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Understanding How User-Generated Content and Viral Marketing Drive Tumblers Purchase Decisions Among Gen Z: The Mediating Role of Sustainable Marketing

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the influence of user-generated content and viral marketing on Generation Z's purchasing decisions regarding Stanley tumblers in Indonesia, with sustainable marketing as a mediating variable. This study is done based on the increasing role of social media in shaping consumption behavior and the importance of sustainability values in purchasing decisions. A quantitative approach is applied using a cross-sectional design and purposive sampling technique involving 100 respondents who had been exposed to Stanley tumbler content on TikTok. The data collected through questionnaire and analyzed by using statistical analysis techniques. The results indicate that user-generated content and viral marketing have a positive and significance influence on purchasing decisions, both directly and through sustainable marketing. Furthermore, sustainable marketing strengthen the relationship between digital marketing stimuli and purchasing decisions. This study conclude that the integration of digital content and sustainability values is a key factor in influencing Gen Z consumers' purchasing decisions.

Keywords: User Generated Content, Viral Marketing, Sustainable Marketing, Purchase Decisions

INTRODUCTION

The global creator economy's growth has surpassed 200 billion USD is driven by the rapid developments of social media platforms (Sachs, 2023). This phenomenon also happened in Indonesia, with over 185 million social media users and the country as Tiktok's second-largest market, projected to reach 107.69 million users in 2025 (Statista, 2025). In this digital ecosystem, viral content has proven able to shape consumer behavior, as demonstrated by the Stanley tumbler phenomenon, which gained 98.9 million views and 9.2 million interactions, and pushed the growth of global revenue from 94 million USD in 2020 to 750 million USD in 2023. This phenomenon shows that digital engagement through social proof not only boosts brand awareness but also influences consumer purchase intention. On the other hand, Generation Z, as a group of digital natives, exhibits purchasing behavior influenced by the

exposure of digital content, with a willingness to pay Rp44,645, as well as a tendency to place greater trust in tangible evidence of quality than in traditional brand claims when making purchasing decisions. This indicates that the dynamics of digital interactions play a significant role in shaping consumer behavior, particularly in the purchasing decision-making process.

Utama et al., (2024) argue that the purchase decision is the final step in the process consumers go through before making a transaction. At this stage, consumers have already selected the desired product or service, proceeding to make the purchase and use the product or service. Meanwhile, Gunawan et al., (2019) explain that the purchased decision is a process that drives consumers by identifying the needs, considering various options, and selecting specific products or brands. This process is viewed as a series of decisions occurring prior to the purchase. In the context of digital marketing, purchase decisions are influenced not only by consumers' characteristics but also by several external factors, such as user-generated content, viral marketing, and sustainability values communicated through sustainable marketing which in this study are positioned as variables influencing consumer purchasing behavior. Therefore, an understanding of sustainable marketing is essential to assess the extent to which sustainability values can influence consumer purchasing decisions amidst the dominant influence of digital content.

Fullstop (2023) explains that in the context of growing awareness of environmental issues, the use of reusable products such as tumblers is increasingly viewed as part of a sustainable lifestyle. However, the phenomenon surrounding Stanley tumblers reveals a paradox: the popularity driven by viral content and user-generated content on platforms like TikTok has actually fueled excessive consumption. It indicates a gap between the communicated sustainability values and consumer purchasing behavior, making it crucial to examine the role of sustainable marketing in influencing purchasing decisions. Sustainable marketing is increasingly vital in today's era as consumer awareness of environmental issues continues to rise (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 2020). According to Trang et al., (2023), sustainable marketing involves the creation and promotion of products or services that meet consumer needs while reducing environmental impact, enhancing social well-being, and supporting long-term sustainability. Meanwhile, Kumar et al., (2012) argue that sustainable marketing is more explicitly linked to the sustainable development agenda, defined as the process of building and maintaining long-term harmonious relationships with customers, the social environment, and the natural environment. This means that sustainable marketing does not merely focus on selling products but is also aligned with the goals of sustainable development. Based on research by Maulidah et al., (2024), Dhingra & Rani (2024), and Sudirjo et al., (2024) it is concluded that sustainable marketing influences purchasing decisions. It means that the better the implementation of sustainable marketing, the higher the tendency for consumers to make purchasing decisions. This is in contrast to the research conducted by Mulyaningsih & Tobing (2023), which concluded that sustainable marketing does not influence purchasing decisions. This means that the quality of sustainable marketing implementation, whether good or bad does not determine the extent of consumers' tendency to make purchasing decisions.

In addition to the sustainability values communicated through sustainable marketing, consumer purchasing decisions in the digital age are also heavily influenced by information from other users, particularly through *user-generated content* (UGC). According to Encinas, as reported in USA Today (2023), the phenomenon of *user-generated content* (UGC) is increasingly demonstrating its crucial role in shaping consumer behavior in the digital age. A viral video uploaded by a user on TikTok showing a Stanley tumbler remaining intact after a car fire is one of the real example. The content, which initially stemmed from the user's personal experience, quickly spread widely and gain public attention without any direct intervention from the company. This event was further amplified by the company's response, which offered compensation to the user, thereby increasing brand exposure and trust. This

phenomenon demonstrates that authentic and emotional UGC not only generates virality but also plays a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and driving purchasing decisions.

