International Summit on Science Technology and Humanity
ISETH 2025
ISSN: 2615-1588 (online)

Integrated Content Marketing Strategy on Customer Journey to Build Brand Awareness of Jember Batik MSMEs in the Digital Era

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Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to analyze the implementation of integrated content marketing strategies at each stage of the customer journey, from awareness, consideration, decision, to retention and advocacy, and to evaluate their impact on increasing brand awareness.
Methodology: The research method used is a qualitative case study approach, involving in-depth analysis of digital marketing practices, content observation, and documentation of promotional activities carried out by Jember's batik MSMEs.
Results: The results show that implementing a structured, consistent, and integrated strategy across communication channels can increase brand visibility, strengthen positive associations, and create a seamless customer experience that encourages long-term loyalty.
Applications/Originality/Value: This study confirms that customer journey-based content marketing is not just a promotional innovation, but a strategic necessity to ensure the sustainability and competitiveness of batik MSMEs in the digital era

Introduction Section

The development of digital technology has fundamentally transformed the marketing landscape, including for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), the backbone of the Indonesian economy. In today's digital era, business competition is increasingly fierce because consumers have broad and rapid access to information through the internet, social media, and various other digital channels (Fhaizyah et al., 2025). MSMEs are required to transform and adapt to modern consumer behavior patterns that tend to rely on online information before making a purchase. Effective marketing strategies no longer rely solely on conventional promotions, but must integrate digital approaches that can reach consumers at every stage of the customer journey, from awareness and consideration to purchasing decisions and advocacy. In the context of batik MSMEs in Jember, this strategy is highly relevant considering that batik is not only a fashion product, but also a representation of cultural identity that needs to be creatively promoted to attract the attention of the younger generation and global consumers.

Although digitalization opens up new opportunities, many batik MSMEs in Jember still face significant challenges in optimally utilizing digital platforms. Some MSMEs use social media only sporadically, without integrated content planning aimed at building long-term brand awareness. As a result, their marketing messages are inconsistent and fail to create a comprehensive customer experience (Nabila Dian Calista, 2022). This phenomenon leads to low audience engagement rates and slow brand awareness among potential consumers. In an era when consumers demand personalized, engaging, and interactive experiences, the lack of a structured content marketing strategy can leave batik MSMEs at a competitive disadvantage to other fashion brands that are more adaptable to digital trends.

Data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs (2024) noted that approximately 64.19 million MSMEs in Indonesia contribute to 61.97% of the national GDP, but only 27% actively utilize digital marketing professionally. In Jember Regency alone, the Department of Industry and Trade reported that there are more than 250 registered batik artisans, but only around 30% have a consistent digital marketing strategy. In fact, local research conducted by the University of Jember (2023) found that only 15% of batik MSMEs have a clear content calendar and customer journey map (Rayastra, 2022). This situation indicates a significant gap between Jember's large batik market potential and its limited digital branding efforts, impacting the product's competitiveness at the national and global levels.

Integrated content marketing within the customer journey is a strategic approach that focuses on delivering relevant, consistent, and valuable content at every stage of the customer experience. This approach includes creating informative

content at the awareness stage (e.g., an article about the history of Jember batik), educational and inspirational content at the consideration stage (e.g., a video of the batik-making process), and promotional content and calls to purchase at the decision stage (e.g., a limited-time offer via social media) (Lianel & Nurvita, 2025). By leveraging digital channels like Instagram, TikTok, marketplaces, and websites, MSMEs can create a communication ecosystem that strengthens brand identity and increases engagement with audiences (Nanulaitta, 2023). In the digital age, this strategy is not merely an option but an urgent necessity to enable local products like Jember batik to compete with global fashion brands.

Several previous studies have shown that strategically designed content marketing can increase brand awareness and consumer loyalty. Research by (Nurohmah, 2024) confirms that relevant and consistent content can create an emotional connection between brands and consumers, which results in increased sales conversions. A study by (Ilyas, 2025) highlights the importance of mapping the customer journey to ensure each touchpoint delivers a positive experience that strengthens brand perception. Research by (Audric et al., 2025) found that MSMEs implementing a storytelling-based content marketing strategy experienced a 45% increase in brand recall within six months. These three studies reinforce the argument that integrating content marketing with the customer journey can be an effective strategy for Jember batik MSMEs to increase brand exposure and expand the market.

