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The Influence of Sales Information Systems and Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Strategies on Customer Loyalty with the Role of Brand Ambassador as a Mediating Variable at PT Arwinda Tour and Travel Sidoarjo

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to analyze the influence of sales information systems and Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategies on the role of brand ambassadors; to analyze the influence of sales information systems and IMC strategies on customer loyalty; as well as to analyze the influence of sales information systems and IMC strategies on customer loyalty through the role of brand ambassadors as a mediating variable at PT Arwinda Tour and Travel in Sidoarjo from 2021 to 2023. The research approach uses quantitative methods. The type of research is causal and it also employs survey research. The sample for this study was determined using non-probability sampling techniques, specifically purposive sampling. The criteria for sample selection were customers who used PT Arwinda Tour and Travel during the period from 2021 to 2023, resulting in a sample population of 75. Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire method. Data analysis was performed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method with SmartPLS version 4.0 software. The results of the analysis indicate that sales information systems and IMC strategies have a positive and significant effect on the role of brand ambassadors. Furthermore, sales information systems and IMC strategies also have a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty. As for the mediating variable, sales information systems and IMC strategies have a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty through the role of brand ambassadors among consumers of PT Arwinda Tour and Travel in Sidoarjo from 2021 to 2023.

Keyword: Sales Information Systems, Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Strategies, Brand Ambassadors, Customer Loyalty

INTRODUCTION

In today's world, we are confronted with a fundamental human need: the desire to bring

our thoughts to life in various forms. Among these thoughts are those that cater to our spiritual and psychological needs. People often seek entertainment and refreshing experiences to break free from the monotony and stress of daily life. This need manifests in many ways, whether it's visiting natural attractions, exploring historical sites or museums, spending time at the zoo, going on pilgrimage tours, or traveling both domestically and internationally, including sacred journeys to places like Mecca. As a result, the tourism industry, particularly in the form of Tour and Travel businesses, is thriving.

The Tour and Travel sector serves consumers by facilitating journeys to specific destinations, and it holds a prestigious position compared to other types of businesses. This status isn't arbitrary; it stems from the sector's wide market appeal and the ongoing demand for entertainment. It's evident that the Tour and Travel business is flourishing around us, leading to significant competition as companies vie for the attention of potential customers. To stand out, businesses must craft effective marketing strategies that encompass segmentation, targeting, and positioning, each playing a crucial role in capturing consumer interest.

To truly succeed and expand in the Tour and Travel landscape, companies need to do more than just offer quality products, excellent service, and competitive pricing. They must also communicate effectively what they provide through various marketing channels. This communication is vital; it opens doors and offers consumers the information they need, ultimately leaving them satisfied and informed (Zainal, 2015). Below, you'll find a recap of visitor data for PT Arwinda Tour and Travel :

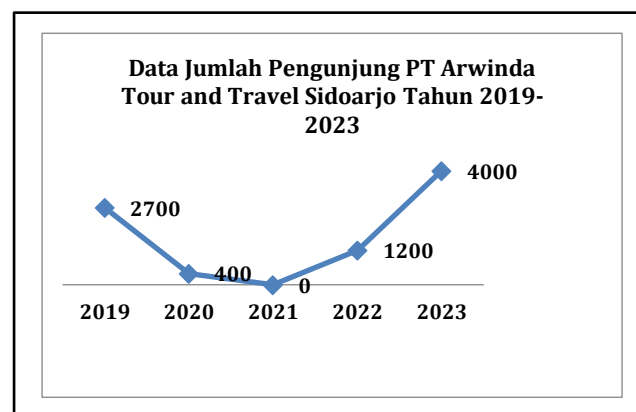


Figure 1. Visitor Data for PT Arwinda Tour and Travel Sidoarjo Year 2019 – 2023

Source : Internal Data of PT Arwinda Tour and Travel

Based on data from 2019 to 2023, the number of visitors to PT Arwinda Tour and Travel has fluctuated, indicating a need for the company to evaluate its relationship with customers. In 2021, the company faced a shutdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting a potential lack of customer satisfaction with its offerings. Good service is crucial for transforming casual consumers into loyal customers. Building customer loyalty should be a primary objective in every sales interaction or communication with potential buyers.

According to Mashuri (as cited in Sukesu, 2013), a customer is considered loyal when they demonstrate consistent purchasing behavior or when certain conditions compel them to make at least two purchases within a specified timeframe. Satisfied customers tend to become more loyal and continue their patronage. However, it's essential to understand that customers who frequently buy products are not always the most loyal. Customer satisfaction can be measured based on the

customers' own experiences and the perceived value of the product or service.

The increasing utilization of the internet correlates directly with marketing practices, making online marketing increasingly popular alongside the rise in internet use. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is defined by experts as the ratio of benefits to costs for consumers, reflecting what they receive compared to what producers offer. Brand ambassadors play a significant role in facilitating marketing activities, both locally and globally. Companies employ brand ambassadors to influence consumer purchasing decisions, ensuring that products resonate with potential buyers, thus fostering interest in advertised products.

The selection of a brand ambassador is often based on their positive image, which the company hopes will symbolize the desires and needs of prospective consumers. This strategy aids companies in gaining recognition and conveying product values effectively (Irana, 2022).

