

## The power of live engagement : How brand experiences and e-WOM drive Somethinc's Tiktok sales



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### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the influence of brand experience and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) on purchase intention in the context of TikTok live streaming conducted by Somethinc. As live-streaming commerce continues to transform consumer engagement in the digital beauty industry, understanding the factors that drive purchase intention has become increasingly important for brand competitiveness and customer acquisition. Employing a quantitative approach, the study analysed the relationships among variables using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS. Brand experience was evaluated through sensory, emotional, behavioural, and intellectual dimensions, while eWOM was assessed based on information usefulness, attitudes toward information, and information credibility. Purchase intention was measured through indicators related to purchase certainty and behavioural tendencies toward buying. The findings reveal that both brand experience and eWOM exert positive and significant influences on purchase intention. An engaging and informative brand experience enhances consumer perceptions and emotional connections with the brand, while credible and useful eWOM strengthens trust and confidence in purchasing decisions. These results suggest that interactive live-streaming activities, supported by authentic consumer-generated information, play a critical role in stimulating purchase intention among digital consumers. The study contributes to the growing literature on social commerce, digital marketing, and consumer behaviour by providing empirical evidence from the rapidly expanding live-streaming ecosystem within Indonesia's beauty industry.*

**Keywords:** Brand Experience; eWOM; Purchase Intention; TikTok; Live Streaming; Somethinc



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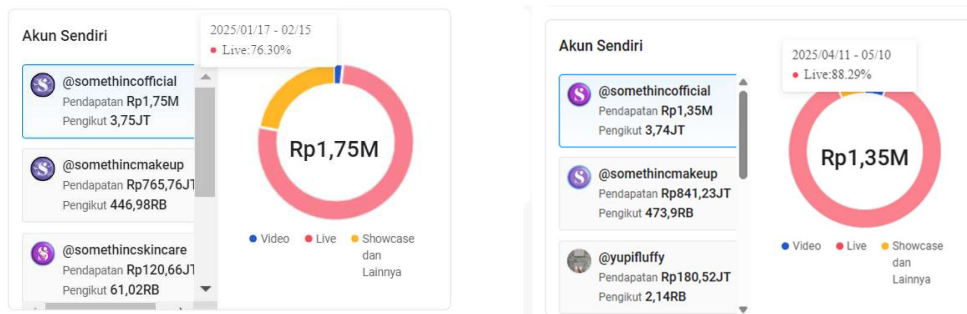
## INTRODUCTION

The advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed consumer behaviour in Indonesia, especially in how people interact with social media and make online purchases (Goodstats, 2023). With over 191 million internet users and 167 million active social media users, Indonesians spend an average of 7 hours and 38 minutes per day online (Goodstats, 2023; CNBC, 2024). Among various platforms, TikTok has emerged as the most-used application in Indonesia, with 127.5 million users as of April 2024 (Data Indonesia, 2024), surpassing other platforms in both user engagement and average time spent. The addition of TikTok Shop and live streaming features has transformed TikTok from a mere entertainment platform into a competitive e-commerce channel.

TikTok Shop's live streaming allows businesses to showcase products in real time, fostering interaction between hosts and viewers. While Shopee remains the leading platform in live shopping with 83.4% usage, TikTok follows at 42.2%, indicating its growing presence in the social commerce landscape (CNBC, 2023). Through a strategy known as "shoppertainment," TikTok integrates entertainment with transaction, creating immersive experiences that allow users to shop without leaving the app.

One notable local brand utilizing TikTok live streaming is Somethinc, a beauty company founded in 2019. Despite being relatively new, Somethinc has become one of the top five beauty brands in terms of live streaming sales, competing alongside more established local and international names. However, despite increasing its live session frequency, the brand has experienced a decline in revenue on TikTok. This phenomenon indicates a potential disconnect between marketing efforts and actual consumer purchase behaviour (Kalodata, 2025).

To further illustrate this phenomenon, Figure 1 presents a comparison of Somethinc's TikTok Shop performance between January–February 2025 and April–May 2025. The figure shows that although the contribution of live streaming to total sales increased significantly from 76.3% to 88.3%, the brand's overall revenue declined from IDR 1.75 billion to IDR 1.35 billion (Kalodata, 2025). This finding suggests that a greater reliance on live-streaming activities does not necessarily lead to higher purchase intention.



Source : kalodata.com, 2025

**Figure 1**  
**Somethinc Revenue**

In the live streaming environment, interactive communication, product demonstrations, and testimonials are not only used to inform but also to create emotional and social engagement with the audience. These elements can shape consumers' brand

experience, which involves sensory, emotional, cognitive, and behavioural responses (Rather et al., 2024). Furthermore, the presence of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) such as live product reviews, real-time feedback, and host recommendations plays a vital role in building trust and encouraging purchase decisions (Cheng et al., 2022 ; Kumar et al., 2024).

