FROM STORY TO LOYALTY: STORYTELLING IN SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING FOR LOCAL FASHION BRANDS JAKARTA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of Social Media Marketing (SMM) on Brand Loyalty by considering the mediating roles of Brand Image and Brand Storytelling in local fashion brands in Jakarta. The increasing use of social media as a marketing communication tool has encouraged local fashion brands to strengthen consumer relationships through digital platforms. This study employs a quantitative approach using a survey method. Data were collected from 120 active social media users who have purchased local fashion brand products in Jakarta. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine both direct and indirect relationships among the proposed variables. The results indicate that Social Media Marketing has a significant positive effect on Brand Image and Brand Storytelling. However, the direct effect of Social Media Marketing on Brand Loyalty is not significant. Instead, Brand Image and Brand Storytelling are proven to mediate the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Brand Loyalty. These findings suggest that effective social media marketing activities must be supported by a strong brand image and compelling brand narratives to build consumer loyalty. Consumers tend to develop loyalty not merely through promotional exposure, but through emotional engagement and meaningful brand stories delivered via social media platforms. This study provides empirical evidence for local fashion brands in optimizing narrative-based social media strategies to enhance brand image and foster long-term consumer loyalty. The findings are expected to contribute to the literature on digital marketing and branding, particularly in the context of local fashion industries in developing markets.

Keywords: *Social Media Marketing, Brand Storytelling, Brand Image, Brand Loyalty, Local Fashion*

INTRODUCTION

In 2022, the fashion industry ranked first in contributing to the national creative economy export value (Hendriyani, 2022), highlighting the importance of this subsector in building Indonesia's creative economy. Unfortunately, Indonesians' interest in purchasing imported clothing products remains very high, as seen in the increasing volume of apparel imports (Heriyati et al., 2024). This situation is further reinforced by a survey conducted by Katadata Insight Center (KIC), which revealed that 34.2% of Indonesians prefer imported clothing and footwear, even though high-quality local alternatives are widely available (Setyowati, 2020). Moreover, MSME actors tend to concentrate heavily on production activities while paying less attention to marketing and promotional efforts, which ultimately hinders their product sales (Fahririn et al., 2025). As a result, local brands must work harder to compete by adopting effective marketing strategies. In Jakarta, where social media penetration is very high, local fashion brands have great opportunities to leverage storytelling in their marketing strategies. By delivering compelling and relevant stories, brands can build deeper engagement with

consumers, which in turn may enhance loyalty. According to data from Leapmesh and Cheefoo (2024), 92% of consumers want brand advertisements to deliver experiences akin to inspiring stories. In response, social media has made it much easier for marketers and influencers to build narratives around the products they promote. Storytelling can communicate product messages and values in ways that allow consumers to feel empathy, particularly when their rational understanding may be limited (Hapsari et al., 2024). One benefit of social media for consumers is that it reduces the effort required to search for information (Laroche et al., 2013).

In social media marketing, storytelling serves as a strategy to convey authentic and engaging narratives that strengthen emotional bonds between brands and consumers. Hapsari et al. (2024) demonstrated that storytelling communicates messages and product values in ways that build empathy, especially when rational comprehension is insufficient. Yulizar et al. (2024) found that in the context of local skincare products in Indonesia, a strong brand image is shaped through digital activities such as influencer promotions and consumer reviews (e-WOM). In today's digital era, consumers also play an active role in shaping brand image through their own experiences, including reviews, comments, and reposts on social media. As such, a brand's image can be formed not only through marketers' strategies but also organically by consumers. Consequently, in the digital space, companies no longer fully control their brand image—consumers also become co-creators.

Previous studies have shown that Social Media Marketing (SMM) influences brands and consumer behavior in several ways, such as brand love, brand consciousness, and value consciousness (Riady & Kusumawati, 2024), as well as brand loyalty through brand experience, brand love, and brand trust (Fathoni & Jatmiko, 2025). Fetais et al. (2023) showed that SMM alone is not sufficient to create brand loyalty unless linked to lovemarks (emotion & respect) and community engagement. Their study implicitly suggested that storytelling is relevant within entertainment and customization elements, but it has not been directly tested as a variable. Storytelling is generally considered only as a content element rather than as a mediator between brand image and brand loyalty. However, within the framework of Narrative Transportation Theory and Experiential Marketing, storytelling has been shown to foster emotional connections that drive loyalty (Hudson et al., 2016; van Laer et al., 2019).

