

Research Article

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Unraveling Consumer Mindset: Analysis of Consumer Behavior in the Distribution of E-WOM on The Originote Skincare Product

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Abstract: *This study aims to analyze the spread of e-WOM on the skincare brand "The Originote" through the use of qualitative methods with a case study approach, as well as data collection techniques in the form of interviews and documentation. The results of the analysis show that The Originote has succeeded in managing the spread of e-WOM well, thus contributing to high levels of consumer satisfaction and loyalty. This is evidenced by positive assessments on various platforms such as TikTok and Shopee, as well as a strong tendency among consumers to make repeat purchases and recommend this skincare to others. This study is expected to provide strategic recommendations to Originote to increase consumer participation so that they are willing to be involved in e-WOM and increase insight into other brands about the importance of managing e-WOM properly to avoid losing consumer trust and buying interest.*

Keywords: *e-WOM, consumer satisfaction, brand trust, purchase intention.*

Introduction

In the increasingly developing digital era, marketing communications have undergone significant changes. Consumers no longer rely solely on traditional advertising to obtain information about a product or brand but also utilize digital media to share experiences and opinions. The rapid development of the internet and technology has made digital marketing a very popular strategy. It is widely used by most marketers around the world, making the internet a very promising strategy (Ardani, 2022). One form of digital communication that has a major impact on purchasing decisions is electronic word of mouth (e-WOM). E-WOM is a form of marketing communication where potential consumers convey statements, both positive and negative, through the internet (Romadhoni et al., 2021).

E-WOM refers to reviews, comments, and recommendations that are distributed through digital platforms, such as social media, discussion forums, and e-commerce sites. Information obtained through e-WOM via the internet is often considered more credible than conventional advertising because it comes from the real experiences of consumers. The Internet is one of the most useful information technologies to date, which has played a role in driving the development of various existing information systems (Fernandes Andry et al., 2023). The IAM (information adoption model) theory from Sussman & Siegal (2003) explains that consumers will assess information by considering the quality of the arguments presented, the level of trust in the source of the information, the extent to which the information is useful, and their tendency to adopt electronic word of mouth (e-WOM).

Consumer behavior has now changed from conventional shopping to online methods through e-commerce platforms, marketplaces, social media, and other (Amaliah et al., 2025). This is characterized by several characteristics, such as considering standards and quality based on reviews, having a certain level of tolerance seen in dialogue with brands, showing loyalty in actively seeking information, and trying to

stay up to date with the latest developments (Nugroho, 2023). A deep understanding of consumers can influence consumer decisions, thus encouraging consumers to buy products offered by marketers (Siregar, 2022). The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) developed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1975) also explains that individual behavior, including in the context of communication or sharing information about a brand online, is influenced by two main factors, namely attitudes toward the behavior and perceived subjective norms. These two factors then form the individual's intention or desire to take action.

The beauty industry is growing every year, with more and more local and international brands entering the skincare market in Indonesia. Competition between skincare brands makes skincare business players always observe consumer needs in the market. With the increasing number of skincare product brands circulating in Indonesia, consumers are becoming more careful and careful in determining the choice of appropriate skincare products. The Originote is one of the beauty brands that is currently growing in Indonesia by offering affordable prices (Setiyanti & Ansori, 2024). According to Kompas.com, The Originote has successfully entered the top 3 beauty products in Indonesia based on sales calculations throughout Q1 2024.

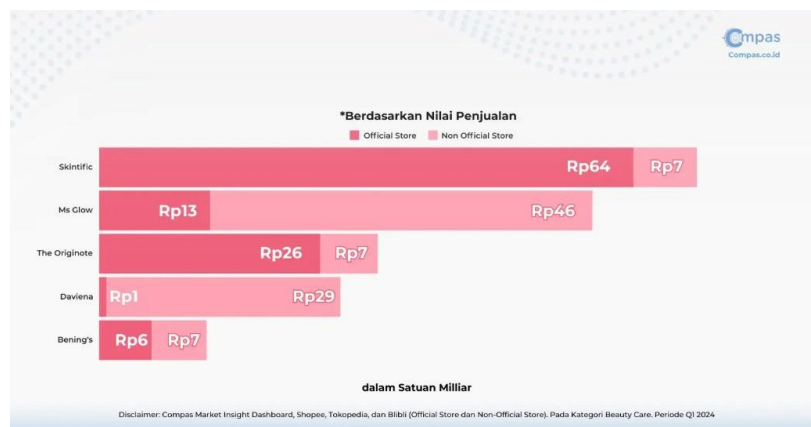


Figure 1. Beauty Product Sales Q1 2024

Source: <https://kompas.co.id/article/market-insight-paket-kecantikan-skintific/>

