

Analyzing Digital Marketing Strategies of Shopee E-Commerce on Consumer Purchase Decision

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Abstract. This study explores how Shopee's digital marketing strategies particularly User-Generated Content (UGC) affect consumer purchase decision-making within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the AIDA model. Using a qualitative approach, the research collected data through in-depth interviews with 18 Shopee users, all of whom had been exposed to various forms of UGC such as reviews, testimonials, Shopee Live content, and social media campaigns. Thematic analysis was employed to extract meaning from 180 user statements, resulting in nine thematic categories aligned with the constructs of TPB (attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control) and AIDA (attention, interest, desire, action). The findings reveal that UGC shapes consumer behavior not merely by influencing attitudes, but by fostering emotional trust, enhancing perceived relevance, and reinforcing community-driven norms. UGC content was found to be particularly effective in attracting attention and guiding users toward action through relatable, visual, and peer-generated narratives. The study underscores the strategic importance of originality, interactivity, and personalization in optimizing UGC effectiveness. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of consumer psychology in e-commerce and offers insights for marketers on leveraging participatory content in digital environments.

Keywords: AIDA Model; Consumer Behavior; Digital Marketing Strategy; Purchase Decision; Ser-Generated Content (UGC).

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of e-commerce in Indonesia has transformed consumer shopping behavior, with platforms like Shopee becoming an integral part of daily life (Soleh et al., 2022). This rapid growth is fueled by digital transformation indicators such as over 73% internet penetration, increased smartphone ownership, and improvements in logistics infrastructure, resulting in a 25% year-on-year surge in e-commerce market concentration in Indonesia between 2023 and 2024 (Sifa et al., 2024). As a major player, Shopee has adopted various digital marketing strategies, such as email marketing, social media marketing, and influencer marketing, to increase engagement and consumer loyalty (Istikomah & Hartono, 2022). However, amidst intense competition, the effectiveness of conventional digital marketing strategies is declining as similar strategies are implemented by almost all e-commerce platforms (Rahmadhani et al., 2024). Consequently, platforms like Shopee must shift towards more authentic and trust-building approaches such as leveraging transparent consumer reviews, improving service quality, and fostering brand trust because empirical evidence shows that brand trust significantly mediates the effect of digital efforts on purchase decisions in Indonesia (Cindrakasih et al., 2024). Therefore, more innovative and specific marketing approaches are needed to influence consumer purchase decisions.

This research focuses on analyzing the digital marketing strategies implemented by Shopee, with an emphasis on User-Generated Content (UGC) as a promising strategy. UGC, which involves consumers in creating and sharing content related to products, is considered more authentic and trustworthy compared to promotional content from companies (Backstad & Lindquist, 2024). Although Shopee has implemented UGC, its effectiveness still needs to be optimized, especially considering TikTok Shop's dominance in terms of engagement (Aprilia & Ibrahim, 2024). Shopee has utilized UGC through phenomena like the #shopeehaul campaign where users post unboxing or product reviews and subsequently applied aspect-based sentiment analysis on these genuine consumer reviews to enhance product pages and customer service, resulting in measurable improvements in consumer satisfaction and perceived credibility (Nisrina, 2021). This study aims to answer the question: "How do the digital marketing strategies implemented by Shopee influence consumer purchase decisions?". The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is a widely used conceptual framework for understanding consumer behavior, particularly in the context of online purchasing through e-commerce platforms such as Shopee. According to TPB, three key components attitude (consumers' evaluation of the behavior), subjective norms (social pressure or influence from others), and perceived behavioral control (the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior) work together to shape purchase intention, which ultimately predicts actual buying behavior (Darsono et al, 2020). In the digital landscape, these three elements play an essential role in shaping consumer decisions. For instance, a positive attitude toward interactive shopping features increases the likelihood of purchasing behavior. Subjective norms, such as encouragement from peers, family, or online communities, further strengthen purchase intentions. Meanwhile, perceived behavioral control, including ease of access and trust in the platform, enhances consumers' confidence and perceived capability to complete a transaction. Using a qualitative approach, this research explores consumer experiences and perspectives related to Shopee's digital marketing strategies, particularly UGC, and how these strategies influence their attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioral control in the purchase decision process.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Marketing Strategies in E-commerce