Although brand storytelling is increasingly discussed in modern marketing literature, research linking storytelling with SMM remains relatively limited. Most studies focus on one aspect—either SMM or storytelling—while few examine how both complement each other in building consumer loyalty. In the digital era, however, authentic and consistent narratives often serve as the differentiating factor between brands that successfully build loyal communities and those that merely sell products. From a contextual perspective, most research has focused on global brands or major e-commerce platforms, while studies on local fashion brands in Indonesia, particularly in Jakarta, are still scarce. This is critical because local brands face unique challenges: limited resources, intense competition from global fast-fashion brands, and the need to build emotional closeness with urban, digital-savvy young consumers who are also proud of their local identity. Based on these considerations, this study seeks to address the research gap concerning the role of SMM and brand storytelling in fostering brand loyalty in local fashion brands in Jakarta.

With the rise of social media and smartphones, consumers can easily access the digital world or the internet. The extent of technology adoption significantly impacts

business performance through its influence on operational efficiency, innovation, and customer value creation (Yudistira et al., 2025). Social media marketing refers to the process of enhancing the popularity of products and services through social media sites (Kaur, 2019), which includes activities such as sharing content, videos, images, captions, and other features for marketing purposes. One benefit of social media for consumers is the reduction of effort in information searching (Laroche et al., 2013).

SMM represents companies' strategic efforts to deliver marketing offerings through social media platforms to build relationships with stakeholders by enhancing value through interaction, information, personalization, and word-of-mouth (Yadav & Rahman, 2018). As a result, more organizations and companies have recently turned to social media to engage customers with their brands (María Díaz-Martín & Suplet, 2015). This trend has also encouraged local product owners to use social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok not only to market their products but also to interact with consumers. SMM has a crucial influence on brand image (Setiawan et al., 2024), as consumers' perceptions of a brand are shaped by their associations with it; a positive brand image increases loyalty and purchase intention (Raut et al., 2019). Yadav & Rahman (2018) identified several dimensions of SMM activities: interactivity, informativeness, personalization, trendiness, and WOM.

Brand image plays an important role in influencing purchasing decisions, especially for consumers exposed to multiple brands in the digital space. Brand image can be defined as perceptions of a brand that reflect the associations stored in consumers' minds (Andhini & Andanawarih, 2023). It is a form of strategic differentiation in marketing—allowing companies to stand out not only through products or services but also through their image (Kotler et al., 2018). Brand image is shaped by consumers' associations with the brand, embedded in their memory and understanding (Hien et al., 2020). Yulizar et al. (2024) found that in the context of local skincare products in Indonesia, a strong brand image is built through digital activities such as influencer promotions and consumer reviews (e-WOM). In line with this, consumers tend to trust reviews and recommendations from fellow consumers more than advertisements or promotional content directly delivered by brands (Utomo et al., 2025). Consequently, some consumers feel more confident when using fashion products with a positive brand image, which drives stronger purchase intentions (Chen et al., 2021). In the digital era, consumers themselves also contribute to shaping brand image through their experiences, including reviews, comments, and reposts on social media. Thus, a brand's image can be formed either through marketers' strategies or organically by consumers. This makes brand image a dynamic concept, highly contextual to digital platforms. Godey et al. (2016), in their research, outlined several brand image dimensions relevant to the fashion industry, such as symbolic image, uniqueness, favorability, and strength. Similarly, brand image can also be classified along cognitive and affective dimensions (Bian & Forsythe, 2012). Thus, the hypotheses proposed are stated as follows: H1: Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on brand image.

Brand loyalty refers to consumers' commitment to a brand, reflected in repeat purchases and consistent preferences, both behaviorally and attitudinally. Generally, brand loyalty consists of two main dimensions: behavioral loyalty (e.g., repurchase and recommending to others) and attitudinal loyalty (e.g., emotional attachment, strong preference, and long-term commitment to the brand) (Hapsari et al., 2017). These dimensions are crucial in the local fashion industry, where consumers seek not only

product functionality but also emotional and symbolic connections with the brands they choose (Bian & Forsythe, 2012).

