The Influence of Product Quality on Purchase Decision Through Brand Image: A Case Study On 3second Fashion

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: A deep understanding of the factors influencing purchasing helps companies become more responsive, effective, and successful in marketing their products or services. This study aims to assess the impact of product quality on purchasing decisions involving the brand image factor in 3-second Fashion Surabaya.

Design/methodology/approach: The research method employed a quantitative approach with the participation of 100 respondents. Structural equation model analysis was used as the analytical technique.

Findings: The study results indicate that product quality influences the purchasing decisions for 3-second Fashion products. In other words, the better the product quality, the higher the consumer's decision to make a purchase. The research findings also show that brand image has an impact on purchasing decisions for 3-second Fashion products. In other words, the better the brand image, the higher the consumer's decision to make a purchase. This study also reveals that brand image serves as an intervening variable that mediates the relationship between product quality and purchasing decisions for 3-second Fashion Surabaya products.

Research limitations/implications: This research focuses on the influence of product quality and brand image on purchasing decisions without considering other variables that may play a role in the purchasing process.

Practical implications: Understanding the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions through the brand image in 3second Fashion Surabaya has several practical implications that can aid decision-making at the managerial and marketing levels. Practitioners and business managers can take specific steps to enhance the performance and competitiveness of the company.

Originality/value: This research provides a new and original contribution, particularly regarding the relationship between product quality, brand image, and purchase decisions in the field of fashion retail.

Paper type: Research paper

Keywords: brand image, product quality, purchase decision

I. INTRODUCTION

Understanding the factors that influence purchase decisions is key for businesses to create products and services that meet the needs of their target market and drive growth (Murtiawati & Fataron, 2019). Knowledge of the consumer decision-making process enables companies to design more focused and efficient marketing strategies (Šostar & Ristanović, 2023). By understanding the factors that influence purchase decisions, companies can increase their chances of winning over consumers and achieving their business goals. Several elements play a role in shaping purchase decisions, which encompass factors such as product quality, brand image, and promotional efforts (Brata et al., 2017; Y. Rahmawati & Nilowardono, 2018).

The initial determinant is product quality, defined as the assurance that the products provided meet consumers' expectations and offer anticipated advantages (Razak & Nirwanto, 2016). Consequently, companies strive to uphold the quality of their products, comparing them with those of rival companies. If a product effectively fulfills its functions, it is deemed to possess good quality. In fact, in some studies, some findings show that product quality does not have a significant effect on purchasing decisions. This is contained in the research (Mohd et al., 2013; Shaharudin et al., 2013; Yani & Ngora, 2022) With the inconsistency of the results of this study, further research on the influence of quality on purchasing decisions needs to be done.

One factor that is thought to mediate the influence of product quality on this purchase decision is brand image (Arifin et al., 2022; Nuraini & Maftukhah, 2015) Brand image, or the perception associated with a company's name, term, symbol, sign, and design, serves to differentiate its products from competitors (Aulia & Briliana, 2017). This image can be cultivated using various media owned by the company and is enduring, delivering a message through visual media, symbols, atmosphere, and events. The brand's image is connected to customer attitudes, manifested in their beliefs and preferences toward a specific brand (Monzoncillo, 2023).

The study was carried out at Fashion 3Second Surabaya, a popular clothing brand widely embraced by the youth. 3Second is recognized for offering products with a trendy and stylish concept, characterized by comfortable materials and subtle colours. The 3Second product line emphasizes diverse fonts, incorporating simple yet unique designs, making it particularly appealing to consumers. Therefore, the author proposes a study that further studies the effect of product quality on purchasing decisions mediated by brand image, which in this case takes a case study in the fashion industry with the brand 3 Second in Surabaya.

A. Literatur Review
1. Product Quality

Product quality as the totality of the form and characteristics of goods or services that show their ability to satisfy consumer needs and desires (Monzoncillo, 2023). Consumer selection is determined by the quality of the products offered. The products offered must be appropriate and well-tested regarding their quality. This is because consumers will prefer and choose products that have better quality when compared to similar products that can only meet their needs and desires (Zhao et al., 2021). Product quality is the ability or characteristic possessed by a product, either goods or services, to meet and satisfy consumer needs (Purwanto & Hapsari, 2021). In addition, product quality is also a public perception where the products offered by a company have advantages over competitors' products. So that the company will try to maintain the quality of the products it offers and compare with the products offered by competing companies (Rita et al., 2019).