Based on the previous studies mentioned above, there is a clear research gap. Most previous studies still discuss content marketing in general terms without deeply linking it to the context of batik MSMEs and the specific customer journey. Another gap is the lack of research examining integrated content marketing strategies as a holistic approach, focusing not only on content creation but also on how that content influences customer decisions at each stage of the customer journey. The novelty of this research lies in the development of a strategic framework that Jember batik MSMEs can adopt to design, implement, and evaluate content marketing comprehensively, so that the results not only increase brand awareness but also create a consistent and sustainable customer experience.

Based on initial observations, researchers found that most Jember batik MSMEs still conduct digital marketing intuitively without a well-documented strategy. Published content often doesn't align with the characteristics of the target market, pays little attention to visual branding, and isn't optimized to increase audience engagement. Furthermore, some MSMEs don't yet understand the importance of mapping the customer journey, so they focus solely on direct sales without first building awareness and engagement. This results in relatively low brand awareness of Jember batik outside the Jember region, despite the high quality of the product.

The purpose of this study is to formulate an integrated content marketing strategy aligned with the customer journey to build brand awareness for Jember batik MSMEs in the digital era. This study aims to identify consumer needs and behavior at each stage of the customer journey, design relevant content for each stage, and provide practical recommendations that can be implemented by MSMEs. Thus, this study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of digital marketing literature as well as practical benefits in the form of strategic guidance for Jember batik MSMEs to increase their competitiveness in national and global markets.

2 Methods

2.1 Research Design

The research method used in this study is a qualitative method with a case study approach, which focuses on the implementation of an integrated content marketing strategy on the customer journey in building brand awareness of Jember Batik MSMEs (Sugiyono, 2019b). The case study approach was chosen because it allows researchers to conduct an in-depth exploration of digital marketing phenomena that actually occur in batik MSMEs, so that a comprehensive understanding of the practices, challenges, and opportunities faced can be obtained (Sugiyono, 2019). This study aims to identify the forms of content marketing strategies used, analyze the effectiveness of content at each stage of the customer journey, and formulate strategic recommendations that can help batik MSMEs increase brand awareness in the digital era.

2.2 Research Informants

The informants in this study were selected using a purposive sampling technique with the following criteria: (1) batik MSMEs who actively engage in digital marketing, (2) have at least 2 years of experience in batik business management, and (3) are willing to provide in-depth data and information regarding the content strategies implemented. The research informants consisted of business owners, marketing managers, and staff responsible for the creation and distribution of digital content (J. W. Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Table 1. Research Informants

No	Informant Code	Position/Role	Information
1	A A	Owner of the Batik UMKM "Sekar Jember"	Responsible for the vision, mission and direction of marketing strategy.
2	RN	Marketing Manager	Manage content planning, set publication schedules, and monitor digital campaign performance.
3	DA	Digital Content Staff	Creating visual content, copywriting, and managing MSME social media accounts.
4	LS	Loyal Consumers of Jember Batik	Provides customer perspective on content quality and customer journey experience.
5	HM	Representative of the Department of Industry & Trade	Provides insight into government policies and support for local batik marketing.

Source: Researcher Processed Data (2025)

The selection of informants was intended to obtain comprehensive data, covering the perspectives of owners, managers, technical implementers, consumers, and external stakeholders.

2.3 Data Collection and Analysis Techniques

The data collection techniques used included in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide to allow informants to answer freely while remaining focused on the research topic. Observations were made of the digital marketing activities of batik MSMEs, including content creation, social media publications, and interactions with consumers. The documentation analyzed included sales data, social media insights, content calendars, and customer reviews.

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis which includes the coding process, grouping themes, interpreting data, and drawing conclusions (Sugiyono, 2021). Analysis was conducted simultaneously from the beginning of data collection, allowing researchers to adjust the research focus according to field findings. Data validation was conducted through triangulation of sources, techniques, and time to ensure the reliability and credibility of the findings. The analysis results were interpreted to formulate a content marketing strategy integrated with the customer journey and in accordance with the characteristics of Jember batik MSMEs (J. Creswell, 2017).