Essentially, brand loyalty encompasses positive aspects of loyal consumer behavior, where consumers consistently enjoy using a brand in socially acceptable ways (Le, 2020). Sundari et al. (2024) found that brand experience and brand image, as antecedent variables, strongly influence brand loyalty for local brands. Several dimensions are often used to measure brand loyalty, including attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty (Hapsari et al., 2017), as well as conative loyalty (Suhartanto et al., 2021). Attitudinal loyalty refers to emotional bonds and consumer preference for a brand, behavioral loyalty is reflected in actual repurchase and recommendation behavior, while conative loyalty reflects strong intentions to remain loyal (intention to repurchase) before actual behavior occurs. Brand loyalty thus refers to consumers' commitment to repurchase and show consistent preference for a brand, both behaviorally (repeat purchases) and attitudinally (emotional attachment) (Hapsari et al., 2017). In the digital context, brand loyalty is influenced not only by product quality but also by consumers' experiences interacting with brands through social media. Several studies show that elements of SMM directly influence brand loyalty.

Godey et al. (2016), in a study of global luxury brands, found that SMM has a significant positive effect on brand image and brand awareness, both of which contribute to brand loyalty. Similarly, Ismail (2017), in the context of fashion brands in Egypt, found that SMM dimensions such as interaction and entertainment can increase emotional engagement, which in turn fosters customer loyalty. Brand loyalty can also be reflected in attitudes and behaviors such as future purchase intentions, brand commitment, and willingness to pay premium prices compared to other brands (Le, 2020). Based on the foregoing discussion, the hypotheses are proposed as follows: H2: Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on brand loyalty, H3: Brand image has a significant effect on brand loyalty, H4: Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on brand loyalty through brand image.

Brand loyalty is consumers' commitment to a brand, reflected in repeat purchases and consistent preferences for the brand, both in behavior and attitude. In general, brand loyalty is divided into two main dimensions: behavioral loyalty (e.g., repeat purchases and recommendations to others) and attitudinal loyalty (e.g., emotional attachment, strong preference, and long-term commitment to the brand) (Hapsari et al., 2017). These dimensions are especially important in the context of the local fashion industry, since consumers seek not only product functionality but also emotional and symbolic connections with the brands they choose (Bian & Forsythe, 2012). Essentially, brand loyalty encompasses the positive aspects of loyal consumer behavior, in which consumers enjoy using the brand in ways that are socially acceptable (Le, 2020). Sundari et al. (2024) found that brand experience and brand image, as antecedent variables, strongly influence local brand loyalty. Several dimensions are often used to measure brand loyalty, including: attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty (Hapsari et al., 2017), as well as conative loyalty (Suhartanto et al., 2021). Attitudinal loyalty refers to emotional attachment and consumer preference for the brand, behavioral loyalty reflects actual repeat purchase and recommendation behavior, while conative loyalty relates to strong intentions to remain loyal (thinking of repurchasing) before actual behavior occurs.

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influenced not only by product quality but also by consumers' experiences interacting with brands through social media. Several studies show that elements of SMM directly influence brand loyalty. Godey et al. (2016), in a study of global luxury brands, found that SMM has a significant positive effect on brand image and brand awareness, both of which contribute to brand loyalty. Similarly, Ismail (2017), in the context of fashion brands in Egypt, found that SMM dimensions such as interaction and entertainment can increase emotional engagement, which ultimately fosters customer loyalty. Research on local cosmetic brands also shows that consistent, personalized, and culturally relevant social media strategies enhance customer engagement, which in turn leads to brand loyalty (Made Widnyani et al., 2024). Brand loyalty can also be reflected in attitudes and behaviors such as purchase intentions, brand commitment, and willingness to pay higher prices compared to other brands (Le, 2020). Therefore, the proposed hypotheses are as follows: H2: Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on brand loyalty, H3: Brand image has a significant effect on brand loyalty, H4: Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on brand loyalty through brand image.