2. Brand Image

Brand image or brand image is the name, term, symbol, sign, and design used by the company to compete with competing products (Tsabitah & Anggraeni, 2021). Brand image also has the meaning of trust, where the existence of brand image shows that consumers assume that certain brands physically have differences from competing brands (Oetama, 2022). According to Yudhanto (2018), stating that brand image is a set of assumptions that exist in the minds of customers or consumers towards a brand arising from information and experience. The image of a brand relates to customer attitudes in the form of beliefs and preferences towards a particular brand.

3. Purchase Decision

Purchase Decision is a selection between two or more options that can be purchased by consumers, where consumers will determine what to buy based on the significance value of the purchase (Limpo et al., 2018). Purchasing decisions are problem-solving actions carried out by individuals in choosing alternative behaviour from two or more options and are considered the most appropriate or appropriate actions through the decision-making stages (Roy & Datta, 2022). In addition, according to Roy & Datta (2022), purchasing decisions are problem-solving processes involved in trying to meet consumer wants or needs.

4. Conceptual Framework

Based on the background of the problem, problem formulation, theories described above, and previous research that has been described, the framework of thinking in this study is as follows:
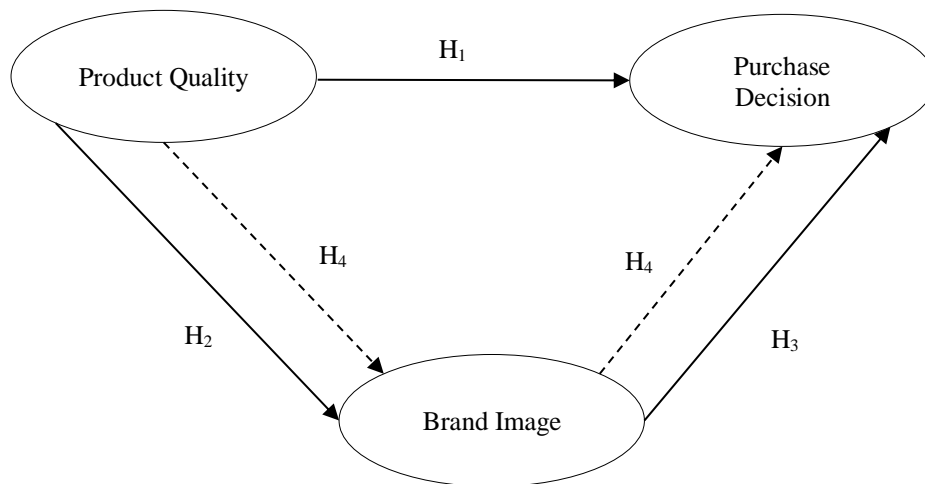
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Figure 1 Conceptual framework

5. Hypothesis

The research hypotheses proposed in this study are as follows:

H1: Product quality has a significant effect on Purchasing Decisions

H2: Product Quality has a significant effect on Brand Image

H3: Brand Image has a Significant Influence on Purchasing Decisions

H4: Product Quality has a significant effect on Purchasing Decisions with Brand Image as a mediating variable

II. METHODS

The research method in this study is quantitative research. Quantitative research is a systematic scientific research method for studying social phenomena using numerical data. This data is collected through various instruments such as surveys, questionnaires, tests, and experiments. The purpose of quantitative research among others is to test hypotheses where researchers formulate hypotheses about relationships between variables and then test them with the collected data. In addition, quantitative research is used to explain the relationship between variables: Researchers want to understand how the variables studied are related to each other (Sheard, 2018).

The object in this study is fashion 3Second consumers at the Royal Plaza Surabaya shopping center. The population used is consumers, namely those who have purchased fashion brand products 3 Second Royal Plasa Surabaya. The research sample is the portion of the population selected to represent the entire population in the study. A good sample must be representative, that is, it has the same characteristics as the population studied (Martínez-Mesa et al., 2016). The number of this population is not known with certainty, therefore the determination of the number of samples in this study uses the Lemeshow formula approach (Wan Ahmad et al., 2013).