User-Generated Content (UGC) is a social media marketing strategy that involves content created by users (Mega Prasanti & Rufaidah, 2024). Mathur et al., (2022) explain that UGC is content created, published, and managed by social media users based on their personal experiences. By leveraging unique content created by users, brands can spread more authentic and engaging stories, thereby increasing the likelihood of consumer interaction and purchases (Hasanah & Miftahul Huda, 2023). In the context of purchase decisions, *user-generated content* (UGC) plays a crucial role in influencing consumers' perceptions and trust in a product. Information derived from other users' experiences tends to be more trusted than corporate marketing messages, thereby enhancing consumers' confidence in making purchase decisions (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Several studies have examined the influence of UGC on purchase decisions. The findings of Alghaniy & Mukaram (2025), Putri & Komaryatin (2025), Ramadhan et al., (2025), Gupta (2023), Nur Aulia et al., (2025) indicate that UGC has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. This means that the higher the intensity and quality of user-generated content received by consumers, the higher the tendency for consumers to make purchasing decisions. This is in contrast to the research conducted by Wafiyah & Wusko (2023), which found that UGC does not have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. This implies that the amount of user-generated content, whether high or low, does not directly influence consumers' tendency to make purchasing decisions.

Those findings indicate that the role of user-generated content (UGC) is not limited to its direct influence on purchasing decisions but also has the potential to shape consumers' perceptions of a product's sustainability value as communicated through sustainable marketing. Several studies indicate that UGC has a positive influence on the formation of perceptions and sustainable consumption behavior. UGC disseminated through social media can enhance environmental awareness and shape consumer attitudes toward eco-friendly products (Tran & Thu Hang, 2025). Additionally, UGC promotes sustainable consumption practices by conveying authentic, user-experience-based information (Ghurab & Ng, 2025). In the context of digital marketing, UGC has been proven to influence purchase interest in sustainable products, thereby reinforcing its role in shaping perceptions of sustainable marketing (El-Shihy & Awaad, 2025). Furthermore, the role of user-generated content (UGC) does not only stop at shaping perceptions of sustainable marketing but also potentially influence purchasing decisions through these variables. UGC that enhances consumer awareness and understanding of environmental issues has been shown to foster sustainable consumption attitudes and behaviors. Research by Tran & Thu Hang (2025) indicates that UGC plays a role in increasing environmental awareness and driving shifts in consumers behavior toward more sustainable consumption. Furthermore, Ghurab & Ng, (2025) explain that UGC plays a role in promoting sustainable consumption practices through the dissemination of authentic, user-experience-based information, thereby fostering positive attitudes toward eco-friendly products. Once perceptions of sustainability value are established, consumers tend to have stronger confidence in making purchasing decisions regarding products considered eco-friendly. Thus, sustainable marketing can serve as a mediating variable bridging the influence of UGC on purchasing decisions. This is further supported by the research of El-Shihy & Awaad (2025), which found that social media content, including UGC, influences interest in purchasing sustainable products, thereby reinforcing the role of sustainable marketing in influencing consumer purchasing decisions.

In addition to user-generated content, the phenomenon of digital marketing is also inseparable from the role of viral marketing, which can rapidly spread information on a large scale in a short period of time. Viral marketing has become an effective strategy for capturing consumers attention through engaging, emotional, and shareable content across various social

media platforms. An example of viral marketing can be seen in the case of the Stanley tumbler, which went viral after a video circulated showing that the product survived a car fire. The content quickly spread widely on social media and garnered massive public attention. This virality was further amplified by the company's response, which offered the user compensation in the form of a new car, a move that strategically enhanced brand image and built consumer trust (Fullstop, 2023; Nadeem et al., 2021). The impact of this virality was not limited to increased brand exposure but also appeared to influence rising market interest and demand. According to Shah (2024), within weeks of the video going viral, Stanley experienced a significant surge in demand. This was evidenced by increased online searches for Stanley products, such as tumblers and thermoses, as well as heightened consumer interest in these items. Additionally, several retailers reportedly faced stock shortages, while Stanley's website traffic reportedly increased by over 300%. Although exact sales data was not published, marketing analysts estimate that the company's revenue increased by approximately 30% during the viral period. This illustrates how a product that was once a practical choice for outdoor enthusiasts became a cultural phenomenon in almost overnight. This situation demonstrates that the viral spread of information on social media can drive widespread consumer attention and boost purchasing decisions.

