

# The Role of Message Credibility in Online Marketing on Digital Consumer Responses

## Top of Form

Nurhaliza Nitswat<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Negeri Makassar, Makassar, Indonesia

### Abstract

#### Article history:

Received: August 21, 2025

Revised: September 22, 2025

Accepted: October 25, 2025

Published: December 30, 2025

#### Keywords:

Consumer Behavior,  
Message Credibility,  
Online Marketing,  
Purchase Intention,  
Digital Marketing.

#### Identifier:

Nawala

Page: 90-104

<https://nawala.io/index.php/gjom>

This study aims to examine the role of message credibility in online marketing and its influence on digital consumer responses. Along with the rapid development of digital technology since 2020, online marketing has undergone a significant transformation and has become a dominant strategy in influencing consumer behavior. This research employs a literature review method by analyzing scholarly articles published over the last five years and indexed in Google Scholar. The findings indicate that message credibility is a critical factor in determining the effectiveness of online marketing, particularly in shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Digital consumers tend to be more critical and selective toward marketing information, making honesty, expertise, and message consistency essential elements in building trust. Furthermore, consumer engagement and positive digital experiences strengthen the impact of online marketing on consumer responses. This study emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to online marketing by integrating message credibility and digital consumer behavior, and contributes conceptually to the development of digital marketing literature in the context of contemporary marketing dynamics.

## 1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has brought fundamental changes in modern marketing practices. Online marketing is now the main strategy that organizations use to reach consumers, build long-term relationships, and influence purchasing decisions through various digital platforms. Since 2020, the intensity of the use of social media, e-commerce, and data-driven technologies has driven a significant transformation in the way companies design and implement digital marketing activities (Dwivedi et al., 2021). In the context of online marketing, consumer behavior has undergone a substantial shift. Consumers no longer rely on one-way information from companies, but are actively searching, comparing, and evaluating information available online. The purchasing decision-making process is increasingly influenced by digital content, such as online reviews, recommendations from other users, and marketing communications through social media (Chetioui et al., 2020). This condition places consumers as a central actor in the digital marketing ecosystem.

One of the key characteristics of online marketing is the increasing role of non-traditional message sources in influencing consumers. The credibility of the message is a crucial factor because consumers tend to be more selective and critical of the information received. Previous studies have shown that marketing messages that are considered credible have a greater ability to shape positive attitudes and consumer buying intent (Wiedmann & von Mettenheim, 2020). Therefore, credibility is a strategic element in designing online marketing. However, the online marketing environment is also faced with various challenges. The increasing volume

of digital promotional content causes consumers to experience information saturation and a decrease in the level of trust in marketing messages. Non-transparent digital endorsement and advertising practices have the potential to cause skepticism, reducing the effectiveness of marketing communications (Weismueller et al., 2020). This challenge underscores the importance of a digital marketing approach that is oriented towards honesty and value.

Previous research has extensively examined the relationship between the credibility of digital messages and consumer responses, particularly in the context of marketing through social media. Empirical findings show that the credibility of message sources has a significant effect on consumer buying interest in the online environment (AlFarraj et al., 2021). In addition, empirical studies based on digital marketing also prove that influencer credibility can increase the buying interest of online consumers (Lumbantoruan & Marwansyah, 2023).

However, most studies still place the credibility of a message or influencer as a separate variable, without integrating it thoroughly within the broader online marketing framework. Recent literature emphasizes the need for a holistic approach that links credibility, consumer engagement, and digital marketing strategies as a single conceptual unit (Dey & Tanty, 2022). Thus, there is still a research gap in understanding how online marketing comprehensively affects the behavior of digital consumers in the era of technology-based marketing. Based on this description, this study aims to examine online marketing by focusing on the role of message credibility and consumer response in the context of contemporary digital marketing,

so that it can make a conceptual contribution to the development of online marketing literature that is relevant to the dynamics of 2025.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Online Marketing and Digital Consumer Behavior**

Online marketing is defined as all marketing activities that utilize digital media and technology to reach and interact with consumers. In the digital environment, the marketing process is no longer one-way, but rather involves dynamic interaction between the company and the consumer. Since 2020, online marketing has evolved towards a more integrated approach with data, digital platforms, and user experiences, thus influencing the way consumers process marketing information (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Digital consumer behavior is characterized by increased consumer independence in seeking and evaluating information before making a purchase decision.

Consumers not only rely on the messages conveyed by the company, but also consider various digital sources of information such as online reviews, recommendations of other users and social media content. Studies show that this process forms a more rational, critical, and comparatively based pattern of consumer behavior (Haro et al., 2024). In addition, consumer involvement is an important element in explaining the effectiveness of online marketing. Consumers who are cognitively and emotionally engaged with digital content tend to show positive attitudes towards brands and are more likely to make purchases. This engagement strengthens the relationship between digital marketing strategies and consumer

responses, so that online marketing not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a tool for shaping consumer experience (Wardana et al., 2024).