The Originote was founded in 2018 and began to be known among consumers in 2022 (Azhari et al., 2025). This product is generally used by teenage and adult women who are looking for safe skin care that has been registered with BPOM. Originote uses natural ingredients in its products to provide maximum moisture, protection, and freshness (Tuurmaida et al., 2024). Thus, it has received great attention from consumers on various digital platforms, and often receives positive reviews, as well as recommendations from users on social media such as Tiktok, and online marketplaces such as Shopee. However, amidst its success, The Originote had repeated controversy in 2024 due to its product promotion practices, which tended to be excessive or overclaiming (Darmawan et al., 2024). This allegation arose because the claims made were considered irrelevant to the actual content of the product. This caused public unrest, where they demanded transparency from The Originote. Although The Originote management has provided clarification and enlightenment regarding its products, it is not easy to restore consumer trust. These negative issues spread quickly because e-WOM plays an important role in the distribution of information and reviews among consumers. The strong presence of e-WOM influences consumer mindsets and behavior when making purchasing decisions.

This study aims to uncover consumer mindsets in e-WOM related to The Originote brand on TikTok and Shopee. By understanding how consumers process information, assessing the credibility and quality of reviews, and responding to opinions of other consumers, these findings are expected to provide insights for brands in designing more effective marketing strategies. Analysis of consumer behavior in e-WOM can also help The Originote in enhancing interactions with consumers and building a stronger brand image in the digital realm. From the problems currently being faced by The Originote, researchers are interested in conducting further research entitled "Unraveling Consumer Mindset: Analysis of Consumer Behavior in the Distribution of E-WOM on The Originote Skincare Product."

Literature Review

E-WOM

The increasing use of digital platforms makes it easier for consumers to interact and discuss a particular brand online. These online discussions make it easier for consumers to exchange information by sharing their experiences after trying a particular product or service with other consumers (Indrawati et al. 2023). The types of information disseminated are in various forms such as storytelling, testimonials, recommendations or ratings, and reviews (Nurhasanah et al., 2021). This phenomenon of online information dissemination is known as e-WOM (electronic word of mouth). E-WOM is the dissemination of both positive and negative information about a particular brand or company through digital media (Pillay, 2021). The presence of e-WOM has slowly changed consumer behavior, where consumers tend to rely on e-WOM in making purchasing decisions. This is because the information in e-WOM is considered more objective and transparent, so it is more trusted by consumers compared to conventional advertising (Ali & Anwar, 2021).

The way consumers manage the information they obtain has been discussed in the IAM (information activation model) theory proposed by Sussman & Siegal (2003). This theory explains that consumers spread information based on the argument quality, the source credibility, the usefulness of the information, and the adoption of e-WOM (Erkan & Evans, 2016). First, the argument quality refers to how well the argument is presented in an online review or recommendation. Second, the source credibility refers to the extent to which the source of the information is credible. Third, the usefulness of the information refers to how useful the information presented is. And finally, the adoption of e-WOM refers to the extent to which consumers accept and use the information in making purchasing decisions or recommending it to others. Research from Nyagadza et al. (2023) and Abedi et al. (2019) proves that the better the argument, the more credible the source, and the more useful the information, the higher the consumer's desire to adopt information in e-WOM.

Benefits of E-WOM

The study of Ahmad et al. (2022) highlighted important information regarding consumer sentiment towards a product in e-WOM. This sentiment helps companies understand consumer preferences, interests, and needs, thus encouraging innovation in improving product quality to achieve consumer satisfaction. Satisfied consumers tend to be more loyal in making repeat purchases and leaving positive comments to support the company's development (Ruiz-Alba et al., 2022; Bulut et al., 2018). These positive comments will increase brand awareness and consumer trust to try the company's products or services, and even recommend them to others (Kim et al., 2019).

