The study of customer engagement of local sustainable fashion brands on Instagram content

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Abstract

The local enterprise aims to ensure long-term business continuity while enhancing brand awareness of regional businesses. Businesses use social media to boost customer engagement and local enterprise items that are ecologically friendly. This study intends to examine how local businesses' Instagram accounts for Local Sustainable Fashion Brands (LSFB) are used by their customers. This qualitative study examines brand engagement tactics used by LSFB and Instagram posts made by its followers. Content analysis is used in the analytical approach. Originality/value- In this study, the LFSB setting demonstrates how small business operators in the fashion industry have grown their enterprises. Social media usage to foster customer involvement is examined because it may assess the target market's brand recognition among a deluge of imported goods or worldwide brands.

Keywords: local sustainable fashion brand (LFSB), customer engagement, social media

Introduction

Local enterprises use social media to increase brand engagement with potential customers and introduce local environmentally based brands. Consumer engagement with social media is explained as content features that are exposed to consumers so that consumers tend to interact with social media (Lin et al., 2023). Consumers will be interested in content that arouses emotional feelings. The emergence of social media has created a transformation in the way consumers interact with brands. Consumers can also use social media to interact with brands and share ideas and views (Gligor & Bozkurt, 2021; Ji et al., 2022). Social media also provides facilities for companies and consumers to interact. Previous research has also explained the use of social media for small enterprises, namely online branding (Paunovic et al., 2022), luxury brands (Kumar et al., 2022), live streaming services (Giertz et al., 2022), and start-ups (Troise et al., 2022).

Previous research has shown that consumer engagement has been widely

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analysd. The focus on customer engagement is carried out in contexts including pro-environmental consumption in the context of social media (Alam et al., 2023), green products in social media marketing (Sun & Wang, 2020), the engagement of brand on Facebook (Maree & Heerden, 2021; de Silvia, 2020), co-created value (Quach et al., 2020), online service (Chi et al., 2022); social media brand post (Sun & Wang, 2020). Existing developments show that this LSFB is not yet optimal for performance. Consumers prefer global brands compared to LFSB. This is also demonstrated by several studies, namely (Huang & He, 2021), product quality (Yu et al., 2022), global retailers (Jim & Kim, 2022), and global consumer culture (Cleveland et al., 2022).

However, small businesses' attention to local fashion products is increasing (Nurfitriyani, 2022). They are trying to survive in competition with their own local and global brands while trying to get consumers' attention (Fikri, 2022). Local enterprises face global brand marketing. Global fashion for women is also experiencing rapid development in Indonesia (Euromonitor, 2023). One way for local enterprises to look for something new to attract consumers' attention is to start developing fashion products with due regard to environmental elements. Local enterprises strengthen brand elements because they are aware of their concern about the impact on the fashion production process. This local fashion production prioritizes the effects on the environment by using production materials that are also environmentally friendly. This is an advantage to show the superiority of local brands amidst competition with global brands in the fashion industry. Jin et al. (2021) show that Instagram can be a social media for sharing fashion information.

This research analyses the role of social media in strengthening customer engagement from LSFB. The uniqueness of this research is that it analyses social media posts from local enterprises. This post aims to create customer engagement as a novelty of this research. This social media is also intended to create brand awareness among consumers amid competition from other fashion brands domestically and abroad. Customer engagement is optimized so LSFB can be well-known by consumers and potential consumers. This customer engagement is expected to create strong brand awareness (Cheung et al., 2020). Analysis of social media posts is essential to increase consumer. To pinpoint engaging content related to LSFB, it is crucial to rely on a robust engagement rate metric. To strengthen the novelty of this research, this engagement rate serves as a metric for assessing audience interaction with the created material.