3. Results

Batik MSMEs in Jember Regency are a creative industry sector that plays a vital role in the regional economy and in preserving local culture. Jember is known for its distinctive batik motifs, such as tobacco, coffee, and local flora, which have become the visual identity of the local community. According to data from the Jember Regency Department of Industry and Trade, there are more than 250 batik artisans and businesses spread across various sub-districts, ranging from household-scale businesses to businesses that have penetrated the national market. However, most of these MSMEs still face limited resources, particularly in terms of digital marketing and brand management. This condition makes Jember batik products less well-known outside the region despite their competitive quality. This situation provides an important basis for conducting research to formulate digital marketing strategies that can increase brand exposure and competitiveness of batik MSMEs in the digital era.

The research object chosen is the "Sekar Jember" Batik MSME, a batik business that has been established for more than five years and is committed to developing Jember's distinctive batik motifs. This business is managed independently by the owner with the support of several employees responsible for production, marketing, and digital content management. "Sekar Jember" Batik has utilized social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp Business to promote its products, but these efforts are still carried out intuitively without an integrated content strategy. This is interesting to study because this business has great potential to increase brand awareness if the right content marketing strategy is implemented. Thus, "Sekar Jember" Batik is a relevant representation to examine how integrated content marketing can help local MSMEs build brand awareness while expanding market share.

The results of this study confirm that most Jember batik MSMEs do not yet have a comprehensive customer journey mapping framework, despite routine digital marketing activities. Field observations indicate that the majority of businesses

still focus on sporadic promotional activities, particularly on social media platforms like Instagram and WhatsApp Business, without a structured strategic guide. As a result, consumers receive only visual stimuli in the form of stand-alone product images without a narrative that can guide them to the consideration and purchase stages. AA (Owner of Jember Batik Sekar MSME) stated emphatically, "So far, we have only focused on posting batik photos on Instagram, without creating content that educates consumers about motifs, philosophies, or how to mix and match batik products." This statement illustrates limitations at the level of strategic planning and awareness. The implication is that brand awareness is only formed within a circle of audiences already familiar with the product, but has not been able to reach new markets on a large scale. This indicates that the initial strategy implemented is inadequate to build sustainable brand awareness and requires fundamental improvements in customer journey design.

At the awareness stage, data shows that the content produced is still heavily focused on product catalogs with static visuals, thus lacking emotional engagement for the audience. This type of content does provide basic information, but fails to create strong brand differentiation. RN (Marketing Manager) explained, "We usually post three times a week, but we don't have a clear content calendar. Sometimes our content themes are inconsistent, today we talk about promotions, tomorrow we talk about behind-the-scenes, and the day after that we post testimonials." This quote demonstrates the lack of systematic message continuity, which should be the core of an integrated content marketing strategy. The lack of a content calendar structured around a customer journey map makes the brand message unfocused and difficult to remember. Awareness content, on the other hand, should introduce the identity of Jember batik by emphasizing its uniqueness, local wisdom, and product quality. From these field findings, it can be concluded that the biggest weakness lies in the lack of a standardized communication pattern, so awareness-building efforts are still reactive and not based on audience research.

The consideration phase is key because it is during this phase that consumers evaluate and compare various options before making a decision. Research has found initial efforts to build engagement through the creation of educational content, such as videos of the batik-making process and posts about the philosophy of Jember's distinctive motifs. DA (Digital Content Staff) explained, "We tried creating reels about the batik-making process so people know that batik is made by hand, not by machine. Engagement increased significantly when we posted content like that." This increase in engagement demonstrates that consumers respond positively to content that provides added knowledge. However, this strategy has not been implemented consistently and measurably. Educational content that should support the consideration phase is still limited in quantity, unscheduled, and lacks a call to action. In-depth analysis indicates that this strategy needs to be strengthened with a messaging map that links cultural values, product authenticity, and emotional benefits to encourage consumers to move on to the decision stage. Therefore, the focus of improvement at this stage is to ensure the continuity of the narrative, which is both educational and persuasive.