Brand storytelling is a communication strategy that incorporates narrative elements to build emotional connections with audiences. Effective storytelling consists of four complementary dimensions: story, meaning, ritual, and transmedia (Zimand-Sheiner, 2024). Storytelling plays an important role in implementing SMM strategies; on social media, it shapes brand perception through stories that not only describe products but also touch the emotional and cultural side of audiences. Thus, brand storytelling is not only informative but also builds psychological closeness between consumers and brands (Mavilinda et al., 2023). Beyond psychological closeness, storytelling often appeals to consumers' emotions. Van Laer et al. (2014) emphasize the importance of narrative transportation, or the extent to which audiences are "carried away" by a story, which influences their emotional engagement with the brand. Marsanggul et al. (2024) show that if storytelling fails to touch emotional and relational aspects, it may limit a brand's ability to foster loyalty.

Visual storytelling, which integrates motion, background context, and emotional messages, can effectively enhance audience engagement (Putri, 2025). When visual narratives are strongly conveyed, audiences tend to be more emotionally involved and feel connected to the brand's story, thereby strengthening emotional bonds and clarifying brand identity in their minds. Storytelling on social media enhances brand communication effectiveness because of its interactive and responsive nature (Jing, 2024). In practice, storytelling across platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook often relies on compelling visuals, influencer involvement, and emotionally engaging storylines to build brand appeal and strengthen consumer relationships. Beyond product sales strategies, storytelling also impacts other sectors: Lund et al. (2018) show that storytelling in tourism destinations can strengthen place image while creating strong emotional experiences for audiences. The resulting emotional bond serves as a key bridge between destination brands and consumer loyalty.

According to recent literature, social media marketing functions not only as a communication channel but also as a strategic platform to strengthen brand storytelling through visuals, emotional content, and participatory formats. Social media enables brands to deliver dynamic, culturally relevant narratives in more interactive ways (Godey et al., 2016; Singh & Sonnenburg, 2012). Brand storytelling helps foster emotional closeness between consumers and brands through authentic, meaningful, and value-relevant narratives. Strong brand stories create positive brand experiences, strengthen

brand image, and encourage consumer loyalty. Storytelling significantly impacts brand experience, which ultimately enhances loyalty (Lundqvist et al., 2013). This is supported by recent studies such as Kaur et al. (2024), which show that digital storytelling can improve brand image and loyalty. Chang (2025) also found that storytelling marketing strategies influence purchase intention, with brand image acting as a mediating variable. Similarly, research on Social Media Marketing shows that digital marketing activities can drive consumer loyalty through the development of consistent and relevant brand narratives (Fetais et al., 2023). This highlights the role of brand storytelling as a significant mediating path linking SMM with brand loyalty.

Zimand-Sheiner (2024) outlines a four-part framework for organizing and analyzing brand stories in the digital context, consisting of story, meaning, ritual, and transmedia. Each dimension involves specific considerations: story includes structure, theme, timing, and local culture; meaning refers to the values and mission promoted by the brand; ritual involves events, ceremonies, artifacts, or objects related to the brand; and transmedia represents the channels or platforms through which the brand conveys its story. Accordingly, the hypotheses formulated in this study are as follows: H5: Brand storytelling has a significant effect on brand loyalty, H6: Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on brand storytelling, H7: Social Media Marketing has a significant effect on brand loyalty through brand storytelling. Table 1. presents the analysis of several local fashion brands in developing or implementing brand storytelling on social media.

Table 1. Storytelling in Local Fashion Brands

No	Brand	Story, Meaning, Ritual	Intermedia
1.	Erigo	tarted from batik fashion and ikat, then evolved into a globally recognized mainstream local casual fashion brand; adaptive to global trends; regularly participates in events (JakCloth).	Events, social media, offline store, official website
2.	Koma.std (Koma Studio)	Carrying the persona of “Super Underrated” — anti-hype, edgy, sporty, authentic; conveying values of perseverance, spirit, and uniqueness without seeking the spotlight; regularly participates in related events.	Events, social media
3	This is april	Initiated from the concern of wanting an on-trend appearance but facing the limitation of high prices, thus prioritizing fashionable collections that are affordable and timeless, easy to mix and match; launches collections periodically, always accompanied by interactive campaigns on social media and communities.	Events, social media
4	Sejauh Mata Memandang	Applying the concept of slow fashion with a focus on sustainability and eco-friendliness. SMM emphasizes the use of materials such as organic cotton,	Events, social media, offline store, official website