This phenomenon indicates that viral marketing has the potential to influence consumer purchasing decisions; therefore, it is important to understand its concept and role in the context of this study. According to Bampo et al., (2008), viral marketing is a form of interpersonal communication that encourages individuals to spread promotional messages to others through their social networks. Meanwhile, K. Ramadhan & Wiraguna (2024) explain that viral marketing is a form of word-of-mouth communication that develops online, where consumers are encouraged to share information or experiences related to a product with others. Additionally, Chaffey & Chadwick (2022) state that viral marketing is a marketing method that leverages the internet's network effects to reach consumers widely and quickly, where marketing messages can spread like a virus among users.

In the context of consumer behavior, viral marketing not only plays a role in increasing dissemination of information but also potentially influence the consumer purchasing decisions. Viral marketing utilizes various digital platforms to spread the information or product promotions to the consumers. When the information spreads widely and goes viral, it can encourage consumers to buy (Saifudin et al., 2025). Beberapa peneliti seperti Ahmed (2018), Sihombing & Husein (2025), Magisa et al., (2024), Saifudin et al., (2025), Agesti et al., (2021), Pane et al., (2024), Azzahra & Prakoso (2025), Diamanda & Rachmad (2024), Irawan & Misbach (2020), Indrastati & Roosdhani (2026), Syamsya & Purwanto (2023), Ningsih & Faraby (2025) conclude that viral marketing has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. However, this is different from the research conducted by Sari & Darma (2024), Doloksaribu & Purba (2024), Katiandagho & Hidayatullah (2023), which explains that viral marketing does not have a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. This means that the level of virality of a piece of content, whether high or low, does not directly determine consumers' purchasing decisions.

In addition to influencing purchasing decisions, viral marketing also has the potential to shape consumer perceptions of the sustainability values communicated through sustainable marketing. The viral spread of content on social media allows messages related to the environment and sustainability to reach a wider audience in a short period of time. This phenomenon is evident in the rising trend of using reusable products like tumblers, which are promoted through various digital content, thereby shaping the perception that they are part of an eco-friendly lifestyle. In addition to influencing purchasing decisions, viral marketing also has the potential to shape consumer perceptions of the sustainability values communicated through sustainable marketing. The viral spread of content on social media enables

environmental and sustainability-related messages to reach a broader audience in a short period of time. This phenomenon is evident in the rising trend of using reusable products such as tumblers, which are promoted through various digital content, thereby shaping the perception that they are part of an eco-friendly lifestyle (Fullstop Indonesia, 2023). This indicates that the spread of viral content does not always consistently reflect sustainability values but can shape consumer perceptions influenced by digital trends (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Furthermore, social media marketing also plays a role in driving preferences for eco-friendly products and sustainable consumption behaviors (K. Kumar et al., 2024). Thus, the higher the level of viral content dissemination containing sustainability values, the stronger consumers' perceptions of sustainable marketing tend to be. Empirically, research directly examining the influence of viral marketing on sustainable marketing remains limited. However, several studies indicate that digital marketing activities and the dissemination of information via social media play a role in raising awareness and shaping consumer perceptions regarding sustainability issues (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

In addition to having a direct influence on purchasing decisions, viral marketing is also believed to influence purchasing decisions indirectly through sustainable marketing as a mediating variable. In this context, the viral spread of information not only increases product exposure but also shapes consumers' perceptions of sustainability, which ultimately influences purchasing decisions. Consumers' perceptions of sustainable marketing can enhance a brand's positive image and build trust in the brand. When consumers perceive a product as environmentally friendly and supportive of sustainability, the likelihood of making a purchase decision increases. This indicates that sustainable marketing plays a crucial role in influencing consumer behavior (Joshi & Rahman, 2015); (Kotler & Keller, 2016); (Chen & Chang, 2012). Furthermore, the dissemination of information through viral marketing on social media enables sustainability messages to reach a broader and faster-growing audience, thereby reinforcing consumer perceptions of sustainable marketing practices (Dwivedi et al., 2021). In this context, viral content containing sustainability values not only increases product exposure but also shapes consumer awareness and understanding of environmental issues. Thus, viral marketing capable of widely disseminating sustainability messages can strengthen consumer perceptions of sustainable marketing, which ultimately drives purchasing decisions. Therefore, sustainable marketing is hypothesized to mediate the influence of viral marketing on purchasing decisions.

This study aims to explore and understand the extent to which User-Generated Content (UGC) and viral marketing influence purchasing decisions, with sustainable marketing serving as a mediating variable among Generation Z users of Stanley tumblers. Additionally, this study aims to contribute to a broader understanding of the factors influencing consumers' purchasing decision-making processes, particularly those related to the development of digital marketing and sustainability issues. Based on the background and previous research, it is known that there remains inconsistency in research findings regarding the influence of UGC, viral marketing, and sustainable marketing on purchasing decisions. On the other hand, research specifically examining the role of sustainable marketing as a mediating variable in the relationship between UGC and viral marketing on purchasing decisions remains limited. This indicates a research gap that can serve as a basis for further research. Therefore, this study was conducted to analyze in greater depth the influence of UGC and viral marketing on purchasing decisions through sustainable marketing as a mediating variable among Generation Z users of Stanley tumblers, which simultaneously constitutes the novelty of this study.

METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach to analyze the influence of user-generated content (UGC) and viral marketing on purchasing decisions, with sustainable marketing as a mediating variable. Sugiyono (2019) states that the quantitative method is a research approach

based on the philosophy of positivism and is used to study a specific population or sample, with data collection using research instruments and quantitative or statistical data analysis to test the formulated hypotheses. This study adopts a cross-sectional design with a one-shot data collection approach, meaning data is collected at a single point in time to capture respondents' perceptions and behaviors during a specific period (Savitz & Wellenius, 2022). The population in this study consists of Generation Z in Indonesia who have viewed or been exposed to content regarding Stanley tumblers on TikTok via the @Danimarielettering account. Since the population size is unknown, the sample size was determined using the Lemeshow formula to calculate the minimum sample size for an unknown population (Lemeshow et al., 1990). Based on calculations with a 95% confidence level and a 10% margin of error, the minimum sample size was determined to be 96 respondents, which was then rounded up to 100 respondents. The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling, which involves selecting respondents based on specific criteria, specifically Generation Z individuals in Indonesia who have been exposed to Stanley tumbler content on TikTok via the @Danimarielettering account. The selection of the TikTok platform as the research location was based on the high level of interaction and the speed of information dissemination, particularly among Generation Z. Viral content, including user reviews and experiences regarding products such as Stanley tumblers, has significant potential to influence consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions.

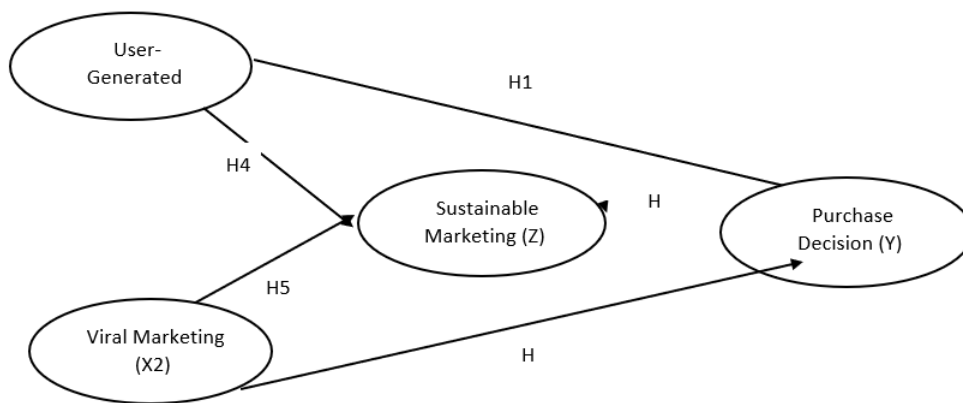


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The outer model test includes several procedures to assess validity and reliability (Hair et al., 2010).

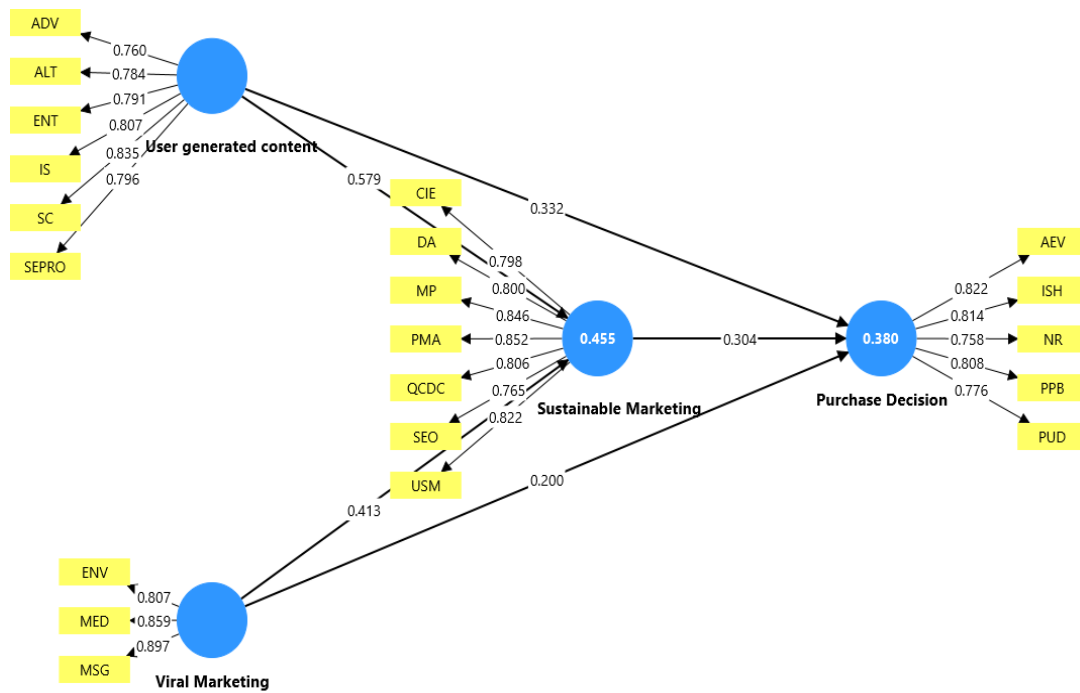


Figure 2 Outer Model Diagram
Source: Smart-PLS 4 (2025)