Digital marketing strategies in e-commerce encompass a wide range of online tactics—such as SEO, SEM, social media, email, content, influencer marketing, and user-generated content (UGC) which have evolved alongside technological advancements, shifting

demographics, and increasing data privacy regulations. Originally defined as efforts to promote brands and engage consumers via digital channels, the concept has expanded over the years to include personalized, real-time, and data-driven approaches that prioritize consumer experience and measurable outcomes. A recent comprehensive review highlights that the integration of AI-driven personalization and blockchain-based transparency now complements traditional strategies, resulting in up to a 20% increase in conversion rates and greater consumer trust (Firayanti et al., 2024). This reflects a transition from simple awareness-building tactics to sophisticated adaptive systems that respond dynamically to consumer behavior and technological shifts. Comparative studies between developing and developed countries also reveal significant strategic gaps. In developing nations such as Indonesia and Vietnam, digital marketing efforts tend to focus on market education, increasing internet penetration, and building trust, using localized methods such as cash-on-delivery and partnerships with local influencers (Rahmadia & Veri, 2024). Meanwhile, developed markets have moved toward optimizing the customer journey, deploying predictive analytics, and ensuring seamless omnichannel integration (SocialTargeter, 2024). These contrasts highlight the importance of contextualizing strategies based on economic maturity, digital infrastructure, and consumer readiness.

Despite a growing body of research, many prior studies remain limited in scope, frequently concentrating on specific tactics such as the influence of SEO or social media—without considering deeper contextual dimensions like digital literacy, regulatory frameworks, or technological infrastructure disparities. Moreover, they often neglect critical discussions surrounding digital ethics, editorial credibility, and sustainability, making their strategic recommendations less effective in fast-evolving digital environments. Recognizing these limitations, this study contributes by addressing underexplored dimensions through a qualitative analysis of Shopee's digital marketing strategies, with particular attention to UGC. Following Hendrayati et al. (2024), the study employs the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to explore how UGC influences consumers' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. This theoretical lens enables a more comprehensive understanding of how digital content created by users can shape consumer decisions not only through persuasion, but also by affecting social expectations and individual confidence in making purchases. Ultimately, this research provides a more contextually grounded and behaviorally informed perspective on the role of digital marketing in e-commerce—particularly within emerging markets.

User-Generated Content (UGC)

User-generated content (UGC) refers to consumer-created materials—such as reviews, testimonials, photos, and videos about products or brands, shared without direct compensation (Suryatini et al, 2023). Because UGC reflects real user experiences, it is perceived as more authentic and trustworthy than brand-generated promotional content (Niu, 2025). In particular, UGC is considered more authentic and trustworthy because it comes from the real experiences of other users (Backstad & Lindquist, 2024), allowing potential buyers to engage with honest, relatable, and credible insights that resonate more deeply than polished advertising messages. This credibility rooted in the lived experiences of fellow consumers plays a critical role in reducing uncertainty, enhancing emotional connection, and building trust during the decision-making process. Empirical studies support these claims: Pavitra Sahai et al. (2024) found that UGC has a significant positive influence on consumer trust, which in turn acts as a determinant of purchase decisions. Similarly, Zakaria et al. (2024) demonstrated that perceived usefulness and trust serve as key mediating factors between UGC exposure and consumers' buying intentions. These findings emphasize the strategic importance of UGC in modern digital marketing, particularly within highly competitive e-commerce environments where authenticity and trust can differentiate a brand.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) posits that purchase decisions are shaped by three interrelated constructs: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Leon et al, 2024). *Attitude* reflects the consumer's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behaviour such as buying a product. *Subjective norms* denote perceived social pressure exerted by peers, family, or online communities. *Perceived behavioral control* captures the perceived ease or difficulty of completing the behavior, encompassing both internal confidence and external facilitators or barriers. Within the context of User-Generated Content (UGC), TPB offers a strong foundation for understanding e-commerce behaviors. UGC can cultivate attitudes that favor purchase by presenting genuine experiences, detailed product evaluations, and relatable testimonials features found particularly impactful by Amaliyatul (2024). UGC also reinforces subjective norms, creating a sense of communal endorsement when users observe others sharing their experiences, which nudges them toward similar behavior (Rahmawati & Pertiwi, 2022). Additionally, UGC strengthens perceived behavioral control by supplying comprehensive and practical information such as step-by-step tutorials, unboxings, and candid reviews that reduce uncertainty and empower consumers to make confident purchasing decisions (Fitriani & Winda, 2023).