While previous studies have explored brand experience and eWOM in various online shopping contexts, few have examined their combined influence in live streaming-based commerce, particularly on TikTok. Moreover, existing research tends to focus on leading platforms such as Shopee, leaving TikTok as an emerging but under-researched area. Given Somethinc's significant use of TikTok live streaming and the observable gap between engagement and sales, further investigation is warranted.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of brand experience and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) on purchase intention within TikTok live streaming sessions hosted by Somethinc. The results are expected to contribute to the growing body of literature on digital marketing and provide practical insights for brands leveraging social commerce to improve consumer engagement and conversion.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW, RESEARCH FRAMEWORK, AND HYPOTHESES**

Brand experience refers to the consumer's internal response to direct or indirect brand interactions. It involves sensory, emotional, behavioral, and intellectual dimensions that are shaped during the engagement with a brand (Akin & Gürbüz, 2024; Rather et al., 2024). In a digital environment such as TikTok live streaming, these experiences are manifested through visuals, live product demonstrations, and interactive engagement between the host and audience. Previous research has shown that a strong brand experience enhances brand attachment and positively affects purchase intention (Murshed et al., 2023 ; Park et al., 2023).

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) is defined as digital communication between consumers regarding products or services. It includes reviews, recommendations, and evaluations shared through digital platforms (Hua et al., 2024; Ngo et al., 2024). The effectiveness of eWOM is often measured through information usefulness, attitude toward the information, and credibility of the message source. High credibility and positive attitudes toward the information shared in live streaming can significantly increase consumer trust and buying tendency (Ngo et al., 2024).

Purchase intention, on the other hand, is a consumer's expressed willingness or likelihood to purchase a product based on their assessment of available information. In the context of digital platforms, purchase intention is shaped by perceived usefulness, emotional engagement, and consumer trust, particularly when interacting with content such as live streaming (Chandraa et al., 2024 ; X. Li et al., 2024).

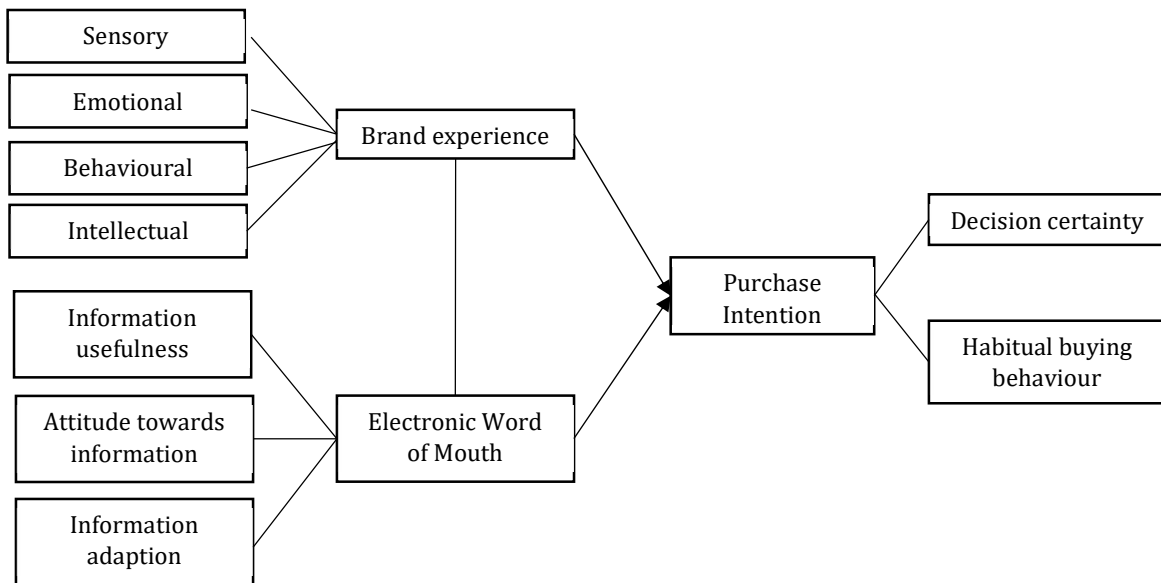
Brand experience can influence purchase intention both directly and indirectly through electronic word of mouth (eWOM). For example, a positive experience with a brand may encourage consumers to share favorable reviews through eWOM. This information is then received by potential consumers, which in turn strengthens their intention to purchase the product or brand. This is supported by the findings of (Chanaya & Sahetapy, 2020) which show that brand experience and eWOM have positive effect on purchase intention. Moreover, positive eWOM can also enhance trust in the brand experience, leading to a stronger purchase intention.