The evaluation of the measurement model demonstrated robust indicator reliability, with all item loadings surpassing the minimum threshold of 0.55 and the majority exceeding the critical 0.70 benchmark. This statistical performance signifies that the indicators possess sufficient commonality and adequately capture the variance of their respective latent constructs (Hair et al., 2022). Consequently, the measurement instrument satisfies the rigorous psychometric standards required for structural equation modeling, confirming both the validity and reliability of the indicators employed (Sarstedt et al., 2022) (Cheah et al., 2023).

Table 1 Outer Loading

Dimension	Purchase Decision	Sustainable Marketing	UGC	Viral Marketing
ADV			0.760	
AEV	0.822			
ALT			0.784	
CIE		0.798		
DA		0.800		
ENT			0.791	
ENV				0.807
IS			0.807	
ISH	0.814			
MED				0.859
MP		0.846		
MSG				0.897
NR	0.758			
PMA		0.852		
PPB	0.808			
PUD	0.776			
QCDC		0.806		
SC			0.835	
SEO		0.765		
SEPRO			0.796	
USM		0.822		

Source: Smart-PLS 4 (2025)

The assessment of internal consistency reliability confirmed the psychometric robustness of the measurement model, with all latent constructs yielding Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients surpassing the critical threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). These findings validate the instrument’s stability and homogeneity, thereby justifying the reliability of the latent variables for subsequent structural analysis (Sarstedt et al., 2022).

Table 2 Reliability dan validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	AVE
Purchase Decision	0.855	0.859	0.896	0.633
Sustainable Marketing	0.914	0.915	0.932	0.661
UGC	0.884	0.885	0.912	0.633
Viral Marketing	0.822	0.876	0.890	0.731

Source: Smart-PLS 4 (2025)

The construct reliability assessment evidences exceptional internal consistency across all latent variables. Specifically, Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients ranged from a minimum of 0.822 for viral marketing to a high of 0.914 for sustainable marketing, with purchase decision (0.855) and UGC (0.884) also surpassing the conventional threshold of 0.70. This psychometric robustness is further corroborated by CR metrics, where rho_a values spanned from 0.859 to 0.915 and rho_c values ranged from 0.890 to 0.932. These very high composite scores underscore the stability of the research instrument, affirming that the indicators consistently reflect the underlying constructs with greater precision than alpha coefficients alone.

Regarding convergent validity, the AVE values for all four variables viral marketing (0.731), sustainable marketing (0.661), and both purchase decision and UGC (0.633) comfortably exceed the critical 0.50 benchmark. Consequently, these findings establish that the measurement model possesses strong convergent validity and reliability, providing a rigorously validated empirical foundation for analyzing the complex interrelationships between UGC, Viral Marketing, and Purchase Decisions, particularly within the context of Sustainable Marketing’s moderating role.

Table 3 Latent Variable Correlations

Variables	Purchase Decision	Sustainable Marketing	User Generated Content	Viral Marketing
Purchase Decision	1.000	0.552	0.473	0.272
Sustainable Marketing	0.552	1.000	0.535	0.351
UGC	0.473	0.535	1.000	-0.107
Viral Marketing	0.272	0.351	-0.107	1.000

Source: Smart-PLS 4 (2025)

Structural Model (Inner Model)

The assessment of the structural model focuses on examining the causal dependencies and predictive capabilities of the latent constructs. The model's explanatory power is primarily assessed through the Coefficient of Determination (R²), while its out-of-sample predictive relevance is validated using Stone-Geisser’s Q² metric Subsequently, the statistical significance of the hypothesized relationships is rigorously tested via a bootstrapping procedure, wherein path coefficients are confirmed as significant if t-statistics exceed the critical threshold of 1.96 and p-values remain below 0.05 (Hair et al., 2022).

