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## Digital Marketing Strategies to Increase Customer Purchase Decisions in the Frozen Food Industry: A Case Study of the Sunny Gold Brand

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**Abstract:** The digital transformation in the modern business landscape has compelled companies to optimize their marketing strategies in order to influence customer purchase decisions more effectively. However, increased investments in digital marketing have not always been accompanied by proportional sales growth, as exemplified by SunnyGold. This inefficiency highlights the urgent need to identify digital marketing strategies that can effectively drive consumer purchasing behavior but also maximize marketing expenditure. This study aims to examine the influence of digital marketing strategies including Advertising, Social Media Marketing, and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) on Customer Purchase Decisions, with Brand Image serving as a mediating variable, in the context of Indonesia's frozen food industry, using SunnyGold as a case study. Employing a quantitative research approach, the study gathered data from 343 respondents who are consumers of SunnyGold nugget products. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.1.1.2 software. The findings reveal that Advertising, Social Media Marketing, and SEM have a positive and significant impact on Customer Purchase Decisions. Moreover, Brand Image is proven to mediate the effects of Advertising and Social Media Marketing on Customer Purchase Decisions. These results underscore the importance of integrating various digital marketing elements to design effective strategies that enhance customer purchase behavior. The study contributes to digital marketing literature and provides practical recommendations for frozen food industry practitioners in crafting more targeted and efficient marketing strategies in the digital era.

**Keyword:** Digital Marketing Strategy, Customer Purchase Decisions, Brand Image, Social Media Marketing, Advertising, Search Engine Marketing (SEM), SunnyGold, Frozen Food

### INTRODUCTION

The rapid and continuous advancement of digital technology and communication has profoundly reshaped numerous business functions, particularly in the realm of customer interaction and the development of marketing strategies (Chaffey et al., 2009; Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014). This digital transformation is particularly evident in Indonesia's food and

beverage (F&B) industry, where the frozen food sector has demonstrated impressive growth. According to (Mordor Intelligence, 2025) the Indonesian frozen food industry is projected to reach a market value of USD 2.07 billion by 2024, driven by a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7.5%.

This growth is mirrored by shifts in digital behavior among Indonesian consumers. By 2024, Indonesia is expected to have approximately 212.9 million internet users, with 167 million of them being active social media users, primarily from Generation Z and Millennials (DataReportal, 2024). These consumers spend an average of more than 7 hours per day online, dedicating over 3 hours to social media, thereby making platforms like Instagram central to shaping consumer preferences (Egliston & Carter, 2021; Khan et al., 2020). As a result, social media content, particularly food-related visuals and influencer-driven materials, has become a significant driver in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. Consumers are increasingly turning to digital reviews and content as a means of validating products before making purchasing decisions (Luong & Ho, 2023). The growing body of research also affirms the effectiveness of digital marketing in fostering brand loyalty and expanding market reach (Hansen et al., 2018; Hartono, 2023).

However, despite the growing influence of digital platforms, SunnyGold, a leading brand in Indonesia's frozen food market, has faced challenges in translating its significant digital marketing investment into sales growth. In 2024, the company allocated IDR 351,648,000 to digital marketing efforts, yet experienced a 3% decline in sales, revealing a disconnect between marketing expenditure and actual sales performance (Pratiwi, 2023; SunnyGold Report, 2024). This discrepancy highlights the pressing need for a deeper understanding of how digital marketing strategies can be optimized to more effectively influence consumer behavior and achieve a higher return on investment.

Addressing this gap, this study aims to investigate the impact of key digital marketing strategies namely Advertising, Social Media Marketing, and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) on Customer Purchase Decisions, with Brand Image acting as a mediating variable. By utilizing this framework, the study seeks to offer valuable theoretical insights and practical recommendations for businesses in the F&B sector, particularly those in the frozen food industry, on how to optimize their digital marketing strategies for more efficient and impactful results.

## **METHOD**

This study focuses on consumers of SunnyGold nugget products across Indonesia, primarily targeting Millennials and Generation Z, who are active social media users and digital consumers. A purposive sampling method was used to select 343 respondents, considered sufficient for quantitative analysis with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Data were collected in April 2025 through online surveys over one month in a natural setting, ensuring minimal manipulation of consumer behavior. The primary instrument was a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire measuring variables such as Advertising, Social Media Marketing, SEM, Brand Image, and Customer Purchase Decisions. The questionnaire was developed from relevant literature to ensure validity and reliability, with pre-testing conducted using SmartPLS. Data analysis included construct validity, reliability testing, measurement model evaluation, and hypothesis testing using bootstrapping. Multicollinearity was checked using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). Ethical standards were upheld by ensuring confidentiality and providing clear research information.