## Research Framework

This study examines the relationship between brand experience, electronic word of mouth (eWOM), and purchase intention. Brand experience comprising sensory, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral dimensions reflects consumer interactions with a brand that can build emotional attachment and enhance brand trust. Prior studies have shown that positive brand experiences significantly influence purchase intention by shaping consumer perceptions (Murshed et al., 2023 ; Akın & Gürbüz, 2024).

Similarly, eWOM through the dimensions of information credibility, usefulness, and consumer attitudes plays a key role in building trust by providing access to others' reviews and recommendations, which in turn influence buying intentions. Past research confirms that credible and positive eWOM improves consumer perception of brands and products, thus boosting purchase intention (Hua et al., 2024; Belhadi et al., 2023).

Moreover, the link between brand experience and eWOM is also crucial. A meaningful brand experience can encourage consumers to share their experiences online, thereby amplifying the effects of eWOM. In this context, eWOM acts as a mediator that strengthens the impact of brand experience on purchase intention (Yin et al., 2022). Therefore, this study explores the interaction between brand experience and eWOM in depth, using relevant dimensions from each variable to provide a comprehensive analysis. Based on the literature review and the relationships identified among the variables, a conceptual framework was developed to illustrate the proposed relationships examined in this study.



Source : Developed by the Author, 2025

**Figure 2**  
**Research Framework**

## Hypotheses

In line with the conceptual framework and literature review, it is evident that the brand experience and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) conveyed through Somethinc's live streaming sessions on the TikTok platform may significantly affect consumers' intention to purchase. Therefore, this study aims to empirically examine the influence of brand

experience and eWOM on purchase intention in the context of TikTok live streaming of the Somethinc brand. The hypotheses proposed are as follows:

*H1: Brand experience has a positive effect on purchase intention during TikTok live streaming of the Somethinc Brand.*

*H2: eWOM has a positive effect on purchase intention during TikTok live streaming of the Somethinc Brand.*

*H3: Brand experience and eWOM together have a positive and significant effect on purchase intention during TikTok live streaming of the Somethinc brand.*

## **METHOD**

This study employed a quantitative approach with a survey method to gather primary data. The respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique (Nur., et al 2023), targeting individuals who have watched TikTok live streaming sessions from @somethincofficial. A total of 270 respondents participated in the survey, which was distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire measured three main variables: brand experience (12 indicators), electronic word of mouth or eWOM (9 indicators), and purchase intention (6 indicators), all using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

A verificative analysis was conducted using SmartPLS (Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modeling) (Hamid, 2019). SmartPLS was selected for its ability to analyze complex relationships between latent variables and their indicators, as well as its flexibility in handling non-normally distributed data or relatively small sample sizes. It does not require strict assumptions of multivariate normality, making it suitable for this type of marketing research (Hamid, 2019).

To ensure the measurement model's accuracy, several validity and reliability tests were conducted. Convergent validity was assessed through loading factors and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Indicators with loading values above 0.70 and AVE values above 0.50 were considered acceptable (Ghozali & Latan, 2015; Hamid, 2019). Discriminant validity was examined through cross-loading analysis, ensuring that each indicator loads higher on its intended construct than on other constructs (Ghozali & Latan, 2015; Hamid, 2019). Lastly, reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, both of which should exceed the threshold of 0.70 to confirm internal consistency (Ghozali & Latan, 2015; Hamid, 2019). These procedures ensured that the measurement model was both valid and reliable before further structural analysis was conducted.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This study collected data from 281 respondents, with 270 complete responses analyzed to provide an overview of respondent characteristics, including gender, age, and place of residence. The majority of respondents were female (79%), aligning with Somethinc's primary target market in the skincare and cosmetics segment. Most respondents were aged 18–25 (77%), indicating a strong presence of Gen Z and early millennials who are highly engaged with digital platforms like TikTok and responsive to brand experience and eWOM. In terms of location, most respondents resided in urban areas on the island of Java, with 46% from Bandung, followed by Jakarta (19%) and Bekasi (11%). This demographic reflects a digitally connected audience that is relevant for assessing the influence of brand experience and electronic word of mouth on purchase intention through TikTok live streaming.

The descriptive analysis revealed that intellectual was the most prominent brand experience dimension, reflecting the importance of educational content in Somethinc's live streaming sessions. Consumers highly appreciated the clarity of information and problem-solving explanations provided during the sessions.