The research aims to analyse the engagement of LFSB to understand the existence of a psychological process as a mechanism to maintain customer relationships. This engagement is expected to encourage consumers to use word of mouth, make recommendations to other people, and provide reviews about the brand. Companies can help build brand engagement by creating brand interactivity. This brand interactivity is a way for companies to develop good communication with consumers so that consumers feel they are getting attention from the company. LFSB in Indonesia is experiencing relatively rapid development. There are around 12 LSFBs launched by local enterprises (Endrawati, 2022). These local fashion brands have an environmentally friendly concept and are considered a wiser fashion choice. These products are considered safe for health and the environment and can support the

strengthening of local entrepreneurs. The role of local enterprises will also support long-term business continuity while strengthening brand love for local brands (Cicilia, 2022).

This study analyss Instagram content by identifying content with good engagement and patterns in high-engagement content. First, identifying content with good engagement leads to two analyses, namely calculating the engagement rate for each content and grouping content based on the engagement rate value. Second, patterns in high-engagement content lead to five analyses: identifying topics and famous words in captions, identifying dominant content, identifying when posting, identifying accounts with reasonable engagement rates, and identifying other patterns that can increase engagement.

Customer engagement is defined as an interactive experience between consumers and brands or other members of the community. Companies can optimize the use of social media to create engagement. The brand engagement has three dimensions: cognition, affect, and activation (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Cognitive processing refers to the thought process related to brands and their evaluation. Brand affect is associated with the brand's tendency and ability to create a positive emotional response due to brand use. Aspect activation shows behavioral activities associated with the brand. Activation is associated with expression through consumer energy in interacting with the brand. The word engagement is widely used in various contexts. This can include consumer engagement, online brand engagement, customer engagement behavior, community engagement, and customer brand engagement.

Customer engagement with brand-related social media content or social media engagement is consumer interaction on social media content, not just on brands. This relationship concerns behavioral constructs, not just cognitive and affective aspects (Schivinski et al., 2016; Carvalho & Fernandes, 2018). Social media engagement helps companies measure consumer engagement on social media. Social media engagement also includes several online activities from consumers related to brands. It can vary in level of interaction and engagement in consumption, contribution, and creation of media content.

Local enterprise Instagram can be a medium for interacting directly with followers regarding sharing new information, the latest features, promos, and various campaigns. Followers can immediately respond via comments and direct messages. Local enterprises can also interact directly by holding online discussions and inviting followers to upload new things from the application, which can be spread widely to other users who have not followed the account. Users feel that accessing social media is very easy, so they can communicate online, for example, chatting, providing information, sharing statuses, and even sending out invitations. With this convenience, online communication is considered more effective for users who are used to using it.

Research Methods

Instagram analysis was carried out using a qualitative method of content analysis, which emphasizes the analysis of a "text," which is a manifestation of the oral form (e.g., radio), writing such as newspapers, magazines, text documents, articles, or in an audiovisual form such as television programs, social media (Guédé, 2023). Analyzing Instagram content emphasizes identifying

content with good engagement and patterns in high-engagement content. First, identifying content with good engagement leads to two analyses, namely calculating the engagement rate for each content and grouping content based on the engagement rate value. Second, patterns in high-engagement content lead to five analyses: identifying topics and famous words in captions, identifying dominant content, identifying when posting, identifying accounts with reasonable engagement rates, and identifying other patterns that can increase engagement. This research has conducted a preliminary study regarding the selection of LSFB. This environmentally based local product already exists in Indonesia, but the penetration rate for this product is very low (Mayasari & Haryanto, 2023).