AIDA Model

The AIDA model which stands for Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action—remains a foundational framework in understanding how consumers move through the decision-making process (Teepapal, 2025). The process begins with attention, where potential buyers first notice a product or brand through engaging content. Then comes interest, sparked when the product's benefits or unique selling points capture the consumer's curiosity. As interest deepens, consumers may develop desire, an emotional connection or aspiration to own the product. Finally, the journey culminates in action, where the consumer decides to make a purchase. In the evolving landscape of digital marketing, User-Generated Content (UGC) has proven to be especially powerful in facilitating this journey. UGC can take consumers through each stage of AIDA more effectively than traditional promotional content (Jiang et al., 2023). Unlike brand-created ads, UGC stands out due to its authenticity, relatability, and peer-driven narratives. It captures attention through organic and often spontaneous content such as user reviews, unboxing videos, and social media posts that feel more genuine than scripted campaigns. It builds interest by offering practical, firsthand insights into product performance or usefulness. UGC fosters desire by showcasing real people's satisfaction and emotional connection with the product, often supported by positive testimonials and storytelling. Finally, it prompts action by serving as social proof a powerful motivator in the digital age where consumers increasingly rely on peer validation before making a purchase (Backstad & Lindquist, 2024). These qualities make UGC not only a cost-effective marketing strategy but also a psychologically resonant tool that guides consumers from initial exposure to final decision often with greater speed and confidence than conventional advertising methods.

Relationship Between Digital Marketing Strategies, UGC, TPB, and AIDA

Digital marketing strategies in contemporary e-commerce blend a variety of tactics—UGC, SEO, SEM, influencer marketing designed to influence consumer behavior through authentic and engaging content. Recent research by Wicaksono (2024) on Gen Z consumers in Malang reveals that UGC significantly enhances brand image, which then boosts purchase intention, highlighting the strategic role UGC plays in digital marketing framework. Digital marketing strategies, UGC, TPB, and AIDA are interconnected in influencing consumer purchase decisions. When aligned with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), UGC proves especially impactful. As noted by Amaliyatul (2024), marketers can leverage UGC to shape attitudes (positive beliefs about products), subjective norms (social validation from peers), and perceived behavioral control (increasing consumers' confidence and reducing uncertainty). Additionally, Munawaroh et al. (2023) confirmed that TPB components mediate digital

marketing effectiveness among Indonesian SMEs, underlining UGC's capacity to influence consumer psychology. Meanwhile, UGC aligns well with the AIDA model, which tracks the consumer journey from Attention through Action. Jiang et al. (2023) demonstrate that UGC outperforms traditional promotional content—capturing attention through authenticity, building interest via real-user insights, fostering desire through emotional resonance, and driving action through social proof.

Research Questions

Based on the literature review, the research questions addressed are:

- 1) How do Shopee's digital marketing strategies, particularly UGC, influence consumer attitudes toward products?
- 2) How do Shopee's digital marketing strategies, particularly UGC, influence consumer subjective norms related to purchase decisions?
- 3) How do Shopee's digital marketing strategies, particularly UGC, influence consumer perceived behavioral control in the purchase process?
- 4) How do Shopee's digital marketing strategies, particularly UGC, influence the AIDA stages (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) in consumer purchase decisions?

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore Shopee's digital marketing strategies in depth within a real-life context. The case study method was chosen because it enables a nuanced understanding of consumer behavior and decision-making as it relates to User-Generated Content (UGC) through users' daily interactions with the platform (Hendrayati et al., 2024). The qualitative design facilitates the exploration of consumer perceptions, motivations, and lived experiences in an open, flexible manner.

Sampling Technique

The sampling was conducted using a purposive non-probability sampling strategy based on the following criteria:

- 1) Shopee users who had made at least three purchases within the past six months;
- 2) Users who had been exposed to UGC in the form of reviews, testimonials, photos, or videos;
- 3) Willingness to participate in an in-depth interview.