Similarly, in the eWOM dimension, information credibility received the highest average score, indicating that viewers trusted the reviews and statements made by the host during the stream. For purchase intention, decision certainty was the strongest aspect, showing that respondents were confident about buying products after watching the live.

### Outer Model

The outer model analysis in this study includes tests of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability to ensure that the instruments used accurately and consistently measure the variables (Hair et al., 2014). Convergent validity is demonstrated by all loading factor values exceeding 0.70 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.50, indicating that each indicator is valid in representing its respective construct (Ghozali & Latan, 2015; Hamid, 2019).

In the discriminant validity test, the Brand Experience variable measured through the dimensions of sensory, emotional, behavioural, and intellectual along with Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), measured through information usefulness, attitude towards information, and information credibility, as well as Purchase Intention, measured through product certainty and purchasing habits, all show that each indicator has the highest correlation with its intended construct. This indicates that there is no issue of discrimination between constructs. In addition, the reliability test results showed that the values of composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha for all constructs exceeded the threshold of 0.70. This can be seen in Table 1, which shows that all variables exceed the threshold and that all variables in this study are reliable and suitable for further analysis

**Table 1**  
**Outer Model**

Variable	AVE	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability
1 Brand Experience ( $X_1$ )	0.533	0.920	0.932
Sensory	0.657	0.738	0.852
Emotional	0.693	0.778	0.871
Behavioural	0.670	0.754	0.859
Intellectual	0.668	0.751	0.858
2 eWOM ( $X_2$ )	0.586	0.911	0.927
Information Usefulness	0.692	0.777	0.871
Attitude Towards Information	0.716	0.802	0.883
Information Credibility	0.703	0.789	0.876
3 Purchase Intention (Y)	0.604	0.868	0.901
decision certainty	0.677	0.761	0.863
habitual buying behaviour	0.712	0.797	0.881

Source: Data Analyzed, 2025

### Inner Model

The structural model evaluation in this study aims to examine the relationship between brand experience (BE), electronic word of mouth (eWOM), and purchase intention (PI). The R-square value for purchase intention is 0.791, indicating that 79.1% of the variance in purchase intention can be explained by BE and eWOM, while the remaining 20.9% is influenced by other factors outside the model. According to Hair et al., (2014) this value falls under the "substantial" category, suggesting a strong predictive capability of the model.

Further analysis through the F-square test shows that brand experience has a moderate effect ( $f^2 = 0.167$ ) on purchase intention, while eWOM demonstrates a stronger moderate effect ( $f^2 = 0.305$ ). This indicates that eWOM contributes more significantly to shaping consumer purchase intention than brand experience. The stronger impact of eWOM may be attributed to its components information usefulness, attitude toward information, and information credibility which make the information received during TikTok live streaming sessions not only relevant and comprehensive but also trustworthy.

When consumers perceive information as helpful, adequate, and credible, they are more likely to develop confidence in their purchase decisions. As shown in Table 2, eWOM demonstrates a stronger contribution to purchase intention compared to brand experience, as reflected by its higher F-square value. These findings highlight the importance of enhancing both brand experience and eWOM quality particularly within live streaming contexts as key strategies for increasing consumer purchase intention.

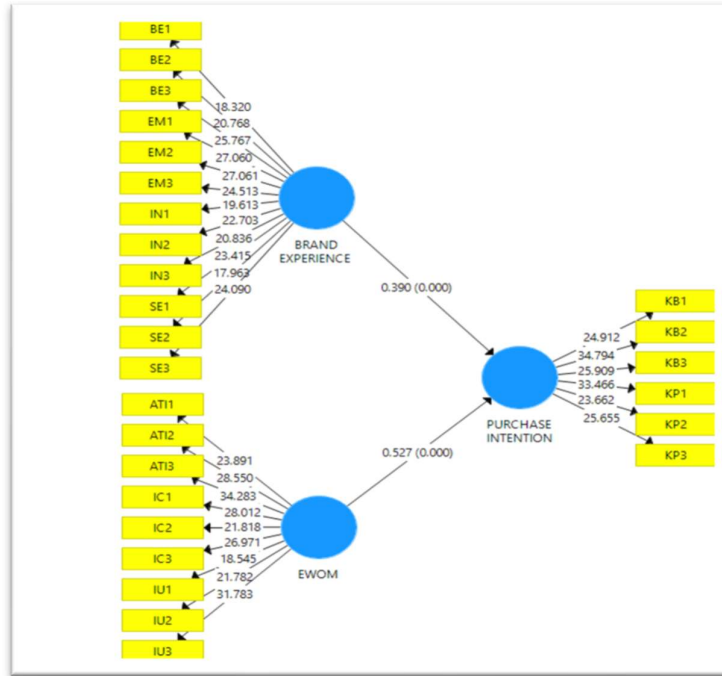
**Table 2**  
**Inner Model**

Variable	R-Square	F-Square
Brand Experience		0.167
Electronic Word of Mouth		0.305
Purchase Intention	0.791	

Source: Data Analyzed, 2025

### Hypothesis Testing

Based on data obtained from 270 samples, the following are the results of the bootstrapping analysis used to test the research hypotheses.