Table1. Local Sustainable Fashion Brands

Brand	Description
Sejauh Mata Memandang	This brand was founded in 2014, with modern batik motifs that young people like. As far as the Eyes Can See carries the concept of slow fashion. Batik making is still handmade by empowering the community through batik artisans from Java and Bali.
SARE/Studio	This brand was founded in 2015, producing pajamas, nightgowns, and casual dresses for men, women, and children.
Pijak Bumi	This brand focuses on eco-friendly shoe products made using organic materials such as leather from plant extracts. This brand is already oriented to the local and international realms. This shoe product from Bandung tries to campaign for society by reducing waste from emissions and implementing sustainable fashion.
Sukkha Citta	This brand initially only made handicrafts and crafts. However, in its development, clothes coloring uses natural, non-chemical ingredients, such as fruit.
Kana Goods	This brand mainly produces blue clothes, including bags, denim, and dresses.
Lakanua	This watch brand is an essential accessory to support your appearance and remind you of time. Lakanua presents watches made from cement and wood waste.
Imaji Studio	This original Indonesian clothing brand is made from woven fabric and uses a natural dyeing process.
Cinta Bumi Artisan	This brand comes from Bali; this environmentally friendly brand makes clothes and other equipment such as bags, wallets, and scarves.
Cotton ink	Cottonink was founded in 2008 as a fashion company that produces garments in clothes and shoes.
OSEM	The following eco-friendly local brand is OSEM, which uses dyeing techniques in clothing coloring and design. In addition to preserving traditional garments-making techniques, OSEM uses environmentally friendly Indigofera plant dyes.
Biasa Official Merek	This brand is also made in limited editions, thus avoiding mass production and leaving much waste. The design characteristic of Usually Official is the resort wear on women's dresses, usually used for holidays or tropical climates.
Lanivatti	This brand carries sustainable fashion in the manufacturing process. The fabric for making clothes comes from biodegradable thread fibers.

Data collection was carried out via Instagram, with a data collection period from January to May 2023. This data collection is related to LSFB posting content involving 19 accounts with 516 posts. Of the 19 accounts involved in the data analysis process, Cottonink is the account that has the most number of posts and is active with 251 content. Cotton ink itself has several followers, reaching 628 thousands. Some of the content creation carried out by Cottonink is a form of collaboration with other accounts like Cottonink collaborating to create content with Zaloraid, which has several followers of up to 778 thousand. In addition, Cottonink also collaborated with Alikaislamadina, who has several followers of up to 521 thousand, in creating content about LSFB.

Result and Discussions

To identify content with good engagement in creating content about LSFB, it is necessary to base it on a good engagement rate indicator. This engagement rate is interpreted as an indicator to measure the extent of audience interaction with the content that has been created. According to Schwartz (2022), engagement rate refers to the percentage of engagement by comparing the number of likes and comments with the total followers on an account. Analyzing the performance of an account or brand on Instagram can be suitable for creating content if the engagement rate calculations get a minimum percentage of 1.39%. Calculation of the percentage of engagement rate itself can be formulated as follows:

Engagement Rate (%) = {(likes + comments) / total followers x 100}   (1)

Figure 1 shows that a total of 516 data content posts have been collected regarding LSFB content; the result is that 67.1% of the content (346 content) has an engagement rate value of less than equal to 0.2%. The amount of content regarding LSFB that is considered to have a good or relatively high engagement rate is only 8.5% of the total 516 existing content posts. The threshold used to conclude that content has a reasonable engagement rate, in this case, uses a minimum rate of 1.39%. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that most content created about LSFB has a meagre engagement rate. This can be interpreted by the low interaction and attention (likes and comments) of the audience/followers for content with LSFB's theme. Low engagement with a product brand, in this case, related to content on social media, can impact the extent of awareness of a product brand being marketed. These conditions can hurt the existence of a product brand. Low consumer awareness of a product brand will reduce attention to that brand, ultimately impacting the desire to buy that product brand.