The decision stage is a critical point in the customer journey, yet research reveals that some Jember batik MSMEs haven't fully utilized call-to-action (CTA) elements. RN explained, "We usually just write 'DM to order' in the caption, without creating special offers or direct links to marketplaces." This strategy results in a lengthy conversion process and relies on consumers to manually contact the seller. From a marketing management perspective, this represents a missed opportunity, as every second of delay can decrease purchase intent. Conversion optimization should be achieved by providing direct links to the purchase page, adding a shop now button, and creating time-limited promotions that create a sense of urgency. The analysis also demonstrates the need for consistency in the use of visual elements such as color, typography, and logos to ensure consumers feel confident they are on the right path to purchase. In conclusion, the decision stage requires a more aggressive, structured, and results-oriented strategy so that every interaction can lead to a transaction.

This study emphasizes the importance of retaining existing customers through retention and advocacy strategies. Interviews with Loyal Customers (LS) indicate an unmet need: "I like notifications about new products or batik care tips, but we rarely find such content from MSMEs here." The lack of post-purchase communication causes the customer experience to stop after the transaction is complete, a crucial moment for strengthening emotional bonds and encouraging repeat purchases. The analysis suggests the need to create post-purchase content such as batik care guides, points-based loyalty programs, or invitations to share experiences through social media. These strategies not only retain customers but also create an advocacy effect that expands the brand's reach organically. Improving the quality of interactions at this stage will have a long-term impact on the brand image and the sustainability of Jember's batik MSME businesses.

Field findings revealed a disconnect between digital content and the offerings available in offline stores. AA candidly admitted, "Sometimes the promotions on Instagram don't match those in-store, which can confuse customers." This demonstrates a lack of coordination between communication channels, creating a fragmented customer experience. In-depth analysis underscores the need for an omnichannel approach to ensure consistent messaging across all touchpoints. Cross-channel coordination strengthens customer trust and creates a seamless experience, ensuring an uninterrupted customer journey. In the context of brand management, cross-channel consistency is a fundamental element in strengthening positioning and enhancing a brand's perceived value in the eyes of consumers.

Based on the overall findings, it can be concluded that an integrated content marketing strategy has great potential to increase brand awareness for Jember batik MSMEs if implemented in a planned, consistent, and sustainable manner. Mapping the customer journey is an important foundation that must be built first, followed by the creation of relevant content for each stage of the customer journey. Field observations and interviews indicate that the main problems lie in the lack of a clear structure, a lack of message consistency, and weak integration between channels. With targeted improvements in these aspects, Jember batik MSMEs will be able to increase audience engagement, accelerate the conversion process, retain customers, and create a loyal customer community. Critical reflection on the results of this study also confirms that digital transformation is not merely an option, but a strategic necessity for Jember batik products to survive and compete in national and global markets.

4. Discussion

4.1 Implementing an Integrated Content Marketing Strategy in the Customer Journey

The implementation of an integrated content marketing strategy throughout the customer journey is an approach increasingly considered crucial in building brand awareness and creating a cohesive customer experience. In the context of Jember batik MSMEs, the implementation of this strategy must begin with a systematic design of how customers are introduced to the product, how they are provided with sufficient information to consider a purchase, and how they are convinced to make a purchasing decision and ultimately become advocates for the brand. Customer journey mapping is a crucial first step. By mapping all touchpoints between customers and the brand, MSMEs can understand the needs, motivations, and potential obstacles experienced by customers at each stage. As stated by (Putri Ardhya et al., 2024) A comprehensive understanding of the customer journey enables companies to design appropriate strategic interventions at every touchpoint, resulting in a more positive and consistent customer experience. For batik MSMEs, this customer journey map serves as the foundation for designing a continuous content narrative, not only introducing products but also instilling cultural meaning and emotional value that strengthen customer engagement.

The first stage of the customer journey, awareness, requires special attention because it is the first step for consumers to learn about the brand. At this stage, the primary goal of content marketing is to create sufficient visibility so that the brand can enter the target audience's attention radar. Ideally, content presented at this stage should be engaging, memorable, and able to spark curiosity. According to (Tahalele, 2023) High brand awareness is a minimum requirement for consumers to engage the brand in their purchasing decision-making process. In practice, awareness content can take the form of educational articles on the history of Jember batik, short videos introducing unique motifs, or infographics demonstrating local cultural values. Consistency in publication scheduling is crucial so that audiences are continually exposed to brand messages. This consistency aligns with the findings of (Chaidir & Irawan, 2024) which emphasizes that relevant and consistent content significantly increases brand recall. Therefore, Jember batik MSMEs need to ensure that the awareness phase is not just a sporadic promotional activity, but a planned and ongoing campaign.