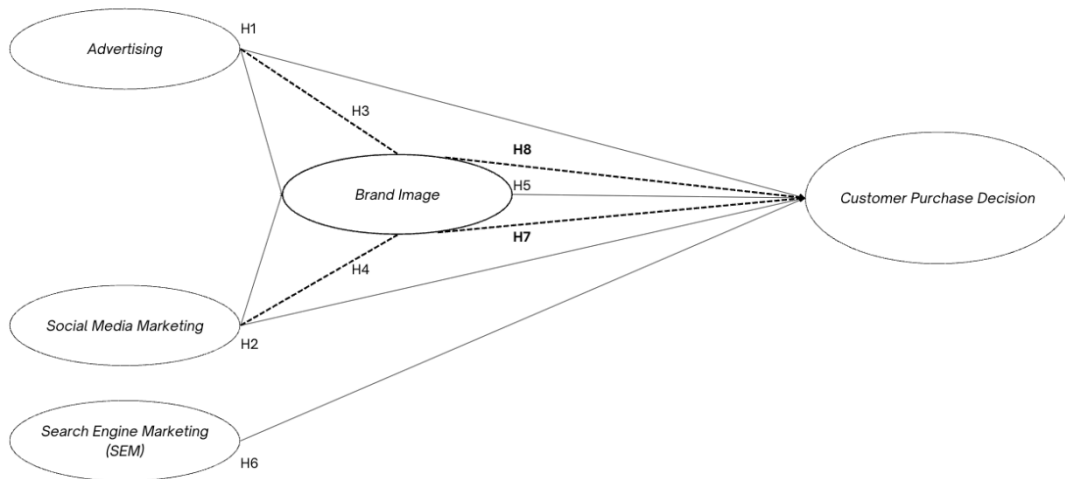


Figure 1. Research Model

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Respondent Profile**

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Profile	Category	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Gender	Male	177	48.4%	343
	Female	166	51.6%	
Age	12 - 27 years old	152	44.3%	343
	28 - 43 years old	184	53.6%	
	44 - 59 years old	7	2%	
Status	Married	118	34.4%	343
	Unmarried	225	65.6%	
Job	Student	65	19%	343
	Employee	154	44.9%	
	Entrepreneur	96	28%	
	Housewife	28	8.2%	
Place	Jakarta	339	98.8%	343
	Outside Jakarta	4	1.2%	

Source: Author’s Work (2025)

Table 1. shows a balanced gender distribution with slightly more females (51.6%) than males (48.4%). Most respondents are aged 28–43 years (53.6%), followed by 12–27 years (44.3%), and few aged 44–59 years (2%). A majority are unmarried (65.6%) and primarily employed as employees (44.9%) or entrepreneurs (28%). Nearly all respondents (98.8%) reside in Jakarta. Overall, the typical respondent is an unmarried female aged 28–43, working as an employee, and living in Jakarta.

**Convergent Validity Test**

Table 2. Convergent Validity

Variable	Indicators	Outer Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability
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Advertising	<b>AD 1</b>	0.868	0.776	0.933
	<b>AD 2</b>	0.877		
	<b>AD 3</b>	0.909		
	<b>AD 4</b>	0.869		
Brand Image	<b>BI 1</b>	0.844	0.713	0.925
	<b>BI 2</b>	0.845		
	<b>BI 3</b>	0.845		
	<b>BI 4</b>	0.848		
	<b>BI 5</b>	0.839		
Customer Purchase Decisions	<b>CPD 1</b>	0.845	0.714	0.909
	<b>CPD 2</b>	0.843		
	<b>CPD 3</b>	0.854		
	<b>CPD 4</b>	0.838		
SEM (Search Engine Marketing)	<b>SEM 1</b>	0.827	0.677	0.894
	<b>SEM 2</b>	0.825		
	<b>SEM 3</b>	0.830		
	<b>SEM 4</b>	0.810		
SMM (Social Media Marketing)	<b>SMM 1</b>	0.783	0.629	0.922
	<b>SMM 2</b>	0.800		
	<b>SMM 3</b>	0.757		
	<b>SMM 4</b>	0.771		
	<b>SMM 5</b>	0.844		
	<b>SMM 6</b>	0.791		
	<b>SMM 7</b>	0.803		

Source: Author’s Work (2025)

Based on Table 2. above, the convergent validity test results indicate that all variables and their indicators have valid outer loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Composite Reliability values, meeting the criteria for convergent validity.