All direct and indirect effects were tested using a bootstrap procedure, and the findings show that every hypothesized relationship is statistically significant. Hypothesis H1 proposes that UGC has a significant positive effect on purchase decision, supported by a t-statistic of 5.111 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). H2 states that UGC significantly affects

sustainable marketing, which is validated by a t-statistic of 11.511 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). H3 suggests that viral marketing positively affects purchase decision. The relationship is confirmed with a t-statistic of 2.690 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.001 (<0.05). H4 viral marketing has a positive and significant effect on sustainable marketing, evidenced by a t-statistic of 8.596 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). H5 proposes that sustainable marketing positively influences purchase decision. This is confirmed by the t-statistic of 3.706 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05), indicating a significant positive effect. H6 indicates that UGC influences purchase decision through sustainable marketing. The mediation effect is significant, with a t-statistic of 3.343 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.001 (<0.05), confirming partial mediation. Similarly, H7 suggests that viral marketing affects purchase decision through sustainable marketing, and this indirect relationship is also significant, as shown by a t-statistic of 3.517 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). Overall, all hypotheses (H1–H7) are supported, indicating that UGC and Viral Marketing both have direct and indirect positive influences on Purchase Decisions, with Sustainable Marketing serving as a significant mediating variable within the proposed research model.

Table 4 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis Testing	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ((O/STDEV))	P values	Result
UGC -> Purchase Decision	0.332	0.334	0.065	5.111	0.000	Supported
UGC -> Sustainable Marketing	0.579	0.581	0.050	11.511	0.000	Supported
Viral Marketing -> Purchase Decision	0.200	0.203	0.075	2.690	0.001	Supported
Viral Marketing -> Sustainable Marketing	0.413	0.414	0.048	8.596	0.000	Supported
Sustainable Marketing -> Purchase Decision	0.304	0.303	0.082	3.706	0.000	Supported
UGC -> Sustainable Marketing -> Purchase Decision	0.176	0.177	0.053	3.343	0.001	Supported
Viral Marketing -> Sustainable Marketing -> Purchase Decision	0.126	0.125	0.036	3.517	0.000	Supported

Source: Smart-PLS 4 (2025)

The Influence of UGC on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the hypothesis test indicate that UGC has a substantial and positive influence on Gen Z’s purchasing decisions regarding Stanley tumblers in Indonesia. The evidence from the hypothesis test shows a t-value of 5.111 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). These findings align with the research by Alghaniy & Mukaram (2025), Putri & Komaryatin (2025), Ramadhan et al., (2025), Gupta (2023), Nuur Aulia et al., (2025), which indicates that UGC has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. This indicates that higher intensity and quality of user-generated content increase consumers’ likelihood of making purchasing decisions.

Conceptually, the influence of UGC on purchasing decisions can be explained through the perspective of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM), where user-generated content serves as a source of information with a higher level of credibility and authenticity compared to marketing communications conducted by companies. This information, based on real-life experiences, reduces consumer uncertainty in evaluating products, thereby increasing confidence in making purchasing decisions. In the context of Generation Z, the role of UGC becomes increasingly significant due to consumer characteristics that tend to be peer-oriented

and exhibit a high level of reliance on social media as an information source. This generation places greater trust in the opinions and experiences of other users than in messages conveyed by brands, meaning that content such as reviews, testimonials, and product usage demonstrations exerts a strong influence in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences. These findings also reinforce empirical evidence showing that authentic user-generated content can capture public attention and foster positive perceptions of products. UGC serves not only as a medium for conveying information but also as an effective tool for influencing consumer attitudes and behavior. Consequently, the higher the intensity of exposure and the quality of UGC received by consumers, the greater the likelihood of building trust and positive perceptions that drive purchasing decisions. Therefore, the results of this study confirm that UGC is a critical factor in the purchase decision-making process, particularly among Generation Z consumers who are active in the digital ecosystem and highly responsive to authentic, user-experience-based content.

The Influence of UGC on Sustainable Marketing

The results of the hypothesis test indicate that UGC has a substantial and positive influence on Gen Z's sustainable marketing attitudes toward Stanley tumblers in Indonesia. This is evidenced by a t-statistic value of 11.511 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). Conceptually, the influence of UGC on sustainable marketing can be explained through its role as a medium for shaping perceptions and disseminating sustainability values among consumers. User-generated content, such as experiences using reusable products, reviews regarding product durability, and narratives related to eco-friendly lifestyles, can shape consumers' understanding of the importance of sustainable consumption. Thus, UGC functions not only as a source of information but also as an educational tool that reinforces the values of sustainable consumption. In the context of Generation Z, exposure to UGC has a significant influence on shaping awareness of environmental issues. This generation is known for its high level of concern regarding sustainability, so content containing environmental messages tends to be more readily accepted and internalized. Therefore, the higher the intensity and quality of UGC that incorporates sustainability values, the stronger consumers' perceptions of sustainable marketing practices become. Additionally, UGC plays a role in organically expanding the dissemination of sustainability values through social media. Content shared by users has the potential to reach a wide audience, thereby accelerating the diffusion of information regarding sustainable marketing practices and reinforcing a product's sustainability image in consumers' minds. Nevertheless, the relationship between UGC and sustainable marketing remains relatively under-explored in previous literature. Most studies have focused more on the influence of UGC on purchasing decisions; thus, the findings in this study contribute by expanding the understanding of UGC's role as a factor capable of shaping sustainability perceptions and values among consumers, particularly Generation Z.