No	Brand	Story, Meaning, Ritual	Intermedia
		linen, tencel, and even recycled textiles from pre-consumer waste processed into high-quality new fabrics; this brand opts for handmade production inspired by traditional Indonesian techniques such as hand-drawn batik and hand screen-printing, supported by innovative technology for efficiency.	
5	CROOZ	Crooz connects the brand with the streetwear community through the strong narrative of "stay true," relevant meanings, established consumption rituals, and consistent cross-media communication. With this approach, Crooz not only sells fashion products but also builds consumer loyalty through cultural identity and lifestyle. Crooz regularly participates in exhibitions and organizes internal events to strengthen relationships with customers.	Events, social media, offline store, official website

Source: Processed by the researcher (2025)

Based on the literature review, it can be observed that social media marketing plays a crucial role in building relationships between brands and consumers, one of which is through the mechanism of brand storytelling. Consistently delivered brand narratives are able to strengthen brand image and create emotional bonds that form the foundation of consumer loyalty. In line with this, various studies emphasize that brand storytelling not only has a direct impact on brand loyalty but can also serve as a mediating variable that bridges the influence of SMM on brand loyalty. Referring to this discussion, a research model was developed to represent the relationships among the variables in this study.

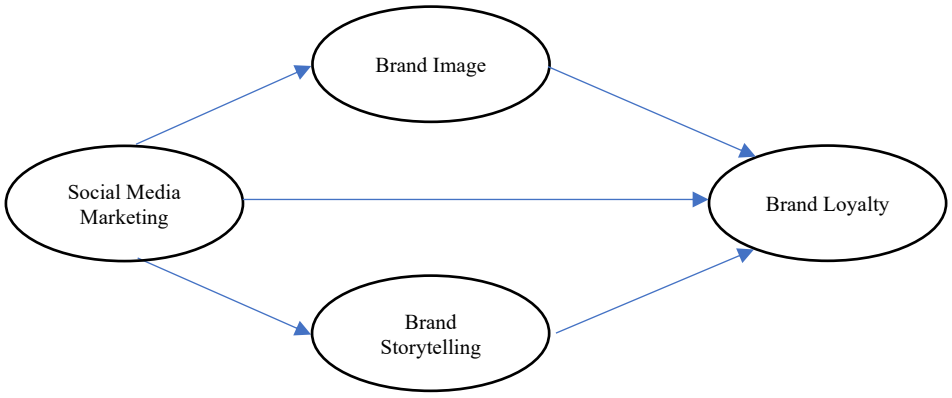


Figure 1. Research Model
Source: Processed by the researcher (2025)

METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

The sample in this study consisted of consumers of local fashion brands in Jakarta and its surrounding areas. The survey was conducted online by distributing a questionnaire link to respondents. To achieve the desired sample size, snowball sampling was employed, in which respondents were asked to provide references to other potential respondents they knew or to share the questionnaire link with suitable candidates. To ensure respondents' confidence in data security, the questionnaire included the name and affiliation of the institution overseeing the study. The sampling method used in this study was non-probability sampling, in which the selected sample met specific criteria or was chosen based on the researcher's subjective judgment (Malhotra, 2010). The sample consisted of 120 respondents. This number was determined based on several methodological considerations: common practical rules for factor analysis and SEM suggest a range of 5–10 respondents per indicator, and Hair et al. (2017) state that the minimum sample size for PLS-SEM should be 10 times the number of indicators in the construct with the most indicators, or 10 times the number of structural paths (predictors) leading to a particular construct.

Data collection was conducted over one month to reach the expected number of respondents. The data were then analyzed using path analysis in Smart PLS to test the structural and measurement models. The questionnaire consisted of statements rated on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree. Additionally, to deepen the discussion of the variables, interviews were conducted with practitioners or experts in social media marketing and brand storytelling.