The sampling technique used in this study was incidental sampling. According to Setia (2016), incidental sampling is a sampling method that is carried out by chance. Therefore, in this study, samples were taken from consumers who coincidentally made purchases at Fashion 3Second Royal Plaza Surabaya. The study utilized a quantitative methodology, involving the engagement of 100 participants. The analysis was conducted using the structural equation model as the chosen analytical method (Urbach & Ahlemann, 2010).

Product quality in this study is the ability of a product to perform its functions which include durability, reliability (Khoironi et al., 2018). Brand image is a consumer's perception or impression of a particular brand (R. Rahmawati et al., 2023). Brand Image in this study has three indicators, namely corporate image, user image and product image. The purchase decision in this study is the stage in the decision-making process where consumers actually buy. Purchasing decision is a decision-making process carried out by individuals or groups to choose a product or service to be purchased (Ramli et al., 2021). Purchasing decision variables in this study have four indicators consisting of need recognition, information search, alterative evaluation and purchase decision.

The analysis technique used for the study titled "The Influence of Product Quality on Purchase Decision Through Brand Image: A Case Study On 3second Fashion" involves the application of Smart PLS (Partial Least Squares) modelling.

Smart PLS is a structural equation modelling (SEM) technique that is particularly suitable for exploratory research and prediction-oriented studies. It allows researchers to analyse complex relationships among latent variables and observed variables, making it well-suited for understanding the causal relationships proposed in this study. To analyse the influence of product quality on purchase decisions through brand image, the following steps are typically followed using Smart PLS (Garson, 2018):

1. Model Specification
   Define the research model by specifying the relationships between latent variables (product quality, brand image, purchase decision) based on the proposed hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H4).
2. Measurement Model Assessment:
   a. Assess the measurement model to ensure the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments (indicators) used to represent each latent variable.
   b. This involves evaluating indicator loadings, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability.
3. Structural Model Assessment:
   a. Evaluate the structural model to examine the relationships between latent variables.
   b. Test the significance and strength of the hypothesized paths (direct effects) between product quality and purchase decision, product quality and brand image, brand image and purchase decision, as well as the indirect effect of product quality on purchase decision through brand image (mediating effect).
4. Model Interpretation and Conclusion:
   a. Interpret the results of the analysis, including the significance of the relationships between variables and the strength of the effects.
   b. Draw conclusions based on the findings, addressing the research hypotheses and providing insights into the relationships among product quality, brand image, and purchase decision.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Validity and Reliability of Research Variable

There are several ways to check if the information gathered is reliable. One important factor is looking at the outer loading values. If the value is higher than 0.7, it means the information is trustworthy. Another thing to consider is the Composite Reliability rating, which should be above 0.6 to be considered reliable. After processing the data using SmartPLS 3, we can draw the following conclusions:

Table 1. Validity and Reliability of Research Variables

Indicator Variable		Loading Factor	Validity	CR	Reliable
Product Quality	X1.1	0,988	Valid	0,881	Reliable
	X2.2	0,985	Valid		
Brand Image	X2.1	0,824	Valid	0,986	Reliable
	X2.2	0,818	Valid		
	X2.3	0,888	Valid		
Purchase Decision	Y1	0,63	Valid	0,855	Reliable
	Y2	0,803	Valid		
	Y3	0,861	Valid		

Y4	0,782	Valid

The provided table offers insights into the validity and reliability of various research variables, as determined through the SmartPLS 3 analysis. Validity, which pertains to the accuracy and appropriateness of measurements, is assessed through loading factors, while reliability, indicating the consistency and stability of measurements, is evaluated via Composite Reliability (CR) ratings.

Starting with the assessment of Product Quality, both indicators X1.1 and X2.2 exhibit remarkably high loading factors of 0.988 and 0.985 respectively, suggesting a robust relationship with the construct of product quality. This implies that the information gathered regarding product quality is likely to be trustworthy. Additionally, the Composite Reliability (CR) for X1.1 is reported as 0.881, surpassing the threshold of 0.6, thus indicating reliability. However, CR for X2.2 is not provided, which limits a comprehensive evaluation of its reliability.