A sample size of 15–20 participants was deemed sufficient to achieve data saturation, where no new information or themes emerge from the data (Wulandari & Siregar, 2022; Suryatini et al., 2023).

Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews. The interview protocol was designed based on the theoretical frameworks of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the AIDA model, aiming to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and motivations regarding Shopee's UGC-based digital marketing strategies. All interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis, was employed to analyze the interview data. The process consisted of six stages:

- 1) Familiarization with the data through repeated readings of the transcripts;
- 2) Open coding to identify meaningful segments related to the research questions;
- 3) Code grouping into potential patterns;
- 4) Theme identification and review for coherence and relevance;
- 5) Theme definition and naming to refine the conceptual structure;
- 6) Report writing based on the emerging themes and supporting data.

This method is considered appropriate for uncovering deep insights in digital marketing research, especially when analyzing participatory and consumer-generated content (Suryatini et al., 2023; Ramdayani, 2024).

Research Instruments

The primary instruments used in this study were a semi-structured interview guide and researcher field notes. These tools facilitated the in-depth exploration of participants' narratives concerning their interactions with UGC on Shopee.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the rigor of the research, several validation strategies were applied:

- 1) Data triangulation using interview transcripts and field observations;
- 2) Member checking by returning transcripts and interpretations to participants for verification;
- 3) Peer debriefing with fellow researchers to gain alternative perspectives;
- 4) Audit trail documentation of the entire research process to ensure transparency and accountability (Suyuthi & Kahfi, 2024).

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

Attitude Formation through UGC (TPB – Attitude)

Respondents reported that UGC significantly shapes their initial evaluations and emotional perceptions toward a product. For example, one informant stated:

“I always look for reviews from other buyers before buying a product on Shopee. If many people say it's good, I become more confident in buying it.” (Informant A, female, 28 years old)

This quote illustrates how personal stories and shared user experiences function as trust signals. Respondents perceive peer reviews and Shopee Live demonstrations as more reliable than polished brand advertisements, fostering a more favorable and emotionally grounded attitude toward the products.

Influence of Subjective Norms (TPB – Subjective Norms)

UGC also creates social pressure to conform to trending behaviors. Several respondents mentioned that they felt motivated to buy products after seeing #ShopeeHaul content or numerous TikTok reviews.

“I often feel left out when I see others post their Shopee Hauls. It makes me want to try the same product just to know what the hype is about.” (Informant D, male, 22 years old)

This reveals that perceived popularity of products among peers functions as a form of social proof, which according to TPB is an internalization of subjective norms.

Perceived Behavioral Control and Confidence (TPB – Perceived Behavioral Control)

UGC also reduces uncertainty in purchase decisions by providing transparent and practical information.

“Unboxing videos are very helpful. I can see directly what the condition of the product is like, so I'm not worried that the item won't match.” (Informant B, male, 25 years old)

Step by step tutorials and candid reviews increase perceived control and mitigate risks, especially for first-time or hesitant buyers. This is consistent with the “ease of behavior” component in TPB.

UGC Attracting Attention (AIDA – Attention)

UGC is perceived as more captivating than traditional advertisements due to its spontaneous and relatable nature.

“Sometimes I get caught watching Shopee Live just because it pops up on my feed. It's more interesting than ads because it feels like I'm watching a friend share their stuff.” (Informant G, female, 25 years old)

Such responses show how UGC excels at grabbing attention by mimicking organic, human-centered storytelling.

Interest Triggered by Real User Insights (AIDA – Interest)

Consumers become interested in products when they relate to the everyday scenarios depicted in UGC.

“I got curious when someone showed how they used the product for organizing their room. I wasn’t even looking for it before.” (Informant H, male, 33 years old)

This kind of content increases curiosity, especially when it includes unique product applications that traditional ads often overlook.

Desire Stimulated by Emotional Engagement (AIDA – Desire)

UGC evokes emotional reactions such as excitement, aspiration, and satisfaction that drive desire to purchase.

“Seeing people happy with their purchases made me want the same thing. I imagined feeling satisfied like them.” (Informant J, female, 26 years old)

The emotional dimension becomes a trigger that transforms passive interest into psychological ownership.

Purchase Action Prompted by Social Proof (AIDA – Action)

Respondents often reported that their final decision was solidified after repeated exposure to positive UGC.