Liu et al. (2021) and Seifert & Kwon (2019) explained in their studies that companies do not need to spend excessive promotional costs to attract consumers. This is because consumers will voluntarily participate in the creation of shared value through e-WOM, which ultimately influences consumer perceptions to make purchases. This phenomenon has been previously discussed in the theory of reasoned action (TRA) by Ajzen and Fishbein (1975). This theory discusses how individuals' attitudes and subjective norms influence their intentions to communicate or share brand-related information online. First, attitudes in e-WOM reflect beliefs about the impact of their reviews on others, whether the reviews help or influence purchasing decisions. Second, subjective norms reflect the social urge to share reviews, recommendations, or experiences because they feel it is a good thing to do, and also due to pressure that requires them to be involved (Yusuf et al., 2018).

In addition to helping companies build brand awareness, increase trust, and attract purchasing power, e-WOM also has benefits for consumers. The spread of e-WOM helps consumers to access some information related to products or services more easily as a consideration in making purchasing decisions (Nofal et al., 2022; Bilal et al., 2021). Therefore, it is important for companies to determine the right e-WOM management strategy to help consumers make purchasing decisions. Based on research results from Lopes et al. (2023), strategies that companies can implement in managing e-WOM include (1) responding to positive reviews carefully so that they do not seem like hidden advertising, (2) responding to negative reviews in a solution-oriented manner by apologizing and providing solutions to correct mistakes, (3) do not give generic responses but give more personal and specific responses so that consumers feel cared for.

Method

A qualitative method with a case study approach is applied in this research to analyze the spread of e-WOM on the skincare brand “The Originote” based on positive and negative sentiment. Data collection is done through documentation to see the e-WOM management strategy implemented by The Originote, as well as in-depth interviews with 7 consumers exposed to e-WOM to see the influence of e-WOM and the effectiveness of the strategy implemented. The following is data from 7 consumers we interviewed to obtain information.

Table 1. Respondent Data

Initials of Name	Gender	Age	Status
N	Woman	20 years old	College student
R	Woman	26 years old	Worker
F	Man	21 years old	College student
L	Woman	17 years old	High school student
I	Man	19 years old	College student
V	Woman	24 years old	Worker
A	Woman	16 years old	High school student

Source: Data processing (2025)

Then, the data obtained were analyzed by reducing, presenting, and drawing conclusions to understand how The Originote responds to negative sentiment from consumers and minimizes the spread. Thus, the results of this study are expected to provide suggestions for improvement for The Originote and become a learning experience for other brands to formulate appropriate strategic steps to maintain consumer trust and satisfaction.

Results and Discussion

E-WOM Sources

TikTok is one of the e-WOM sources used by consumers to find references, especially in choosing skincare. This platform allows users to share experiences and opinions about a product or service through content that is more interesting to watch. Creating content such as review videos, as well as videos before and after using the product, encourages more people to try the recommended skincare and increases sales potential. In addition to TikTok, Shopee as an e-commerce platform also influences purchasing decisions. This platform not only provides facilities to facilitate purchases, but also shows reviews from many consumers who have purchased products or used services. Not only positive reviews, but also negative reviews that are spread need to be considered because they can affect brand reputation and consumer perception. Thus, monitoring is needed from The Originote to manage e-WOM effectively in order to maintain consumer satisfaction.

Sentiment E-WOM on TikTok

The Originote has received many positive reviews on TikTok regarding the quality of skincare with student-friendly prices. The Originote products are considered suitable for dealing with various skin problems, as evidenced by the many uploads from users showing satisfactory results, such as fading acne, brighter skin, and healthier-looking skin. Several *influencers* and *beauty enthusiasts* also appreciate The Originote's ability to create quality skincare products at affordable prices, such as its light and easily absorbed moisturizer content, without leaving a sticky feeling on the skin. Their reviews have received many viewers, up to millions of views, which influence consumer perceptions of The Originote as one of the trusted skincare brands in meeting skin needs and problems.