The Influence of Viral Marketing on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the hypothesis test indicate that viral marketing substantially has positive influence on Gen Z's purchasing decisions regarding Stanley tumblers in Indonesia. The evidence from the hypothesis test shows a t-value of 2.690 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.001 (<0.05). These findings are consistent with research by Ahmed (2018), Sihombing & Husein (2025), Magisa et al., (2024), Saifudin et al., (2025), Agesti et al., (2021), Pane et al., (2024), Azzahra & Prakoso (2025), Diamanda & Rachmad (2024), Irawan & Misbach (2020), Indrastati & Roosdhani (2026), Syamsya & Purwanto (2023), Ningsih & Faraby (2025), who concluded that viral marketing has a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions. This means that the higher the level of information dissemination and the appeal of viral content, the greater the tendency for consumers to make purchasing decisions.

Conceptually, the influence of viral marketing on purchasing decisions can be explained by its ability to increase information exposure widely and rapidly through social media networks. Viral content is characterized by being easily shareable, attention-grabbing, and capable of reaching a large audience in a short time, thereby increasing the product's visibility in consumers' minds. The high intensity of this exposure encourages consumers to become more familiar with the product, which ultimately increases the likelihood of a purchase decision. Additionally, viral marketing is linked to psychological effects such as the fear of missing out (FOMO), where consumers are driven to participate in popular trends. In this context, products that go viral tend to be perceived as something in high demand, thereby increasing their appeal and the urgency to own them. This reinforces the tendency of consumers, particularly Generation Z, to make purchasing decisions as part of their participation in social trends. This finding also aligns with the phenomenon described in the introduction, where the virality of Stanley tumbler content on social media was able to attract widespread public attention and trigger a surge in market interest in a short period of time. This massive dissemination of information not only increases product awareness but also creates a social pressure that influences consumer purchasing behavior. Thus, viral marketing serves not only as a marketing communication tool but also as a mechanism capable of generating exposure, establishing trends, and driving consumer engagement, all of which ultimately lead to purchasing decisions.

The Influence of Viral Marketing on Sustainable Marketing

The results of the hypothesis test indicate that viral marketing has a positive influence on sustainable marketing among Gen Z in Indonesia regarding Stanley tumblers. The evidence from the hypothesis test shows a t-value of 8.596 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). Conceptually, the influence of viral marketing on sustainable marketing can be explained by its ability to accelerate the dissemination of information and shape consumer perceptions on a broad scale through social media. Viral content enables messages related to sustainability, such as the use of reusable products and eco-friendly lifestyles to reach a large audience in a short period. This makes viral marketing an effective tool for raising awareness and shaping consumer understanding of sustainability values. In the context of digital marketing, the viral spread of content not only increasing product exposure but also shaping social constructs regarding what is considered relevant and valuable consumption behavior. Trends in the use of products like reusable tumblers, which are frequently featured in digital content, indirectly shape the perception that using such products is part of a sustainable lifestyle. Thus, the virality of content can influence how consumers interpret the sustainability value of a product. Nevertheless, the relationship between viral marketing and sustainable marketing remains relatively limited in previous literature. Most studies have focused on the role of viral marketing in increasing exposure and purchase decisions, while research directly linking it to the formation of sustainability perceptions has not been extensively explored. Several studies indicate that digital marketing activities and the dissemination of information via social media play a role in raising awareness and shaping consumer perceptions regarding sustainability issues (K. Kumar et al., 2024) ; (Dwivedi et al., 2021). However, empirical testing that specifically links viral marketing with sustainable marketing remains limited. Therefore, the findings of this study contribute to expanding our understanding of the role of viral marketing, not only as a tool to increase exposure but also as a factor capable of shaping consumer perceptions of sustainability values in the context of digital marketing.

The Influence of Sustainable Marketing on Purchasing Decisions

The results of the hypothesis test indicate that sustainable marketing has a substantial and positive influence on Gen Z's purchasing decisions regarding Stanley tumblers in Indonesia.

The evidence from the hypothesis test shows a t-value of 3.706 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05), indicating a significant positive effect. These findings align with the research by Maulidah et al., (2024), Dhingra & Rani (2024), Sudirjo et al., (2024), which concluded that sustainable marketing influences purchasing decisions. This means that the better the implementation of sustainable marketing, the higher the likelihood of consumers making a purchase decision.