Table 2. Variable and Indicator

Variabel	Indikator	Sumber
Social media marketing	1. Direct interaction 2. Sharing experiences 3. Product-related content 4. Helping make the right purchase deision 5. Content that matches interests 6. Personalized content 7. Trendy content 8. Information about new things 9. Reviews from other customers 10. Sharing experiences with others	Yadav & Rahman (2018)
Brand image	1. Symbolic image 2. Uniqueness 3. Favorability 4. Strength	Godey et al. (2016)
Brand storytelling	1. Story 2. Meaning 3. Ritual	Zimand-Sheiner (2024)

Variabel	Indikator	Sumber
	4. Transmedia	
Brand loyalty	1. Intention to purchase in the future	Le (2020)
	2. Commitment to the brand	
	3. Willingness to pay a higher price compared to other brands	

Source: Processed by the researcher (2025)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research results, the characteristics of Preferred Fashion Brands were obtained as follows:

Table 3. Respondents' Preferred Fashion Brands

Brand	**Jumlah Responden (%)**
This is April	9 (7.5)
bwbyaz	1 (0.8)
TAKA	2 (1.7)
Cotton Ink	10 (8.3)
Pyoppfledge	26 (21.7)
Koma Studio	6 (5.0)
Erigo	25 (20.8)
Kanky	6 (5.0)
Compass	8 (6.7)
Bigissimo.id	4 (3.3)
Aljenna	1 (0.8)
Crooz	9 (7.5)
Sukhacitta	1 (0.8)
Rucas	1 (0.8)
Maternal Disaster	1 (0.8)
Mandkind	1 (0.8)
Wigman Denim	1 (0.8)
Duraking	1 (0.8)
Greenism	1 (0.8)
Taza	1 (0.8)
Sejauh Mata Memandang	1 (0.8)
Roadmiles	3 (2.5)

Source: SPSS Processing Results

Table 3 shows the local fashion brands selected by respondents when completing the questionnaire. All brands included were screened to ensure relevance to this study, specifically local brands operating in Jakarta that implement Social Media Marketing (SMM) and brand storytelling strategies.

Table 4. Frekuensi Responden

Demographic	Jumlah Responden (%)
Gender	
Male	76 (63.3)
Female	44 (36.7)
Social media	
x	3 (2.5)
Instagram	102 (85)
Tiktok	13 (10.8)
Youtube	2 (1.7)
Age	39 (32.5)
18 - 28	71 (59.2)
29 - 39	51 (43,6)
40 and above	10 (8.3)
Employment Status	
Civil Servant (ASN)	2 (1.7)
Private Sector Employee	79 (23.3)
Student	28 (23.3)
BLUD (Regional Public Service Agency	1 (0.8)
Employee)	8 (6.7)
Entrepreneur	1 (0.8)
Housewife (IRT)	1 (0.8)
Freelancer	

Source: SPSS Processing Results

Based on the respondents' characteristics, the majority were male (63.3%) compared to female (36.7%). Regarding social media usage, Instagram dominated as the primary platform with the highest percentage (85%), followed by TikTok (10.8%), while YouTube (1.7%) and non-social media users (2.5%) were relatively small. In terms of age range, most respondents were in the 29–39 years category (59.2%), followed by 18–28 years (32.5%), and those aged 40 and above (8.3%). Respondents' employment status was quite diverse, with the majority working in the private sector (23.3%) and students (23.3%), while the remaining were distributed across civil servants (1.7%), BLUD employees (0.8%), entrepreneurs (6.7%), housewives (0.8%), and freelancers (0.8%). These findings indicate that respondents in this study were predominantly from the productive age group, mainly private-sector employees and students, and were actively using Instagram as their primary social media platform.

Table 5. Validity and Reliability

Variabel	Indikator	*Loading Factor*
Social Media Marketing AVE (0.75), CR (0.96), α (0.96)	1. Direct interaction	0.828
	2. Sharing experiences	0.875
	3. Product-related content	0.820
	4. Helping make the right purchase decision	0.862
		0.880
	5. Content that matches interests	0.888
	6. Personalized content	0.894
	7. Trendy content	0.893
	8. Information about new things	0.876

	9. Reviews from other customers	0.862
	10. Sharing experiences with others	
Brand Image	11. Symbolic image	0.918
AVE (0.65), CR	12. Uniqueness	0.706
(0.88),	13. Favorability	0.832
α (0.82)	14. Strength	0.777
Brand Storytelling	15. Story	0.752
AVE (0.61), CR	16. Meaning	0.811
(0.88),	17. Ritual	0.798
α (0.79)	18. Transmedia	0.776
Brand Loyalty	19. Intention to purchase in the future	0.826
AVE (0.65), CR	20. Commitment to the brand	0.826
(0.83),	21. Willingness to pay a higher price	0.726
α (0.70)	compared to other brands	

Source: SMART PLS Processing Results

Based on the results of the construct validity and reliability tests, all research variables demonstrated good instrument quality. The Social Media Marketing variable had an AVE of 0.75, CR of 0.96, and α of 0.96, with all indicator loadings above 0.80, indicating that each indicator strongly reflects this construct. The Brand Image variable also met the criteria with an AVE of 0.65, CR of 0.88, and α of 0.82, although one indicator had a relatively low loading factor (0.706), it was still within acceptable limits.