Based on further analysis, it is known that of the 19 Instagram account respondents in the research, the signature was the Instagram account with the most content and a high engagement rate. Inen. Signature has 29 types of content with an average engagement rate of 2.16%. With the sizeable average engagement rate percentage, it can be concluded that there is a positive response related to the interaction and attention of the audience/followers towards LSFB-themed content created by Inen. Signature.
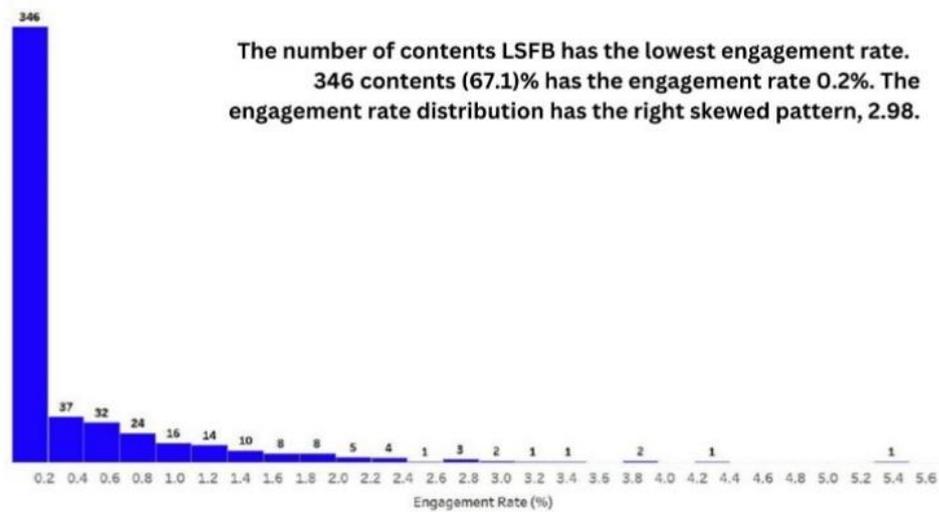
Figure 1. The Distribution of Content Engagement Rate

Other analysis results show that there is a negative relationship at a moderate level between the engagement rate and the number of followers, with a p-value = 1.02 e-37. Figure 2 shows that this negative relationship can be interpreted as the existence of opposite or contradictory directions between the tested variables. If variable X experiences an increase in score, then variable Y will experience a decrease in score and vice versa (Creswell, 2012). In the results of this analysis, it can be interpreted that the relationship between engagement rate and number of followers has an inverse or contradictory direction. A strong indication from the correlation results based on existing data shows that when one LSFB content has a high engagement rate, it is associated with a low or relatively small number of followers on one account and vice versa. A large number of followers on one account does not necessarily have a strong relationship with a high engagement rate or high positive response given by followers to a particular content on that account. A study's moderate correlation level is often interpreted by the extent of the strength of the relationship between the variables being tested (Schober et al., 2018). This moderate correlation shows a reasonably strong relationship between a high engagement rate and a low/small number of followers.
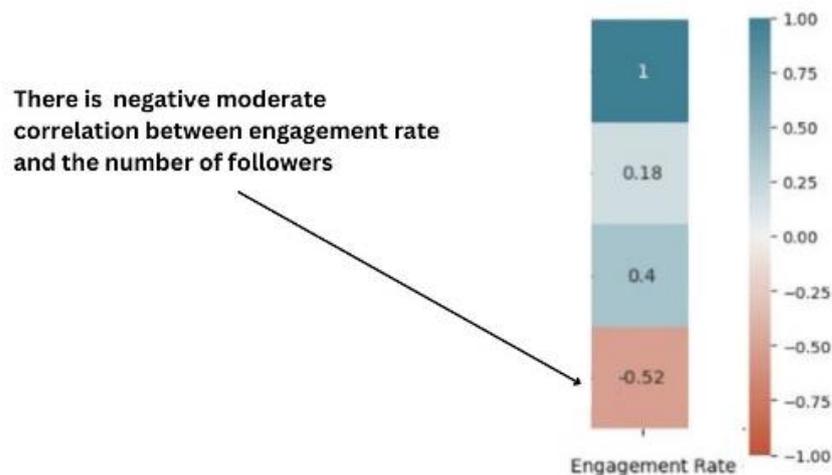

Figure 2. Correlation Between Engagement Rate and The Number of Followers

The depiction of patterns regarding content with a high engagement rate shows the role of hashtags in captions in the content created. The analysis results illustrate that LSFB content with a reasonable engagement rate uses more hashtags in the caption. Figure 3 further describes several other hashtags raised by 19 accounts that create content about LSFB. Based on several studies, the existence of hashtags, on the one hand, has a positive impact on achieving high engagement. However, paying attention to related aspects in generating a hashtag is also necessary.