Source : SmartPLS 4 Output, 2025

**Figure 3**  
**Boostrapping Analysis**

Hypothesis testing is conducted to examine the presence of direct or indirect effects among the research variables (Malhotra et al., 2017). The testing is carried out using path coefficients and evaluated through p-values, with a significance threshold set at below 0.05 or 5%. A hypothesis is considered accepted if the p-value  $\leq 0.05$ , whereas if the p-value in the path coefficients is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected (Ghozali & Latan, 2015; Hamid, 2019). The following are the results obtained from the p-value assessment.

**Table 3**  
**Hypothesis Testing Results**

Hypothesis	Coefficient	T-Statistics	P-Values	R-Square	Conclusion
H1 : Brand experience (BE) has a positive effect on purchase intention.	0.390	5.862	0.000		Accepted
H2 : Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has a positive effect on purchase intention.	0.527	7.724	0.000		Accepted
H3 : Brand experience and eWOM has a positive effect on purchase intention				0.791	Accepted

Source: Data Analyzed, 2025

Based on the hypothesis testing results, all proposed hypotheses in this study are supported. The p-values for each hypothesis are below the significance threshold of 0.05, and the t-statistics exceed the critical value of 1.96, indicating statistically significant relationships. Specifically, brand experience (H1) and electronic word of mouth (H2)

both have a positive and significant effect on purchase intention. Furthermore, the combined influence of brand experience and eWOM (H3) accounts for 79.1% of the variance in purchase intention, as indicated by the high R-square value of 0.791. These results confirm that both brand experience and eWOM play substantial roles in shaping consumer purchase intention in the context of TikTok live streaming.

### **Hypothesis 1**

Based on the bootstrapping test results, Brand Experience has a positive and significant effect on Purchase Intention, with a p-value of 0.000 ( $<0.05$ ), T-statistic of 5.862 ( $>1.96$ ), and a path coefficient of 0.390. The F-square value of 0.167 indicates a moderate effect. This suggests that brand experience during TikTok live streaming can shape consumers' purchase intention, although the fast-paced and less interactive nature of the content makes its influence less optimal in consistently driving purchasing decisions. This findings is consistent with (Akin & Gürbüz, 2024), who found that brand experiences significantly influence purchase intention by shaping consumer perceptions.

### **Hypothesis 2**

The results indicate that electronic word of mouth (eWOM) has a positive and significant influence on purchase intention, with a p-value  $< 0.05$ , and T-statistic  $> 1.96$ , and an F-square value of 0.305, indicating a moderate to strong contribution. The path coefficient of 0.527 also shows that eWOM is a more dominant factor compared to brand experience. These findings affirm that useful, credible, and clearly delivered information during TikTok live streaming significantly enhances consumer confidence and effectively drives purchase intention. This findings support study by (Ngo et al., 2024), which revealed that information usefulness, information credibility, and attitude toward information play important roles in shaping consumer trust and purchase intention. Therefore, useful and credible information delivered through TikTok live streaming can significantly enhance consumer confidence and encourage purchasing decisions.

### **Hypothesis 3**

The results of the study indicate that brand experience and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) simultaneously have a positive and significant influence on purchase intention, with an R-square value of 0.791, meaning that 79.1% of the variation in purchase intention can be explained by these two variables.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

This study concludes that both brand experience and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) significantly and positively influence purchase intention in the context of TikTok live streaming by the Somethinc brand. The intellectual and emotional dimensions of brand experience, as well as the credibility of information conveyed during the streams, are especially influential. These findings emphasize the importance of providing educational, engaging, and trustworthy content to strengthen consumer confidence and drive purchasing decisions.

From a practical standpoint, it is recommended that brands utilizing live streaming optimize their content strategy to deliver high-quality information, maintain consistent brand aesthetics, and foster interactive communication with viewers. Furthermore, ensuring the authenticity and credibility of information shared by hosts or influencers is crucial for generating effective eWOM. Future research could explore

additional variables such as trust, entertainment value, or influencer credibility to further understand consumer behavior in social commerce platforms.

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