Furthermore, the Brand Storytelling variable showed good reliability (AVE 0.61, CR 0.88, α 0.79), with all indicators ranging from 0.75 to 0.81. Meanwhile, the Brand Loyalty variable was also well-measured (AVE 0.65, CR 0.83, α 0.70), with all indicator loadings above 0.70. Referring to the criteria proposed by Hair et al. (2017), this study's instruments meet the requirements for convergent validity (loading factor > 0.70 and AVE > 0.50) and construct reliability (CR > 0.70 and Cronbach's Alpha ≥ 0.70), indicating that all variables are valid, reliable, and suitable for use in structural model analysis.

The results of the measurement model indicate that Social Media Marketing is consistently perceived by consumers of local fashion brands in Jakarta. This supports recent studies showing that interactive and relevant social media activities strengthen brand-related perceptions and help local brands compete in a market dominated by imported products. (Godey et al., 2016; Setiawan et al., 2024; Setyowati, 2020).

Furthermore, the strong measurement properties of Brand Image and Brand Storytelling suggest that consumers effectively interpret both functional brand attributes and emotional narratives conveyed through social media. This finding is consistent with Yulizar et al. (2024), which emphasizes the role of digital activities and e-WOM in shaping brand image, as well as recent studies highlighting storytelling as a key mechanism for communicating brand values and identity (Kaur et al., 2024; Zimand-Sheiner, 2024).

Finally, the reliable measurement of Brand Loyalty reinforces recent evidence that loyalty is driven more by positive brand perceptions and emotional engagement than by direct promotional exposure. This aligns with studies showing that brand image and storytelling function as important mediating mechanisms in fostering long-term consumer loyalty in competitive markets (Fetais et al., 2023; Hapsari et al., 2017).

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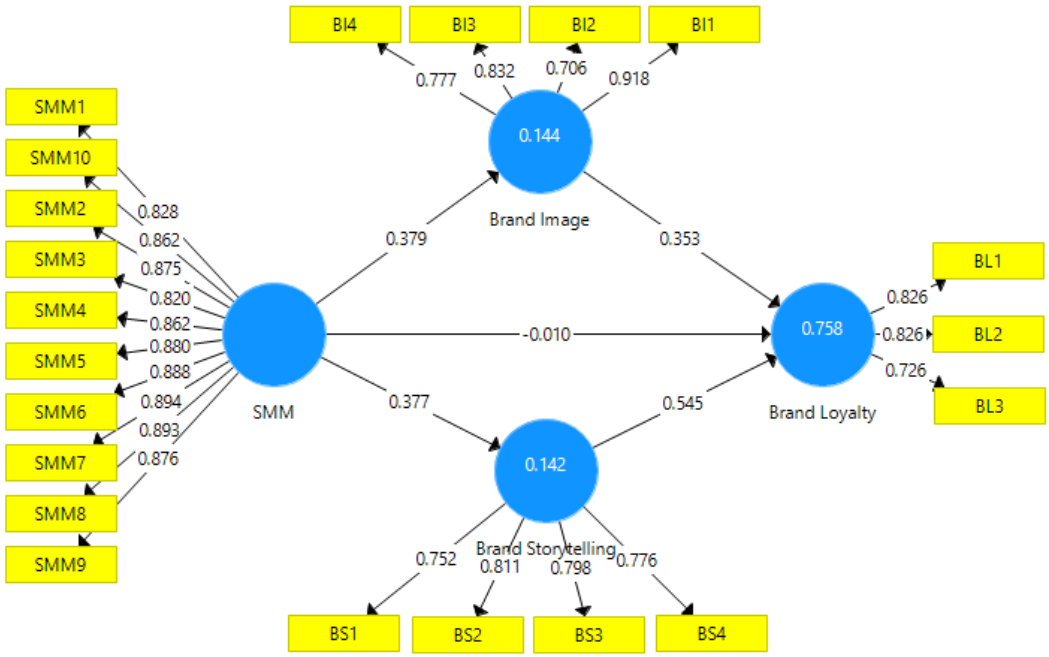


