thus, the capacity of the independent variables can be inferred (electronic word of mouth, emotional branding and personal selling) in explaining the variable of consumer loyalty to Vaseline products in the Kupang City community.

1. Emotional Branding on Consumer Loyalty

According to the results of a multiple linear analysis, emotional branding had no discernible effect on Vaseline product loyalty in the Kupang City neighborhood. A significance value of 0.074 and a regression coefficient of 0.122 support this. The impact of emotional branding on customer loyalty is not statistically significant at the 5% level, despite the positive coefficient $(0.074 > 0.05)$. Thus, hypothesis H_1 is rejected since this study finds emotional branding does not seem to have a substantial effect on client loyalty. Thus investigation's conclusions are supported by previous studies(Jannah & Ningsih, 2023) "The Influence of Emotional Branding and Customer Relationships on Consumer Loyalty" The emotional branding indicator that influences consumer loyalty is relationship, which is the brand's ability to build strong and sustainable emotional closeness. This closeness creates a sense of attachment and ownership of the product, thus encouraging consumers to remain loyal and make repeat purchases. (Gobe, 2010),

emotional branding is able to the brand and the customer have a deep emotional bond, which is essential for building enduring loyalty. (McEwen. W.J., 2004) also emphasized that emotional attachment makes consumers reluctant to switch to other brands because the relationship goes beyond just the function of the product. Consumers who feel an emotional connection will tend to be loyal and recommend the brand. However, the effectiveness of emotional branding still depends on the cultural, social context, and consumer preferences. If the emotional message is not relevant or not conveyed well, then its influence on loyalty will be minimal.

2. Personal Selling on Consumer Loyalty

Vaseline product customer loyalty in the Kupang City community is positively and significantly impacted by the personal selling variable, according to the findings of multiple linear analysis. The regression coefficient value is 0.250, with a significance level of 0.004 (<0.05) demonstrate this. Therefore, H2 is accepted since the study's conclusion demonstrates that personal selling significantly and favorably affects customer loyalty. The findings of this investigation are supported by past research by (Rizfie, 2023) "The Influence of Digital Marketing, Personal Selling and Word of Mouth on Consumer Loyalty and Consumer Trust as Intervening Variables" Personal selling indicators that influence consumer loyalty are reliability, namely the ability of salespeople to convey accurate and reliable information about Vaseline products. Consistent, clear, and realistic promotions build consumer trust, which ultimately encourages them to remain loyal to the product. (Cron, W. L. & Decarlo, 2010) personal selling is direct communication between salespeople and potential consumers aimed at creating transactions, fulfilling satisfaction, and building mutually beneficial relationships. The characteristics of effective personal selling are the ability to convey accurate information and answer consumer needs appropriately.

3. Electronic Word Of Mouth on Consumer Loyalty

According to the results of the multiple linear analysis, the electronic word-of-mouth variable has a positive and significant impact on the Kupang City community's consumer loyalty to Vaseline products. The regression coefficient of 0.373 and a significance level of less than 0.001 support this. Thus, the study's findings show that electronic word-of-mouth significantly and favorably influences customer loyalty, so (H3 is accepted). Previous studies have supported the conclusions of this investigation (Masruroh et al., 2023) "The Influence of Electronic Word Of Mouth (E-Wom) on Consumer Loyalty with Purchasing Decisions as a Mediating Variable (Case Study of Female Consumers at Monokrom Store Yogyakarta)." Electronic word of mouth indicators that influence consumer loyalty are content, namely the content of reviews or comments on social media about Vaseline products. Relevant, clear, and useful content helps consumers consider purchasing decisions and strengthens their trust. Quality information about benefits, advantages, prices, safety, and personal user experiences forms a positive perception and drives brand loyalty. (Kotler, P., & Keller, 2016), electronic word of mouth (eWOM) or viral marketing is a marketing strategy that utilizes the internet to create an online word-of-mouth information dissemination effect. Like a virus, eWOM spreads quickly through clicking and sharing content in the form of audio, video, or writing. Hennig-Thurau., (2004) added that eWOM has a wide reach and is able to shape public opinion through the quality of the information conveyed. Currently, customers frequently search for product reviews on digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and marketplaces before making purchasing decisions or recommending products.

4. Emotional Branding, Personal Selling and Electronic Word Of Mouth on Consumer Loyalty

The study's findings make it clear that the three separate factors personal selling, electronic word-of-mouth, and emotional branding all significantly and favorably affect customer loyalty at the same time. The F test findings support this, showing a significance value of less than 0.001 and a F count of 117.435 that is higher than the F table value of 2.699. Additionally, these three variables account for 78.6% of the variation in customer loyalty, based on the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.786. Thus, the study comes to the conclusion that electronic word-of-mouth, human selling, and emotional branding all have a big impact on customer loyalty, so that (H4 is accepted). (Djatnika, 2007) the AIDA theory explains the psychological process of consumers starting from attention, interest, desire, to purchasing action. In the context of Kupang City society, attention arises through emotional communication from the brand, followed by interest in product excellence through personal selling. The desire to continue using the product is driven by positive experiences from other users through e-WOM, which ultimately drives purchasing and loyalty. This is corroborated by the questionnaire results, which show that the majority of respondents agreed with the statement on the customer loyalty component.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the tests and data analysis conducted, the study can be inferred the following conclusions: In the Kupang City neighborhood, emotional branding has no discernible impact on Vaseline product loyalty. The findings of this investigation suggest that emotional bonds built through indicators such as emotional relationships, imagination, sensory experiences and brand vision are not enough to encourage consumer loyalty to Vaseline products in the Kupang City community. The Kupang City community's commitment to Vaseline goods is positively and dramatically impacted by personal selling. According to the study's findings, personal selling involves more than just in-person contacts, but also includes online promotional communications such as through social media. The delivery of clear, responsive and quality product information directly and digitally has proven to be effective in attracting the attention and interest of consumers, fostering consumer trust and encouraging consumers to make repeat purchases. In Kupang City, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has a favorable and substantial impact on customer loyalty to Vaseline products. The results of this study demonstrate that favorable perceptions, intensity, and information content spread on digital platforms have a strong influence on consumer perception. eWOM is able to create interest which ultimately encourages consumers to remain loyal to using and recommending Vaseline products. The customer loyalty of Vaseline goods in Kupang City is positively and profoundly influenced by emotional branding, personal selling, and Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). The findings of this investigation indicate that an integrated marketing approach, both in terms of emotion, sales approach and digital communication, can encourage consumers through each stage in the AIDA theory, from attracting attention to influencing loyal actions.

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