**Discriminant Validity Test**

**Table 3. Discriminant Validity**

Variable	AD	BI	CPD	SEM	SMM
<b>AD</b>					
<b>BI</b>	0.351				
<b>CPD</b>	0.597	0.715			
<b>SEM</b>	0.431	0.769	0.773		
<b>SMM</b>	0.347	0.777	0.738	0.823	

Source: Author’s Work (2025)

Based on Table 3., all HTMT values are found to be below 0.9. This indicates that all variables meet the discriminant validity criteria and are valid for discriminant validity testing.

**Multicollinearity Test**

**Table 4. Multicollinearity Test**

Inner VIF	AD	BI	CPD	SEM	SMM
<b>AD</b>		1.109	1.178		
<b>BI</b>			2.233		

<b>CPD</b>		
<b>SEM</b>		2.407
<b>SMM</b>	1.109	2.527

**Source: Author’s Work (2025)**

Based on Table 4., the VIF test results show that all research variables and relationships between variables have VIF values below 5.00. Therefore, it can be concluded that all variables in the research model meet the established criteria and do not exhibit multicollinearity issues with each other.

**R-Square Test**

**Table 5. R-Square Test**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>R-Square</b>
Brand Image	0.504
Customer Purchase Decisions	0.606

**Source: Author’s Work (2025)**

The R-Square value for Brand Image is 0.504, meaning that Advertising and Social Media Marketing explain 50.4% of its variation, indicating a moderate influence. For Customer Purchase Decisions, the R-Square value is 0.606, indicating that the independent and mediating variables explain 60.6% of the variation, reflecting a strong model influence. The remaining variations in both variables are attributed to factors outside the model, with 49.6% for Brand Image and 39.4% for Customer Purchase Decisions. Overall, the model has good explanatory power, particularly for predicting Customer Purchase Decisions.

**F-Square Test**

**Table 6. F-Square Test**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>F-Square</b>	<b>Results</b>
Advertising > Brand Image	0.022	Small effect
Advertising > Customer Purchase Decisions	0.188	Moderate effect
Brand Image > Customer Purchase Decisions	0.051	Small effect
SEM (Search Engine Marketing) > Customer Purchase Decisions	0.059	Small effect
SMM (Social Media Marketing) > Brand Image	0.812	Large effect
SMM (Social Media Marketing) > Customer Purchase Decisions	0.059	Small effect

**Source: Author’s Work (2025)**

The F-Square test results indicate that Advertising has a small effect on Brand Image (0.022) and a moderate effect on Customer Purchase Decisions (0.188). Brand Image has a small effect on Customer Purchase Decisions (0.051), and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) also has a small effect on Purchase Decisions (0.059). Social Media Marketing (SMM) has a large effect on Brand Image (0.812) but a small effect on Customer Purchase Decisions (0.059).

In summary, Social Media Marketing significantly shapes Brand Image, while Advertising and SMM have small to moderate effects on Customer Purchase Decisions.

**Hypothesis Testing**

**Table 7. Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Standardized Path Coefficient	T-Statistics (>1,645)	P-Value (<0.05)	Results
H1	Advertising > Customer Purchase Decisions	0.295	7.644	0.000	Supported
H2	SMM (Social Media Marketing) > Customer Purchase Decisions	0.243	3.718	0.000	Supported
H3	Advertising > Brand Image	0.109	3.057	0.002	Supported
H4	SMM (Social Media Marketing) > Brand Image	0.668	18.279	0.000	Supported
H5	Brand Image > Customer Purchase Decisions	0.211	3.879	0.000	Supported
H6	SEM (Search Engine Marketing) > Customer Purchase Decisions	0.236	3.581	0.000	Supported

**Source: Author’s Work (2025)**

The hypothesis testing results show that all proposed relationships are statistically significant. Advertising positively impacts Customer Purchase Decisions ( $\beta = 0.295$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), as does Social Media Marketing (SMM) ( $\beta = 0.243$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). Advertising also significantly affects Brand Image ( $\beta = 0.109$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), while SMM has a strong effect on Brand Image ( $\beta = 0.668$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). Additionally, Brand Image positively influences Customer Purchase Decisions ( $\beta = 0.211$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) has a significant positive effect on Purchase Decisions ( $\beta = 0.236$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). These findings highlight the important roles of marketing variables and Brand Image in shaping consumer purchase behavior, with SMM having the strongest influence on Brand Image.