Despite receiving many positive reviews, content containing unpleasant experiences with The Originote products remains a major concern, especially for consumers who want to consider several skincare brands before deciding to buy. Several users complained about the ineffectiveness of The Originote products in overcoming their skin problems. Some of them showed their skin conditions before and after use in the form of photos or videos showing that The Originote products did not provide significant changes, even worsening their skin conditions. The comments column on the video was also filled with discussions from other consumers who agreed and experienced similar things. Side effects such as acne, pimples, and redness of the skin were topics often discussed by consumers who were disappointed because the results did not match the claims made by The Originote.

One of The Originote's products that has received a lot of negative sentiment from consumers is sunscreen. Product performance in terms of comfort, such as stinging effects on the eyes, dullness, and oiliness when applied, are negative sentiments that consumers often talk about regarding sunscreen products from The Originote. In addition to negative reviews, The Originote has also been hit by issues related to overclaims in its sunscreen and serum products. This issue started with one user who has many followers sharing laboratory results of several sunscreens related to SPF ingredients, and a doctor who is famous for his objective reviews sharing information about retinol ingredients in serums that do not match claims. The instructions given in this video invite assumptions from many consumers, where several allegations in the comments column are directed at The Originote's products.

Sentiment E-WOM on Shopee

The Originote received a rating of 4.9 out of 6.1 million reviews on Shopee. This high rating shows that many consumers are satisfied with The Originote products. By focusing on product sales on Shopee, instead of getting reviews related to product usage, The Originote received reviews related to product delivery and packaging, which were considered fast, neat, and safe. Many consumers expressed their love for The Originote products, which have given significant effects to the skin with competitive prices and economical packaging. Several consumers also expressed their loyalty to The Originote by making repeat purchases for the umpteenth time.

Despite its high rating, The Originote still cannot escape from its shortcomings. There are times when The Originote accidentally makes mistakes that result in low ratings from consumers. Several consumers shared reviews related to the obstacles they experienced, such as the incompatibility of the product ordered with the one they received. So in this case, consumers have to submit a product request that takes a long time. Therefore, there needs to be further management from The Originote to take appropriate action to resolve the issue.

Consumer Behavior The Originote

To analyze consumer behavior in responding to the spread of positive and negative e-WOM, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with seven users of The Originote skincare. The first, second, third, and fourth consumers are consumers who often make repeat purchases for different reasons. If the first consumer buys because The Originote offers a low price, then the second and third consumers buy because of the effectiveness of The Originote products in overcoming their skin problems. While the fourth consumer did not give a specific reason, but only felt comfortable with The Originote products. When The Originote was hit by the overclaim issue, the reactions from consumers also varied. The first and second consumers only waited for The Originote to provide clarification because so far there have been no side effects felt. The third consumer expressed her disappointment and chose to turn to another skincare brand. While the fourth consumer chose to continue to trust The Originote products because so far there have helped overcome her skin problems.

Then, the fifth and sixth consumers are consumers who have tried products from The Originote. Meanwhile, the seventh consumer is a consumer who just wants to buy because of recommendations from TikTok users. The fifth consumer said that at first she was just curious, but was interested in buying again after feeling the benefits of using the moisturizer. The sixth consumer chose not to continue using sunscreen from The Originote because it had a dull effect on her face. The seventh consumer hopes that products from The Originote can solve her acne skin problems. When The Originote was hit by the overclaim issue, the reactions of the fifth, sixth, and seventh consumers all showed disappointment. The sixth consumer was grateful for her decision not to buy again, while the seventh consumer chose to delete The Originote products from her Shopee shopping cart list. Likewise, the fifth consumer chose to switch to another moisturizer brand, even though the ones that were hit by the overclaim issue were sunscreen and serum products from The Originote. The results of this interview can be concluded that negative e-WOM, especially in terms of overclaim, has a significant impact on consumer trust and purchasing interest. There needs to be a responsive and solution-oriented answer from The Originote to restore consumer trust and purchasing interest.