Moving on to Brand Image, all three indicators (X2.1, X2.2, X2.3) demonstrate substantial loading factors, with values ranging from 0.818 to 0.888. These high loading factors suggest a strong relationship between the indicators and the construct of brand image, reinforcing the validity of the gathered information. Furthermore, the Composite Reliability (CR) values for all brand image indicators exceed the threshold of 0.6, indicating a high level of reliability in measuring brand image.

Concerning Purchase Decision, the indicators Y1, Y2, Y3, and Y4 exhibit loading factors ranging from 0.63 to 0.861, indicating moderate to strong relationships with the construct of purchase decision. While these loading factors suggest acceptable validity, the absence of Composite Reliability (CR) values for Y2, Y3, and Y4 limits the comprehensive assessment of reliability within this construct. However, the reported CR value for Y1, which is 0.855, meets the reliability threshold.

In conclusion, the analysis of the validity and reliability of research variables reveals generally strong findings. The measurements for product quality, brand image, and purchase decision demonstrate validity based on their loading factors, with indications of reliability for certain indicators based on the provided Composite Reliability (CR) values.

B. Hypothesis Testing

The outcomes of each hypothesis test are presented in the table. SmartPLS 3 was used to conduct the experiments, running an analytical test path to examine how an exogenous variable influences an endogenous variable. To assess significance in this test, a significance threshold of 0.05 is applied. Further details can be found in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Influence	Coefficient Original	Test t	P Value	Information
H1	Product Quality → Purchase Decision	0,767	13,830	0,000	Significant
H2	Perceived Quality → Brand Image	0,363	3,788	0,000	Significant
H3	Brand Image → Purchase Decision	0,168	2,975	0,003	Significant
H4	Product Quality → Brand Image → Purchase Decision	0,278	3,840	0,000	Significant

The table presents the outcomes of hypothesis testing conducted using SmartPLS 3 to analyze the influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables. Each hypothesis is tested for significance using a significance threshold of 0.05. Starting with Hypothesis 1 (H1), which examines the influence of Product Quality on Purchase Decision, the coefficient value is reported as 0.767. The test statistic (Test t) is calculated as 13.830 with a corresponding p-value of 0.000. This indicates that the relationship between Product Quality

and Purchase Decision is statistically significant, as the p-value is less than the significance threshold of 0.05. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported.

In real-world scenarios, this suggests that when consumers perceive a product to be of high quality, they are more likely to make a purchase decision in favor of that product. This aligns with common consumer behavior, where individuals tend to gravitate towards products that are perceived to be reliable, durable, and of superior quality. For businesses, understanding and maintaining high product quality standards can thus directly impact consumer purchasing behavior, leading to increased sales and market competitiveness. Therefore, the robust statistical significance of Hypothesis 1 underscores the practical importance of prioritizing and enhancing product quality as a key driver of consumer purchasing decisions.

Moving on to Hypothesis 2 (H2), which investigates the influence of Perceived Quality on Brand Image, the coefficient value is reported as 0.363. The test statistic (Test t) is calculated as 3.788 with a p-value of 0.000, indicating statistical significance. This suggests that Perceived Quality has a significant impact on Brand Image, thereby supporting Hypothesis 2. In practical terms, this implies that consumers' perceptions of a product's quality directly influence their perception of the brand associated with that product. In real-world scenarios, when consumers perceive a product to be of high quality, they are more likely to develop positive associations with the brand, considering it trustworthy, reputable, and desirable. Conversely, poor perceived quality can tarnish the brand's image and erode consumer trust and loyalty. Therefore, businesses operating in competitive markets must prioritize maintaining and enhancing perceived product quality to bolster their brand image. The significant support for Hypothesis 2 underscores the crucial role of perceived quality in shaping consumer perceptions of brands and highlights the importance of strategic branding efforts aligned with product quality standards to maintain a positive brand image in the marketplace.