The next stage, consideration, demands a more in-depth content approach because consumers at this stage are evaluating various product alternatives. Effective content at this stage must provide richer information, encompassing product advantages, differentiated value, and evidence of quality that can strengthen consumer trust. Educational content strategies such as showcasing the batik-making process, the philosophical meaning of motifs, and the stories of artisans are highly relevant. This approach aligns with the concept of content-driven engagement proposed by (Rozaliana et al., 2025), which states that content that provides added cognitive value to the audience drives higher engagement and increases purchase likelihood. At this stage, integrating social media with e-commerce platforms can also play a strategic role. By directing consumers from educational content to product pages or digital catalogs, MSMEs can reduce the psychological barriers to moving consumers to the next stage. The combination of emotional storytelling and objective product information creates a balanced narrative between the cultural and commercial aspects, so consumers feel both educated and motivated to purchase.

The decision stage is the critical point that determines whether a content marketing strategy is successful in converting audiences into customers. At this stage, the content presented must be persuasive and make it easy for consumers to take action. According to (Sutina, 2025) Clear and accessible calls-to-action (CTAs) can significantly increase conversions by reducing friction in the purchasing process. Jember batik MSMEs can utilize various CTAs, such as "Buy Now" buttons on social media posts, direct links to marketplaces, or special offers with specific deadlines, to create a sense of urgency. Furthermore, customer testimonials and positive reviews can be integrated into the content to provide social proof that strengthens potential buyers' confidence. This approach aligns with Cialdini's (2009) theory of social influence, which explains that individuals tend to follow the actions of others when making decisions. Therefore, the decision stage must be designed in such a way that the consumer's journey to purchase is as smooth as possible, both technically and psychologically.

The next step often overlooked by small business owners is retention and advocacy. However, retaining existing customers is far more efficient than attracting new ones, as the cost of acquiring new customers is typically higher. (Wiechmann et al., 2022) a 5% increase in customer retention can increase profitability by 25–95%. Therefore, Jember batik MSMEs need to create post-purchase content that can foster long-term relationships with customers. Content such as batik care tips, notifications of new collections, or personalized thank-you messages will make customers feel valued. Furthermore, encouraging customers to share their positive experiences on social media can create an advocacy effect that organically expands brand reach. This approach aligns with findings (Study et al., 2025) which highlights the role of user-generated content in strengthening community engagement and increasing brand loyalty. By creating an active customer community, MSMEs not only retain existing customers but also attract new ones through digital word-of-mouth recommendations.

In addition to mapping the customer journey, implementing an effective content marketing strategy also requires integrated communication channels. Inconsistent messaging between online and offline channels often leads to consumer confusion. This can disrupt the customer experience and damage brand image. The omnichannel marketing approach recommended by (Verhoef & Bijmolt, 2019) emphasizes the importance of creating a seamless customer experience across all touchpoints, both physical and digital. In the context of Jember's batik MSMEs, this means promotions offered on Instagram must be synchronized with those offered in physical stores, visual design must be consistent across all platforms, and product information must be uniform to avoid confusion. With good integration, consumers will feel they are receiving a holistic experience, which in turn strengthens the perception of brand professionalism and increases trust.

Another important aspect is measuring content performance at each stage of the customer journey. A content marketing strategy will not be effective without data-driven evaluation. According to (Kannan, 2021) Metrics such as reach, engagement rate, click-through rate, and conversion rate should be analyzed regularly to assess campaign effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. For MSMEs, this means utilizing the analytics features available on social media platforms to understand what types of content resonate most with audiences. This evaluation allows businesses to adjust strategies in real time, ensuring optimal use of limited resources. Furthermore, consistent measurement allows MSMEs to set measurable targets, such as increasing marketplace traffic or increasing quality followers, thus making their content marketing strategy more focused and results-oriented.