E-WOM Strategy: Overcoming Negative Sentiment on TikTok

The flood of alleged overclaims has raised many questions from consumers regarding the suitability of the product. Many consumers feel worried and lose trust, and demand clarification. Therefore, The Originote implemented several strategic steps to overcome this negative sentiment. This step was taken to eliminate anxiety and restore consumer trust. First, The Originote quickly reformulated their sunscreen product, which some consumers found stung when applied to their faces. Second, made a clarification video by presenting evidence of laboratory test results to refute allegations of overclaiming the SPF content in its sunscreen. Third, The Originote did not hesitate to admit mistakes and temporarily stopped sales to improve the quality of the product in its serum, which was proven to be overclaimed by a doctor. After the improvements were made, The Originote asked the doctor to re-review all the products.

The goodwill shown received a positive response from various parties and succeeded in restoring consumer trust that had been lost. In addition to carrying out reformulation, clarification, and improvement actions, The Originote also took another strategic step by providing quality information packaged in the form of educational content. Educational content in the form of video tips on choosing skincare that suits your skin type, tutorials on how to use skincare correctly, and an introduction to the benefits and uses of certain skincare ingredients was created so that consumers avoid the side effects that have been complained about. The concern shown by The Originote shows its credibility and authority in the skincare world. It also collaborates with various influencers who are believed to have knowledge and experience in the skincare field to create a positive buzz about The Originote brand among TikTok users.

E-WOM Strategy : Overcoming Negative Sentiment on Shopee

The Originote provides a solution-oriented response to every negative review to show its concern for consumer complaints. Some consumers gave low ratings without comment, so The Originote contacted consumers to ask further questions regarding the details of the problems experienced. Some strategies implemented by The Originote to manage the spread of e-WOM in the form of reviews on Shopee include the following. First, utilize the Shopee warranty feature. This feature is open to protect consumers from damage, inconsistencies, and side effects of the product, as well as providing a delivery guarantee so that the product arrives on time. Second, utilizing the AI assistant feature to help The Originote provide fast and accurate service. This feature can help consumers to search for products, product recommendations, answer questions, order assistance, receive reminders about promotions, to provide assistance related to resolving problems or complaints experienced by consumers. Third, always be polite and professional in responding to negative reviews. This is done to avoid escalating conflict with dissatisfied consumers and to build good communication through follow-ups. This communication is carried out to ensure that complaints have been resolved and consumers are satisfied with the corrective actions taken by The Originote.

Effectiveness of Implemented Strategies

To find out consumer opinions on the steps taken by The Originote in overcoming its mistakes, researchers conducted in-depth interviews with several of the same consumers. The results were that out of seven consumers, only one consumer did not want to buy again, namely the sixth consumer, after having a bad experience when using sunscreen products from The Originote. Even though reformulation, clarification, or others had been carried out, the sixth consumer still chose another brand that was considered suitable for her skin. Meanwhile, the other six consumers greatly appreciated the corrective actions taken to improve product quality and chose to return to using or trying products from The Originote. Then, out

of the seven consumers, only the first consumer had ever experienced a problem when buying The Originote products on Shopee. She shared her experience where The Originote gave her compensation when the serum she bought had broken packaging, although this was likely an error on the part of the expedition. This solution-oriented response from The Originote made her not give up on buying again, because The Originote provided a guarantee until the product she bought arrived safely.

Conclusion

Based on the results that have been presented, it can be concluded that The Originote has managed the distribution of e-WOM very well. The Originote always responds to consumer complaints responsively and provides solutions. This strategic step is effective in maintaining consumer satisfaction and trust. However, The Originote has not implemented the right strategy to motivate consumers to engage in e-WOM. So the researcher provides several suggestions that can be used as options for The Originote to increase consumer engagement. First, The Originote can provide rewards for consumers who have purchased and given positive reviews. This reward is not in the form of points like those on Shopee, but in the form of cashback that consumers can later use when making repeat purchases. This not only encourages consumers to engage in e-WOM, but also attracts consumers to make repeat purchases. Second, hold giveaways with hashtags on various digital platforms. And finally, hold campaigns with interesting themes around skincare. This strategy not only encourages consumers to share their positive experiences, but also increases trust and visibility in The Originote. This study uses a qualitative method that allows for bias in data interpretation. Therefore, further research can apply quantitative methods to generalize the findings to a wider population. Alternatively, interviews with more diverse consumers can be conducted to gain a more detailed understanding of their perceptions in processing e-WOM.

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