Conceptually, the influence of sustainable marketing on purchasing decisions can be explained through the value-driven consumption approach, where consumers consider not only the functional aspects of a product but also the social and environmental values associated with it. The implementation of sustainable marketing allows consumers to link their purchasing activities to contributions toward sustainability, thereby increasing their preference for products perceived as environmentally friendly. In the context of Generation Z, the influence of sustainable marketing becomes increasingly relevant due to the characteristics of consumers who possess a high level of awareness regarding environmental and social issues. This generation tends to be more selective in choosing products and demonstrates a tendency to support brands committed to sustainability. Therefore, the communication of sustainability values conveyed through marketing strategies can shape positive perceptions that drive purchasing decisions. This finding also aligns with the phenomenon described in the introduction, where products like tumblers are perceived as part of a sustainable lifestyle. However, the paradox between consumption trends and sustainability values indicates that purchasing decisions are not influenced solely by environmental awareness but also by how effectively those values are communicated to consumers. In this regard, sustainable marketing plays a crucial role in bridging sustainability values with actual consumption behavior.

The influence of UGC on purchasing decisions through sustainable marketing as mediation

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that UGC has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions through sustainable marketing as a mediating variable among Gen Z in Indonesia regarding Stanley tumblers. The evidence from the hypothesis testing shows a t-value of 3.343 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.001 (<0.05), confirming partial mediation. These findings indicate that the influence of UGC on purchase decisions occurs not only directly but also through sustainable marketing as a mediating variable. This suggests that user-generated content shapes consumers' perceptions of a product's sustainability value, which in turn drives purchase decisions. In other words, UGC plays a role in reinforcing purchase decisions through the process of constructing meaning and the perceived sustainability value experienced by consumers. UGC that includes product usage experiences and narratives related to an eco-friendly lifestyle can enhance consumers' understanding of the importance of sustainable consumption. When these sustainability values are successfully internalized, consumers tend to have a stronger conviction to choose and purchase products perceived as aligned with those values. In this context, sustainable marketing functions as a mechanism linking information received from UGC to the purchasing decisions made by consumers. Results indicating partial mediation suggest that sustainable marketing acts as an additional pathway in strengthening the influence of UGC on purchasing decisions. This means that while UGC can directly drive purchasing decisions, the presence of sustainability values fostered through sustainable marketing exerts an influence that further reinforces consumers' tendency to make purchases. Furthermore, studies specifically examining the role of sustainable marketing as a mediating variable in the relationship between UGC and purchasing decisions remain relatively limited in the existing literature. Therefore, the findings of this study offer a new contribution by demonstrating that the influence of UGC is not only direct but also

involves a mechanism of sustainability value formation that plays a role in driving purchasing decisions, particularly among Generation Z consumers.

The influence of viral marketing on purchasing decisions through sustainable marketing as mediation

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that viral marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions regarding Stanley tumblers among Gen Z in Indonesia, with sustainable marketing acting as a mediating variable. The evidence from the hypothesis testing shows a t-value of 3.517 (>1.96) and a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05). These findings suggest that the influence of viral marketing on purchasing decisions occurs not only directly but also through sustainable marketing as a mediating variable. This indicates that the viral dissemination of content not only increases product exposure but also shapes consumers' perceptions of the sustainability value inherent in the product, which ultimately drives purchasing decisions. Thus, viral marketing plays a role in reinforcing purchase decisions through the formation of sustainability meanings perceived by consumers. Content that spreads virally on social media allows sustainability-related messages to reach a wider and faster audience, thereby increasing consumer awareness and understanding of environmental issues. When these messages successfully shape the perception that a product has eco-friendly value and supports sustainability, consumers are more likely to make a purchase decision. In this context, sustainable marketing functions as a mechanism linking exposure to viral marketing with the purchasing decisions made by consumers. Findings indicating a mediating effect suggest that sustainable marketing acts as a pathway that strengthens the relationship between viral marketing and purchasing decisions. This means that, in addition to increasing consumer attention, viral marketing is also capable of shaping perceptions of sustainability value, providing an additional impetus in the purchasing decision-making process. Nevertheless, studies specifically examining the role of sustainable marketing as a mediating variable in the relationship between viral marketing and purchase decisions remain relatively limited in the existing literature. Therefore, the findings of this study contribute by expanding our understanding of the mechanisms through which viral marketing influences consumer behavior, not only by increasing exposure but also by shaping perceptions of sustainability that play a role in driving purchase decisions, particularly among Generation Z consumers.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to analyze the influence of user-generated content (UGC) and viral marketing on Generation Z's decision to purchase Stanley tumblers in Indonesia, with sustainable marketing serving as a mediating variable. The results indicate that UGC and viral marketing have a positive and significant influence on purchase decisions, both directly and through sustainable marketing. These findings confirm that purchase decisions are influenced not only by exposure to digital content but also by consumers' perceptions of sustainability value.

Furthermore, sustainable marketing is shown to act as a mechanism that strengthens the relationship between digital marketing stimuli and purchase decisions. These findings contribute to expanding the understanding of the role of sustainable marketing in the context of digital marketing, particularly as a mediating variable that remains under-explored in the literature. Practically, the results of this study indicate the importance for industry practitioners to consistently integrate engaging digital content with communication of sustainability values to foster positive perceptions and more effectively drive consumer purchasing decisions.

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