Given these insights, the author is particularly interested in exploring the issue of customer loyalty. The findings of this research are presented in this paper titled "The Influence of Sales Information Systems and Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Strategies on Customer Loyalty with the Role of Brand Ambassador as a Mediating Variable at PT Arwinda Tour and Travel Sidoarjo."

METHOD

This research employs a quantitative approach, specifically using explanatory research aimed at elucidating the cause-and-effect relationships between the study variables and hypothesis testing (Nasution, 2017). The study is conducted at PT Arwinda Tour and Travel in Sidoarjo Regency. The criteria for sample selection include customers who have utilized the services of PT Arwinda Tour and Travel between 2021 and 2023. A total of 75 samples were collected for the study. Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire method, with sampling techniques based on probability sampling. After the samples were taken, the next step involved data analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS), utilizing SmartPLS 4.0 software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Model analysis using Partial Least Square (PLS) using the Smart PLS program gave the following results:

Hypothesis Test

Variable Relationship	Table 1 Data Analysis Results				
	Original	Sample	T Statistics		
	Sample (O)	Mean (M)	(O/STDE V)	P Values	Results
Sales Information System (X1) -> Role of Brand Ambassador (Z)	0,110	0,806	8,786	0,010	Signific ant
IMC Strategy (X2) - > Role of Brand Ambassador (Z)	0,056	0,607	6,232	0,040	Signific ant

Variable Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Results
Sales Information System(X1) -> Customer Loyalty (Y)	0,119	0,505	6,318	0,035	Significant
IMC Strategy (X2) -> Customer Loyalty (Y)	0,012	0,045	7,265	0,034	Significant
Sales Information System (X1) * IMC Strategy (X2) -> Role of Brand Ambassador (Z) -> Customer Loyalty (Y)	0,155	0,188	8,211	0,018	Significant

Source: Researcher Processed Data (2024)

Discussion

The Influence of Sales Information Systems on the Role of Brand Ambassador

This study shows that the p-value for the relationship between the sales information system and the role of the brand ambassador at PT Arwinda Tour and Travel in Sidoarjo for the years 2021-2023 is 0.010, which is less than 0.05. Additionally, the T-statistic is 8.786, exceeding the critical value of 1.96, with a coefficient value of 0.110. This suggests that the sales information system has a positive and significant impact on the role of the brand ambassador directly. This finding aligns with research conducted by Magfiroh et al. (2023), which also concluded that sales information systems influence brand ambassadors.

The Influence of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Strategies on the Role of Brand Ambassador

The findings further reveal that the p-value for the relationship between IMC strategies and the role of the brand ambassador at PT Arwinda Tour and Travel is 0.040, again less than 0.05. The T-statistic is 6.323, which is greater than 1.96, with a coefficient of 0.056. This indicates that IMC strategies have a positive and significant effect on the role of the brand ambassador directly. This result is consistent with the study by Magfiroh et al. (2023), which asserts that IMC strategies positively and significantly affect the role of brand ambassadors.

The Influence of Sales Information Systems on Customer Loyalty

The analysis shows that the p-value for the relationship between the sales information system and customer loyalty at PT Arwinda Tour and Travel is 0.035, which is less than 0.05. The T-statistic is 6.318, exceeding 1.96, with a coefficient of 0.119. This indicates that the sales information system has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty directly. This finding is supported by research from Helen et al. (2023), which indicates that sales information systems positively and significantly influence consumer loyalty.

The Influence of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) Strategies on Customer Loyalty

This study also finds that the p-value for the relationship between IMC strategies and customer loyalty at PT Arwinda Tour and Travel is 0.034, below the 0.05 threshold. The T-statistic stands at 7.265, greater than 1.96, with a coefficient of 0.012. This suggests that IMC strategies positively and significantly influence customer loyalty directly. This aligns with Nur's (2021) research, which confirms the positive and significant impact of IMC strategies on customer loyalty.

The Influence of Sales Information Systems and IMC Strategies on Customer Loyalty through the Role of Brand Ambassador

Last but not least, the results indicate that the p-value for the relationship between sales information systems and IMC strategies on customer loyalty through the role of the brand ambassador is 0.018, which is less than 0.05. The T-statistic is 8.211, exceeding 1.96, with a coefficient of 0.155. This signifies that both sales information systems and IMC strategies positively and significantly influence customer loyalty through the role of the brand ambassador. This finding is in line with research conducted by Nuralam (2023) and Hapsari (2020), which states that sales information systems and IMC strategies have a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty through the role of the brand ambassador.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis and discussion conducted, several conclusions can be drawn. The Sales Information System and Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) strategies have a positive and significant impact on the role of the brand ambassador at PT Arwinda Tour and Travel in Sidoarjo. Furthermore, both the Sales Information System and IMC strategies positively and significantly influence customer loyalty at PT Arwinda Tour and Travel during the period of 2021-2023. Additionally, in terms of the mediating variable, the Sales Information System and IMC strategies positively and significantly affect customer loyalty through the role of the brand ambassador among consumers of PT Arwinda Tour and Travel in Sidoarjo from 2021 to 2023.

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