Conceptually, implementing an integrated content marketing strategy in the customer journey provides significant added value not only in terms of promotion but also in the formation of a sustainable digital marketing ecosystem. By combining aspects of narrative, education, persuasion, retention, and advocacy, Jember batik MSMEs can build a stronger and more competitive brand. This integration not only helps create top-of-mind awareness among consumers but also increases customer lifetime value. This research broadens the insight that content marketing strategy cannot be viewed as a stand-alone activity, but as part of a broader customer relationship management strategy. The synergy between understanding consumer behavior, digital technology, and cultural narratives is the key to success in building an authentic and relevant brand in the dynamic digital era.

Thus, it can be emphasized that implementing an integrated content marketing strategy in the customer journey for Jember batik MSMEs is not only a marketing innovation, but a strategic necessity. In an increasingly competitive business ecosystem, brands that are able to comprehensively manage the customer experience will have a sustainable advantage. This research makes an important contribution by demonstrating that this strategy can be implemented even though MSMEs have limited resources, as long as there is careful planning, consistent messaging, and the use of appropriate digital channels. Going forward, the combination of creative and data-driven approaches will be a key driver of MSME success in building brand awareness and expanding market reach at the national and global levels.

4.2 Omnichannel Marketing Strategy The Role of Omnichannel Marketing Strategy in Increasing Customer Loyalty

The implementation of an integrated content marketing strategy throughout the customer journey has a substantial impact on increasing brand awareness, particularly in the context of batik MSMEs transforming toward digital marketing. Brand awareness extends beyond simply introducing a brand name to consumers; it encompasses a deep understanding of the brand's identity, values, and differentiation from competitors. According to (Aaker A., 2018), brand awareness is the first stage in building brand equity and is an important prerequisite for loyalty. In the context of Jember batik MSMEs, the implementation of a planned content marketing strategy allows the audience to receive consistent, relevant, and repeated exposure, which ultimately places the brand in the minds of consumers more permanently. In other words, the success of this strategy can be measured by the increase in consumers' ability to recognize, remember, and associate Jember batik with certain qualities, uniqueness, and cultural values.

The first and most obvious impact is increased top-of-mind awareness. When content is presented regularly through social media and other digital channels, the brand becomes more memorable to the audience. Strategies that emphasize storytelling about the batik-making process, the philosophy of the motifs, and the cultural values they uphold create deeper

emotional associations. This aligns with findings (Kotler and Keller, 2013) which states that consistent and meaningful brand exposure will create a strong mental image in consumers. This repeated exposure is important because consumers typically require multiple interactions with a brand before deciding to purchase. With integrated content marketing, Jember batik MSMEs can create a series of complementary interactions, thereby increasing the brand's chances of remaining top of mind in consumers' minds when they are ready to purchase batik products.

In addition to increasing brand awareness, this strategy also contributes to the formation of brand associations, which is how consumers connect a brand with certain attributes. Educational content explaining the meaning of Jember batik motifs, traditional production techniques, and its contribution to preserving local culture creates positive associations in the eyes of consumers. According to (Kotler & Keller, 2022) Strong brand associations create perceived differentiation, the perception that the brand is different and more valuable than competitors. In the case of Jember's batik MSMEs, consumers who understand the story behind the batik motifs will see the product not simply as clothing, but as a representation of cultural identity worthy of appreciation. This kind of association is crucial for building brand preference, which in turn increases the likelihood of repeat purchases and customer advocacy.

An integrated content marketing strategy also increases the brand recall dimension, which is the consumer's ability to recall a brand when the product category is mentioned. Research by (Fhaizyah et al., 2025) Research shows that message consistency across communication channels strengthens consumers' brand recall. In practice, when Jember batik MSMEs consistently publish consistent content across Instagram, Facebook, and marketplaces, consumers will more easily recognize and remember the brand. Visual consistency, such as the use of distinctive colors, logos, and a consistent communication tone, will help create a strong visual identity. As a result, the brand will spontaneously come to mind when consumers consider purchasing batik, significantly increasing the chance of conversion.

Another impact is an increase in engagement rates, which serve as an indicator of audience engagement. High engagement indicates that audiences are not only viewing content but also interacting with the brand through likes, comments, and shares. This interaction reflects greater consumer emotional engagement, which is a crucial factor in building long-term brand awareness (Nabila Dian Calista, 2022). High engagement on social media content can strengthen the psychological bond between consumers and brands. In the context of Jember batik, content such as videos of the batik-making process or tips on mixing and matching batik encourages audiences to comment or share their experiences, simultaneously expanding the brand's reach organically. This creates a network effect that accelerates the spread of brand information without requiring additional advertising costs.