Figure 3. Hashtag of Local Sustainable Fashion Brand

LFSB business actors strive to expand their business scope regionally and internationally. Efforts are made to use social media to target globally. LSFB business actors have a global orientation, so they try to design content strategies and create customer engagement. These content strategies are expected to get a response from consumers, which is analysd from the number of likes, shares, or comments (Taecharungroj, 2017; Kim et al., 2015; Sridevi et al., 2021). This research uses Instagram because this social media is considered a medium for sharing information, including stories and posts (Casalo et al., 2020).

The company has implemented a customer engagement program with a social media account. Apart from that, business actors have also posted information related to products and other marketing activities. This customer engagement aims to communicate with followers of the LSFB Instagram account. Followers give likes or comments. However, the results of this research show that LSFB social media accounts have a low level of engagement. The results show

that consumers who become followers have low interaction. Besides that, followers also pay little attention to social media posts. Followers do not give many likes or comments.

It is hoped that social media can become a learning medium for consumers to find product information, designs, prices, or the benefits of using LSFB. This social media can create brand awareness. For example, the brand is usually launched at the introduction stage, so the company creates a program to strengthen brand awareness. Brand awareness is essential for companies to strengthen brand relationships with consumers. If brand awareness is firm, at least consumers have a good memory of the brand's existence. This is important to consider when a brand enters the growth stage; consumers will face several other new brand offers. Existing brands will compete for consumers' attention. The brand relationship of the company needs to be strengthened because it retains existing consumers so they do not switch to other brands. Consumer knowledge of LSFB is a concern for market players because this can be a consideration for consumers when deciding to buy a product. If consumers do not have good LSFB knowledge, they will easily consider other brands. Especially now, global brands for fashion products and local brands are competing to retain existing consumers. One way for business actors is to create interactive communication with consumers.

The LSFB brand account in Indonesia is part of Inen. Signature has a lot of content with a high engagement rate. This shows that there is a positive response to the content. Consumers pay close attention to the posts of LSFB managers. On the other hand, the results of this study show that when an LSFB account has a large number of followers, the engagement rate tends to be relatively low. On the other hand, when the number of followers is low, the engagement rate tends to be relatively high. This shows that account managers will easily interact with the number of consumers they tend to reach. Communication has a good level of intensity. This good interaction will cause consumers to have the opportunity to explore more details.

This research also analyses LSFB content that has a reasonable engagement rate and will have lots of captions. The results of this analysis align with research conducted by De Vries (2019), who conducted experimental tests on the large number of hashtags that impact engagement. Hashtags are an interactive element in social media that increases likes and comments. With hashtags, followers and brands can mark content specifically, making it easy for other non-followers to find similarly tagged content.

The existence of hashtags as a variable that can affect the increase in the engagement rate on LFSB content has characteristics in its preparation. Based on the analysis results, it is known that the characteristics of this hashtag can be unique, which describes each brand itself to general hashtags that aim to attract attention and responses from users to increase engagement. Some hashtags with unique characteristics that describe the brand include #youxcottonink, #lanivattiheritage, and #sahabatinen. Some general hashtags include #quotes, #simplehappiness, #fashionlover.

LFSB, which is in the research selection, is not visible in several hashtags. Cotton ink brand accounts only. A study by De Vries (2019) emphasized many hashtags that were not too excessive, up to 20. In a study conducted by Yoo

(2021) regarding the role of hashtags in increasing engagement in fashion products, several things must be paid attention to. First, creating hashtags in the form of comments and likes will be more effective in increasing engagement if they are not too long and do not appear too often. Second, using hashtags combined with captions will increase user or customer engagement more effectively than using hashtags alone. Third, hashtags that contain promotional messages are generally less effective in increasing engagement in the form of likes and comments.