Figure 2. Measurement Model
Source: SMART PLS Processing Results

Table 6. Path Coefficients

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Brand Image -> Brand Loyalty	0,353	0,361	0,105	3,346	**0,001**
Brand Storytelling -> Brand Loyalty	0,545	0,542	0,109	4,988	**0,000**
SMM -> Brand Image	0,379	0,392	0,072	5,263	**0,000**
SMM -> Brand Loyalty	-0,010	-0,015	0,044	0,229	**0,819**
SMM -> Brand Storytelling	0,377	0,386	0,070	5,394	**0,000**

Source: SMART PLS Processing Results

The results of the inter-variable relationship tests revealed several important findings. First, Brand Image had a positive and significant effect on Brand Loyalty (β = 0.353; t = 3.346; p = 0.001), indicating that the stronger the brand image, the higher the consumer loyalty. Second, Brand Storytelling also had a significant effect on Brand Loyalty, with the strongest influence (β = 0.545; t = 4.988; p < 0.001), confirming that brand narratives and stories are dominant factors in building loyalty. Third, Social Media Marketing (SMM) had a positive and significant effect on Brand Image (β = 0.379; t = 5.263; p < 0.001), and similarly, SMM significantly influenced Brand Storytelling (β = 0.377; t = 5.394; p < 0.001). However, SMM had no significant direct effect on Brand Loyalty (β = –0.010; t = 0.229; p = 0.819). This indicates that SMM does not

automatically increase brand loyalty but operates through Brand Image and Brand Storytelling as mediating variables.

According to Hair et al. (2017), path significance is determined by t-statistic values > 1.96 ($\alpha = 0.05$) and p-values < 0.05. The results of this study met these criteria for almost all paths, except for SMM to Brand Loyalty, which was not significant. Therefore, hypotheses H1, H3, H4, H5, H6, and H7 are supported, while H2 is rejected. Accordingly, the tested structural model explains the role of brand image and storytelling in social media marketing strategies in building consumer loyalty.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The results of this study indicate that Social Media Marketing (SMM) significantly affects brand image and brand storytelling, which in turn drive brand loyalty, although SMM does not directly increase consumer loyalty. These findings align with previous studies (Kaur et al., 2024; Zimand-Sheiner, 2024) emphasizing the importance of authentic and relevant storytelling in building emotional engagement with consumers through social media. Effective storytelling strengthens positive brand perceptions and facilitates long-term loyalty. For local fashion brands in Jakarta, this suggests that SMM strategies should focus on creating narrative content that reflects the brand's identity and values, consistently delivered through popular digital platforms such as Instagram and TikTok. Interaction with consumers through reviews, comments, and experience-sharing is crucial to reinforcing brand image and storytelling. Thus, integrated SMM management with storytelling can serve as a foundation for building consumer loyalty, increasing repeat purchases, and strengthening the position of local fashion brands in a competitive market. Therefore, using social media is not merely about posting products; content must be designed to build a consistent narrative and highlight local identity. For instance, brands can use social media to showcase the stories behind designs or collaborate with local artists, allowing consumers to feel emotionally connected. This is consistent with interviews with SMM practitioners, who stated that brands must be able to tell stories, as this differentiates them from others and fosters closeness with consumers (Kenly, Personal Communication, September 15, 2025).

Although this study provides important insights into the role of SMM and brand storytelling in building consumer loyalty for local fashion brands in Jakarta, several limitations should be noted. First, the sample was limited to respondents who are active social media users, so the findings may not fully represent offline consumers or those who rarely use digital platforms. Second, the use of questionnaires and interviews relies on respondents' subjective perceptions, which may be influenced by personal experiences or social biases. Third, the study's focus on local fashion brands in Jakarta limits generalizability to fashion brands in other regions or different industries. Finally, other variables potentially influencing brand loyalty were not included in the research model, leaving room for further analysis. Understanding these limitations, future research is recommended to expand the sample and consider additional variables to produce more comprehensive findings that can be generalized across various local fashion industry contexts.

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