**Indirect Effect Testing**

**Table 8. Indirect Effect Testing**

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Standardized Path Coefficient	T-Statistics (>1,645)	P-Value (<0.05)	Results
H7	Advertising > Brand Image > Customer Purchase Decisions	0.023	2.608	0.009	Supported

H8	SMM (Social Media Marketing) > Brand Image > Customer Purchase Decisions	0.141	3.684	0.000	Supported
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Source: Author's Work (2025)

The mediation analysis shows that Brand Image significantly mediates the relationship between Advertising and Customer Purchase Decisions (indirect effect = 0.023,  $t = 2.608$ ,  $p = 0.009$ ), supporting H7. Brand Image also mediates the effect of Social Media Marketing (SMM) on Customer Purchase Decisions with a stronger indirect effect of 0.141 ( $t = 3.684$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), confirming H8. These results highlight the important role of Brand Image as a mediator in transferring the effects of both Advertising and SMM to consumer purchase decisions.

## Discussion

This study finds that Advertising positively influences Customer Purchase Decisions, as shown by a T-Statistic of 7.644 and a P-Value of 0.000. Persuasive advertising encourages consumer purchases, supported by Hanaysha (2020), who affirm the role of digital advertising in shaping attitudes and increasing sales. Social Media Marketing also significantly affects Customer Purchase Decisions (T-Statistic 3.718; P-Value 0.000). Visual and informative content enhances engagement and trust, in line with findings from (Jamil et al., 2024; Upadana & Pramudana, 2020; Utama et al., 2025) who highlight the power of social media in influencing buying behavior.

Advertising contributes positively to Brand Image (T-Statistic 0.109; P-Value 0.002). Clear and consistent messaging strengthens brand perception, as supported by (Basil et al., 2013; Gupta & Chitrao, 2024; Lim et al., 2022) emphasizing the role of structured digital content in brand equity. Social Media Marketing has a strong influence on Brand Image (T-Statistic 18.279; P-Value 0.000). Active interaction on social platforms builds positive brand associations, as confirmed by (Dwivedi et al., 2023; Jin & Ryu, 2024). Brand Image significantly affects Customer Purchase Decisions (T-Statistic 3.879; P-Value 0.000). A strong image fosters confidence and intent to purchase, supported by He and Jin (2022), and Keller (2022). Search Engine Marketing also positively impacts Customer Purchase Decisions (T-Statistic 3.581; P-Value 0.000). It increases visibility and relevance, echoing findings from (Huang & Benyoucef, 2023; Terrance et al., 2017; Zhang & Huang, 2024). Brand Image mediates the effect of Advertising on Customer Purchase Decisions (T-Statistic 2.608; P-Value 0.009), where strong branding enhances the influence of advertising, as shown by (Kremer & Viot, 2012; Singh et al., 2023). Likewise, Social Media Marketing influences Customer Purchase Decisions through Brand Image (T-Statistic 3.684; P-Value 0.000). Interaction and trust formed via social media boost purchase intent, as evidenced by (Alalwan et al., 2021). In conclusion, Advertising, Social Media Marketing, and Search Engine Marketing significantly impact Customer Purchase Decisions, with Social Media Marketing being the most dominant, mediated strongly by Brand Image in the digital consumer landscape.

## CONCLUSION

This research investigates the efficacy of digital marketing strategies in augmenting SunnyGold product sales, revealing that Social Media Marketing exerts the most profound influence on Customer Purchase Decisions. It advocates for optimizing the visibility and clarity of product details on Instagram through compelling visuals, succinct narratives, and supplementary features such as FAQs and product catalogs, while concurrently advocating for product representation via visual storytelling that accentuates critical attributes, including food



safety, practicality, and premium ingredients. Furthermore, disseminating easily preparable, nutritious recipes could bolster the brand's value proposition, resonating with consumers who seek efficiency and culinary inspiration. Additionally, the study highlights a discernible discrepancy between escalating marketing expenditures and stagnant sales, implying that prior strategies failed to effectively target the most impactful channels; thus, reallocating marketing budgets towards more potent platforms and employing data-driven decision-making strategies is imperative to align marketing efforts with consumer expectations and preferences.

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