Implementing this strategy also impacts the post-purchase experience, contributing to brand loyalty and advocacy. Post-purchase content such as thank-you notes, batik care tips, and announcements about new collections help maintain long-term relationships with customers (Schäfer et al., 2024). Post-purchase satisfaction is key to building loyalty, which ultimately leads to brand advocacy. By providing a positive post-purchase experience, MSMEs create customers who are more likely to recommend the product to others, both in person and through social media. These customer recommendations are highly valuable because consumers tend to trust testimonials from fellow users more than conventional advertising messages.

The implementation of an integrated content marketing strategy also has a significant impact on perceived quality. Consumers who receive detailed information about the production process and cultural values behind batik will perceive the product as being of higher quality. This aligns with research (Parasuraman et al., 1985). which found that perceived quality is a key determinant of consumer perceived value and influences purchasing decisions. In other words, the better the content strategy in communicating product value, the higher the perceived quality in the eyes of consumers, which ultimately increases their willingness to pay. This is an important finding because it allows Jember batik MSMEs to compete not only on price but also on value.

The long-term impact of implementing this strategy is the strengthening of overall brand equity. Strong brand equity provides a competitive advantage by creating customer loyalty, facilitating new product launches, and promoting lower price sensitivity (Rayastra, 2022). Elements such as brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty reinforce each other to create sustainable brand equity. By implementing integrated content marketing, Jember's batik MSMEs are gradually building a solid foundation for long-term business growth. This is crucial in the competitive digital era, where only brands with a clear identity, consistent messaging, and an emotional connection with consumers can survive.

The impact of implementing this strategy is evident in increased visits to MSMEs' digital channels, an increase in social media followers, and a rise in positive interactions. These indicators demonstrate that the content produced successfully captures and retains audience attention. However, the study also found that strategy sustainability is key. If MSMEs stop producing content consistently, brand awareness levels will decline rapidly as digital audiences tend to shift to more engaged brands. This emphasizes the importance of developing a long-term content calendar and using analytical metrics

to measure the effectiveness of each campaign. With a data-driven approach, MSMEs can identify the most effective content and allocate resources optimally.

This discussion confirms that an integrated content marketing strategy in the customer journey not only increases brand exposure but also creates a deeper emotional connection between consumers and products. With consistent messaging, a strong cultural narrative, and a seamless customer experience, Jember batik MSMEs can position themselves as relevant, authentic, and competitive brands. These results support Keller's (2013) theory on customer-based brand equity, which states that strong brand awareness is the gateway to sustainable customer loyalty. Thus, the implications of this research are not only conceptual but also practical, providing guidance for MSMEs to utilize the power of content marketing as a key pillar in building brands in the digital era.

5. Conclusion

Based on the overall research results and discussion, it can be concluded that an integrated content marketing strategy in the customer journey plays a very important role in building brand awareness for Jember batik MSMEs in the digital era. Clear customer journey mapping, consistent content calendar development, and the presentation of relevant narratives at each stage of the customer journey from awareness, consideration, decision, to retention and advocacy have been proven to increase brand visibility, strengthen positive associations, and foster audience engagement and trust. Integration across communication channels and the use of uniform visual elements strengthen brand identity and create a seamless customer experience, so that consumers not only recognize the product but also develop an emotional attachment that encourages long-term loyalty. Thus, the implementation of this strategy is not just a marketing innovation, but a strategic necessity for Jember batik MSMEs to be able to survive and compete in the national and global markets.

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that Jember batik MSMEs design a systematically integrated content marketing strategy by referring to customer journey maps, developing a long-term content calendar, and balancing educational, promotional, and storytelling content to build emotional connections with consumers. MSMEs need to utilize digital analytics to periodically evaluate campaign effectiveness, strengthen integration between online and offline channels, and create retention programs such as batik care tips and customer loyalty programs. Furthermore, local governments and MSME support institutions are advised to provide training and mentoring on digital marketing so that business owners can optimize their content strategies sustainably. Future researchers can expand this study by measuring the impact of content marketing strategies on more specific business metrics, such as increased sales, customer lifetime value, or market growth in other regions.

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