Next, Hypothesis 3 (H3) explores the influence of Brand Image on Purchase Decision, with a coefficient value of 0.168. The test statistic (Test t) is calculated as 2.975 with a p-value of 0.003. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the relationship between Brand Image and Purchase Decision is considered statistically significant, supporting Hypothesis 3. In practical terms, this suggests that the perception consumers have of a brand directly influences their purchasing decisions. In real-world scenarios, a strong and positive brand image can instill trust, loyalty, and positive associations among consumers, thereby influencing their decision to purchase products or services offered by that brand. Conversely, a negative or weak brand image may deter consumers from engaging with a brand's offerings, leading to decreased sales and market share. Therefore, businesses must invest in building and maintaining a favorable brand image through consistent messaging, customer experiences, and brand identity. The statistically significant support for Hypothesis 3 underscores the pivotal role of brand image in driving consumer purchase decisions and underscores the importance of strategic brand management in today's competitive marketplace.

Lastly, Hypothesis 4 (H4) examines the combined influence of Product Quality and Brand Image on Purchase Decision. The coefficient value is reported as 0.278, with a test statistic (Test t) of 3.840 and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that the combined influence of Product Quality and Brand Image on Purchase Decision is statistically significant, thereby supporting Hypothesis 4. In practical terms, this implies that both product quality and brand image play significant roles in influencing consumers' purchasing decisions when considered together. In real-world scenarios, consumers often evaluate both the quality of a product and the reputation of the brand before making a purchase. A positive perception of both factors can strengthen consumers' confidence in their decision to buy a product, leading to increased sales and brand loyalty. Conversely, a discrepancy between perceived product quality and brand image can lead to skepticism and hesitation among consumers, potentially resulting in lost sales opportunities for businesses. Therefore, it is essential for companies to consistently deliver high-quality products while also maintaining a positive brand image through effective branding strategies and marketing efforts. The strong statistical support for Hypothesis 4 underscores the intertwined relationship between product quality, brand image, and purchase decisions in influencing consumer behavior and highlights the importance of holistic approaches in driving business success in competitive markets.

The outcomes of hypothesis testing demonstrate robust support for all hypotheses, with each relationship between the exogenous and endogenous variables proving to be statistically significant. These findings offer valuable insights into the intricate interplay between the variables under investigation, contributing to a more profound understanding of the underlying dynamics within the research context.

In practical terms, these results hold significant implications for businesses and researchers alike. By confirming the statistical significance of the relationships between variables such as product quality, perceived quality, brand image, and purchase decisions, organizations can make informed strategic decisions to enhance their market positioning and competitiveness. For instance, understanding the influential role of product quality in driving purchase decisions underscores the importance of maintaining high-quality standards to meet consumer expectations and foster brand loyalty. Similarly, recognizing the impact of brand image on consumer

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behaviour highlights the need for businesses to invest in effective branding strategies to cultivate positive perceptions and differentiate themselves in the marketplace.

Moreover, these findings provide researchers with valuable insights into consumer behaviour and decision-making processes, paving the way for further exploration and refinement of theoretical frameworks in fields such as marketing, psychology, and consumer studies. By deepening our understanding of the relationships between key variables, researchers can develop more nuanced models and theories that accurately reflect the complexities of real-world dynamics.

In essence, the statistically significant relationships uncovered in this study offer practical guidance for businesses seeking to optimize their marketing strategies and enhance their competitive advantage in today's dynamic market landscape. Furthermore, they contribute to the advancement of knowledge in academic circles, driving ongoing research and innovation in the fields of consumer behaviour and strategic management.

Based on the findings of the SmartPLS analysis, it can be concluded that the product quality variable has a positive and statistically significant impact on purchase decisions. This is in line with research conducted by Arifin et al. (2022) who researched product quality influences on purchasing decisions in a study of 150 Zara Women consumer respondents shopping centers in Tunjungan Plaza, Galaxy Mall, and Pakuwon Mall in Surabaya, where it was found that product quality had a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. In addition, the results of this study prove that durability and reliability indicators have an important role in consumers' decisions to buy 3Second fashion products.

Following the conclusion of the hypothesis test in this study, it can be concluded that product quality has an impact on brand image. This is by research conducted by Diahtaradipa & Sri (2021), which researched 150 consumers of H&M fashion products in Denpasar, where it was found that product quality had a positive and significant effect on brand image.