Social media accounts for LSFB can be used to communicate with users and potential users and forge connections. Local businesses should upload content that will elicit and encourage consumer participation. Customers may be interested in posting favorable and unfavorable comments and asking for feedback from other customers or prospective customers. Positive remarks will encourage additional prospective customers to view the account and become interested in the goods. On the other hand, if unfavorable remarks also compel customers to learn the subject of debate and the issue with the post, then the local business's content will be ineffective. The best possible planning and design must go into LSFB. Each upload needs to be meaningful because it will serve as the model for how followers would perceive the value of LSFB, target audiences, mood board, color, sequence, caption, and all other elements that can encourage user involvement. Local businesses' official material also explains the brand image they wish to project to followers. This also determines the local business's anticipated response.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that LSFB business actors have poor levels of consumer involvement. The utilization of social media must be optimized. This takes into account the fact that LSFB anticipates having a wider target market reach. Managers of LFSB must maximize social media for more frequent contact to raise consumer knowledge of LFSB. Since joining a more extensive account would limit their ability to engage with customers, LFSB management is not likely to do so. LFSB account managers can further engage customers by showcasing high-quality images and engaging photo descriptions.

Customer involvement, customer participation, customer interactivity, and customer flow experience form brand engagement (Carvalho & Fernandes, 2018). Involvement is a person's relevance and interest in an object or brand. Consumers who have high involvement will also show high brand engagement. Regarding customer participation, consumers can actively participate in consumption, contribution, and creating content or other creativity. If this is related to the use of social media, consumers will be involved in brand processes or activities. Likewise, with customer interactivity, companies can develop marketing programs that allow consumers to communicate with brands. Brand engagement can also be formed if consumers are actively involved in the flow experience; for example, a company offers a program that gives consumers an intensive emotional experience.

For academic implications, social media sites offer extensive datasets for researchers to examine user behavior, trends, and sentiment. Scholars can use social media data to examine social occurrences, analyse sentiment, and

investigate developing patterns. Researchers can analyse how brands interact with their audiences on social media to assess the efficacy of branding and communication tactics. Social media engagement presents ethical concerns around privacy, data security, and online conduct. Researchers are examining the ethical consequences of using and designing social media platforms. For further research, the next research investigates the reasons behind user involvement on social media. This involves comprehending why individuals share content, engage in debates, or follow particular accounts. Psychological aspects like self-presentation and social approval can be analysed further.

Social media possesses significant potential for promoting local products and facilitating customer engagement. Multiple strategies exist via which social media platforms might augment customer interaction for locally produced goods. Based on managerial implications, the act of presenting and displaying products of LSFB to highlight their features and qualities. Marketers also use social media sites like Instagram to effectively exhibit local items through visual content with high-resolution photographs and videos that captivate viewers and accentuate the distinctive attributes of LSFB products. The marketer can provide an account of the narratives associated with the products. This essay will examine the local origins, craftsmanship, and individuals creating these objects. Marketers can develop interactive content, which refers to digital media that allows users to engage and participate in the content actively. Polls and surveys can be practical tools on popular social media platforms like Instagram and Twitter to collect valuable customer insights and views of LSFB. This practice fosters client engagement and yields valuable input to enhance the product. Marketers can develop quizzes tailored to the region's local items of LSFB. This not only imparts knowledge to the audience but also adds an element of enjoyment to the interaction process. Marketers can also develop user-generated content (UGC), which refers to any form of content, such as text, images, videos, or audio of LSFB, created and shared by individuals online.

Furthermore, marketers can carry out contests and challenges that can serve as effective means to incentivize customers to actively engage in sharing their experiences about LSFB. This practice serves as a means of promoting your products and facilitates the creation of user-generated content (UGC) that can be subsequently shared on various social media platforms. Marketers can disseminate consumer testimonials and reviews through the LSFB social media platforms. This practice fosters confidence and establishes a reliable reputation for locally sourced goods. It is imperative to swiftly address and acknowledge comments and messages, demonstrating a genuine appreciation for consumers' viewpoints and a steadfast dedication to enhancing the product offerings of LSFB. Marketers can also provide details regarding upcoming events within the community or support community-driven initiatives. This displays the dedication to the nearby community and has the potential to cultivate a favourable perception of LSFB.

Acknowledgments

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