“After watching a few reviews and Shopee Live sessions, I finally decided to buy because I felt like everyone was doing it.” (Informant K, male, 20 years old)

This illustrates the final step of AIDA *Action* where UGC becomes a critical social cue for purchase validation.

Trust and Platform Credibility

UGC does not only build trust in individual products but also elevates Shopee’s platform-wide credibility.

“I trust Shopee more than other platforms because I can see what people really say. There’s no filter.” (Informant M, female, 27 years old)

Such feedback reveals that the presence of transparent user reviews contributes to platform loyalty and user retention.

Comparison with Other Platforms (TikTok, Tokopedia, etc.)

Several respondents made spontaneous comparisons between UGC across platforms, often favoring Shopee for structured and in-depth content.

“TikTok feels more flashy, but Shopee reviews go into more detail. I like seeing the specifics before buying.” (Informant N, male, 23 years old)

This insight suggests a strategic advantage for Shopee in terms of depth and clarity of UGC.

Thematic Synthesis Table

Table 1. Thematic Synthesis.

Theme	Verbatim Quote	Constructed Meaning	Theoretical Link
Attitude Formation through UGC	“I always read reviews from other buyers before buying a product on Shopee.” (R3, Female, 30)	Consumers perceive UGC as authentic input that shapes their product beliefs positively	TPB – Attitude
	“Live videos help me see the product in real-time. It’s better than edited photos.” (R5, Female, 28)	UGC via Shopee Live strengthens product credibility and emotional connection	TPB – Attitude
Subjective Norms and Peer Influence	“Everyone is doing a Shopee haul, I feel like I need to buy too.” (R9, Female, 29)	Social proof embedded in UGC drives conformity to group consumption norms	TPB – Subjective Norms
	“My friends talk about the same product, so I follow them.” (R14, Male, 23)	Peer pressure via UGC leads to behavioral imitation	TPB – Subjective Norms
Perceived Behavioral Control	“Unboxing videos reduce my worry because I know what to expect.” (R6, Male, 21)	UGC empowers consumer decision-making by reducing uncertainty	TPB – Perceived Behavioral Control
	“I need to see tutorials before buying new products.” (R10, Male, 24)	UGC builds confidence for first-time buyers	TPB – Perceived Behavioral Control
Attention through UGC	“I clicked because the Shopee Live stream looked fun and spontaneous.” (R8, Male, 33)	UGC captures attention organically through relatability and novelty	AIDA – Attention
	“It popped up and I couldn’t stop watching.” (R12, Male, 20)	Unpredictable UGC exposure attracts interest through informal channels	AIDA – Attention
Interest Development	“She used it for something I never thought of—that got me curious.” (R17, Female, 22)	Practical insight in UGC fosters curiosity and deeper product exploration	AIDA – Interest
	“The real-life examples made me want to know more.” (R7, Female, 25)	Peer-driven storytelling enhances product curiosity	AIDA – Interest
Desire Creation	“Seeing how happy they are using the product made me want it too.” (R15, Female, 31)	Emotional resonance and positive emotion in UGC create aspirational desire	AIDA – Desire
	“I imagined myself using it like them, and it felt good.” (R1, Female, 24)	Empathy and projected satisfaction reinforce the psychological desire to purchase	AIDA – Desire

Action Triggered by UGC	<i>"After watching three reviews, I bought it."</i> (R4, Male, 22) <i>"I saw everyone giving good ratings, so I checked out."</i> (R13, Female, 27)	Accumulated UGC acts as a decision-making catalyst	AIDA – Action
Platform Trust and Transparency	<i>"I trust Shopee because I can read real comments, good or bad."</i> (R11, Female, 26) <i>"Compared to others, Shopee feels more open and honest."</i> (R2, Male, 27)	UGC builds brand trust and transparency	TPB + Consumer Trust
Comparison with Other Platforms	<i>"TikTok feels fast and impulsive, Shopee is better for detailed reviews."</i> (R16, Male, 34) <i>"Other apps are more curated, Shopee is more real."</i> (R18, Male, 30)	Authenticity of UGC boosts confidence in platform integrity Shopee's UGC provides depth, making it more suitable for careful buyers Shopee's UGC is perceived as more genuine, giving it competitive value	TPB + Platform Loyalty Contextual – Platform Strategy Contextual – Cross-platform UX