The results of this study also show that brand image with its indicators of corporate image, user image, and product image proved to be influential on purchasing decisions. This also supports research conducted by Kusuma et al. (2022) who have researched the influence of brand image on consumer purchasing decisions research was conducted on 100 consumers of Uniqlo fashion products at a mallproduk fashion in Semarang, where the results showed the influence of brand image on purchasing decisions.

And in the next hypothesis regarding the hypothesis that product quality affects purchasing decisions through brand image in this study has a positive and significant influence, therefore this study provides alternative solutions to the existence of gap in several previous studies where product quality does not have a significant effect on purchase decisions. The mediating role of brand image on the influence of product quality on purchase decisions also supports research conducted by Akbari et al. (2024) who researched the role of brand image in mediating the influence of social media marketing and product quality on purchase decision Uniqlo in Indonesia. In addition, it also supports research conducted by Ketut (2018) in their research on the role of brand image mediating the effect of product quality on repurchase intention.

IV. CONCLUSION

These results indicate that all proposed hypotheses are by the influence of perceived quality on purchase decision through brand image for consumers 3 second fashion product n Surabaya proven to be accepted. So that it can be stated that (1) product quality has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision, (2) product quality has a positive and significant impact on brand image, (3) brand image has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision, (4) product quality has a positive and significant effect on purchase decision through brand image.

In this study, we thoroughly explored the relationship between product quality and purchasing decisions, taking into account the role of brand image as a mediating variable. The results showed that product quality has a significant impact on brand image perception, which in turn influences consumer purchasing decisions. Our findings confirm the important role of brand image as a significant intermediary between product quality and purchasing decisions. This confirms that brand image becomes a critical factor in shaping consumers' perception of products and, ultimately, influencing their purchasing decisions. Although this study provides significant insights, there are still opportunities for further research. In-depth research can be directed at the specific factors that shape a brand's image, as well as their impact on different types of purchasing decisions, such as impulse buying decisions or repeat buying decisions. It is important to remember that contextual factors and market variability can influence the dynamics between product quality, brand image, and purchasing decisions. Therefore, further research that considers specific industrial or geographical contexts can add to an in-depth understanding of this complexity. This research opens a window to further understanding of the complex relationship between product quality, brand image, and purchasing decisions. Our conclusions provide

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a foundation for advanced research and provide valuable guidance for practitioners to optimize their marketing strategies.

Recommendations for Future Research:

1. Investigation into Specific Brand Image Factors: Future research could delve deeper into the specific factors that shape a brand's image within the context of 3second Fashion. Exploring elements such as brand reputation, brand personality, and brand associations can provide a more nuanced understanding of how brand image influences consumer behaviour.

2. Exploration of Different Types of Purchasing Decisions: While this study focuses on the influence of product quality and brand image on overall purchase decisions, future research could examine their impact on specific types of purchasing decisions. For example, studying the effects of product quality and brand image on impulse buying decisions or repeat purchasing decisions can provide valuable insights into consumer behaviour.

3. Consideration of Contextual Factors and Market Variability: It's important to recognize that contextual factors and market variability can influence the dynamics between product quality, brand image, and purchasing decisions. Future research should take into account specific industrial or geographical contexts to gain a more comprehensive understanding of these relationships.

4. Longitudinal Studies: Conducting longitudinal studies can help capture changes in consumer perceptions of product quality, brand image, and purchasing decisions over time. By tracking these variables longitudinally, researchers can identify trends, patterns, and shifts in consumer behavior, providing valuable insights for businesses.

5. Qualitative Research Methods: Complementing quantitative analyses with qualitative research methods such as interviews or focus groups can provide deeper insights into consumer perceptions and motivations. Qualitative approaches can help uncover nuanced aspects of product quality, brand image, and purchasing decisions that may not be captured through quantitative measures alone.

By addressing these recommendations, future research can build upon the findings of this study and further advance our understanding of the complex relationship between product quality, brand image, and purchasing decisions in the context of 3second Fashion. Additionally, these insights can provide valuable guidance for practitioners in optimizing their marketing strategies to effectively target and engage consumers.

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