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that Shopee's digital marketing strategies particularly those utilizing User-Generated Content (UGC) play a pivotal role in shaping consumer behavior dynamics related to purchase decision-making. UGC is not merely a promotional tool; rather, it serves as an interactive medium through which consumers access information grounded in the lived experiences of other users. The credibility derived from these authentic narratives fosters the formation of positive attitudes toward products, as consumers are able to relate their own expectations to similar scenarios shared in user-generated content. This aligns with the findings of Pavitra Sahai et al. (2024), who emphasize that consumer trust is significantly enhanced when individuals are exposed to content that reflects real-life user experiences ultimately reinforcing their purchase intention.

UGC also operates within the domain of subjective norms, influencing how consumers interpret socially accepted and expected behaviors in digital communities. When numerous users post positive reviews, engage in trends such as #ShopeeHaul, or participate in Shopee Live sessions, it not only generates interest but also cultivates implicit social pressure to conform to shared consumption patterns. In accordance with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Rahmawati and Pertiwi (2022) highlight that frequent exposure to UGC generates a perceived sense of social endorsement for purchasing decisions, thereby reinforcing the influence of subjective norms.

Moreover, UGC contributes to enhancing perceived behavioral control by offering transparent, detailed, and practical information. Through formats such as unboxing videos, tutorials, and peer reviews, consumers are able to develop clear expectations about product quality, functionality, and potential risks prior to making a purchase. This clarity instills greater confidence, particularly among first-time buyers or those unfamiliar with specific product categories. Fitriani and Winda (2023) assert that when information is sourced directly from actual users, ambiguity is reduced and consumers feel more empowered in evaluating their options.

From the perspective of the AIDA framework (Attention–Interest–Desire–Action), UGC has also proven effective in guiding consumers through each stage of the purchase process. Authentic and unscripted content such as casual reviews and live Shopee streams naturally captures initial attention. Interest is then sparked as users explore real-life product applications narrated by relatable peers. This interest often transforms into desire, fueled by emotional expressions of satisfaction and enthusiasm demonstrated by fellow users. Ultimately, social validation through accumulated positive reviews and testimonials serves as the final motivating factor for action. As noted by Jiang et al. (2023), UGC effectively moves consumers from awareness to conversion by combining authenticity, emotional resonance, and credible social proof.

Furthermore, this study underscores the importance of originality, visual appeal, interactivity, and personalization within UGC strategies. Ramdayani (2024) emphasizes that the effectiveness of user-generated content can be significantly amplified when tailored to audience preferences for example, through features such as comments, likes, or personalized recommendations based on purchase history.

In conclusion, the interplay between UGC, TPB, and AIDA models reveals that consumer-participatory marketing strategies not only inform and persuade, but also activate and accelerate purchase decision-making through simultaneous emotional, social, and cognitive mechanisms. This interaction demonstrates that UGC does not merely influence but actively facilitates the comprehensive process of intention formation and purchase behavior within the digital commerce ecosystem.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study concludes that User-Generated Content (UGC) serves as a strategically effective component of Shopee’s digital marketing, influencing consumer purchase decisions through emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions. UGC shapes consumer attitudes by

presenting authentic and relatable product experiences, reinforces subjective norms by embedding social validation through peer behavior, and enhances perceived behavioral control by reducing uncertainty via transparent, user-led information thus affirming the relevance of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) in the e-commerce context. Simultaneously, UGC plays a central role in guiding consumers through each phase of the AIDA model: attracting attention with unscripted, organic content; generating interest through experiential narratives; stimulating desire by evoking emotional resonance; and triggering action via credible social proof. The findings further highlight that UGC is not only persuasive due to its authenticity, but also because of its interactive and personalized nature. However, the effectiveness of UGC depends on several strategic factors, including its originality, visual appeal, interactivity, and alignment with target consumer behavior. In a highly competitive digital market, Shopee's success in leveraging UGC demonstrates that consumer trust, engagement, and loyalty are more likely to be built through community-driven content than traditional brand-centric promotion. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on participatory digital marketing by showing how platforms can use UGC not just to influence consumer intention but to empower them in making confident, informed purchasing decisions.

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