## **2.2 Credibility of Messages in Online Marketing**

Message credibility is a key concept in online marketing because it is directly related to the level of consumer trust in the information received. In the digital context, the credibility of the message is perceived through the honesty, expertise, and attractiveness of the information source. Marketing messages that are considered credible tend to be more receptive and have a stronger influence on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Nalio et al., 2024). In online marketing practices, message credibility is becoming increasingly important because consumers are exposed to various forms of marketing communication simultaneously. When consumers doubt the authenticity or transparency of digital messages, marketing effectiveness can decrease significantly.

Research shows that non-transparent digital marketing practices, such as endorsements without clear disclosure, have the potential to generate consumer skepticism and resistance to brands (Sahabuddin et al., 2024). Empirical findings also show that the credibility of message sources has a significant relationship with consumer buying interest in the online context. Empirical studies in digital marketing prove that the higher the level of credibility that consumers feel, the greater the tendency of consumers to respond positively to marketing messages and consider purchases (Adnan et al., 2024). Therefore, message credibility needs to be seen as a strategic component in designing consumer-oriented online marketing.

### **3. Methods**

This study uses a literature study method with a descriptive qualitative approach. The literature study method was chosen because the purpose of this research is to gain an in-depth conceptual understanding of online marketing, especially related to the role of message credibility and consumer response in the contemporary digital marketing environment. Through this approach, the research does not focus on the collection of primary data, but on the analysis and synthesis of knowledge that has been generated by relevant previous studies.

The source of research data comes from scientific journal articles published in the last five years and indexed by Google Scholar. The selection of the time range aims to ensure that the study used reflects the latest developments in the field of online marketing, especially after the acceleration of digital transformation that has occurred since 2020. The articles used include conceptual and empirical research that discusses digital marketing, online consumer behavior, message credibility, and consumer buying interest. One of the main references in this study is an empirical article on the influence of influencer credibility on consumer buying interest which is used as a foundation to understand the relationship between credibility and consumer response in the context of online marketing.

The literature collection process is carried out systematically through searching academic databases using relevant keywords, such as online marketing, digital consumer behavior, message credibility, and purchase intention. The articles found were then selected based on the suitability of the topic, the quality of the publication, and their contribution to the discussion of the research. Literature that

is not directly relevant or outside the specified year range is not included in the analysis.

Data analysis was carried out by reading, reviewing, and grouping literature based on the main themes that emerged. This stage aims to identify thought patterns, similarities and differences in findings, as well as research gaps that still exist in online marketing studies. Furthermore, a conceptual synthesis was carried out to integrate these findings into a coherent framework of understanding. The results of this analysis are then used as a basis for compiling a discussion about the role of online marketing and message credibility in influencing digital consumer behavior comprehensively.

#### **4. Results**

The results of the literature review show that online marketing has experienced very rapid development since 2020 and is increasingly occupying a strategic position in modern marketing practices. Recent literature confirms that digital marketing is no longer limited to promotional activities, but has evolved into an integrated marketing system that connects data, technology, and consumer behavior simultaneously (Dey & Tanty, 2022). This transformation makes online marketing the main framework for understanding the interaction between brands and consumers in the digital environment.

Most of the studies studied emphasized that changes in digital consumer behavior are a direct consequence of the intensity of online platform use. Consumers are increasingly accustomed to searching for information, evaluating alternatives,

and making decisions through digital media. Studies show that consumers tend to rely on a variety of sources of information before making a purchase, including social media content, online reviews, and recommendations from other parties (Chetioui et al., 2020). These findings indicate that online marketing must be able to adapt to the increasingly active and critical character of consumers.

The results of the study also revealed that message credibility is the dominant factor in determining the effectiveness of online marketing. In a digital environment filled with various marketing messages, consumers tend to filter information based on the level of trust in the source of the message. Previous research confirms that messages that are considered credible have a greater chance of influencing consumer attitudes and purchasing intentions (Wiedmann & von Mettenheim, 2020). This shows that credibility is a fundamental element in digital marketing communication.

In addition, the results of the study show that non-traditional message sources, such as influencers or digital figures, have a significant role in online marketing. A number of empirical studies prove that influencers can serve as effective intermediaries in conveying marketing messages because they are considered closer and relevant to consumers. However, the effectiveness of the role is highly dependent on consumers' perception of the honesty and expertise of the message source (Weismueller et al., 2020). Thus, influencers are not automatically effective without perceived credibility.

The results of an empirical study used as the main reference show that influencer credibility has a positive and significant influence on consumer buying interest in the context of online marketing (Lumbantoruan & Marwansyah, 2023).

These findings reinforce the argument that consumers are more likely to respond to marketing messages when they view the source of information as trustworthy and competent. This credibility is formed through consistency of messages, transparency, and the ability to convey relevant information.

On the other hand, the results of the study also identified the challenges faced by online marketing, especially related to the decline in consumer confidence. The increase in digital marketing practices that are manipulative or non-transparent causes consumers to become more skeptical of marketing messages. Research shows that when consumers doubt the integrity of digital messages, they tend to ignore the information or even develop negative attitudes towards brands (AlFarraj et al., 2021). This indicates that credibility is not only a supporting factor, but a prerequisite in online marketing.

In addition to credibility, the results of the literature review highlight the role of consumer involvement as an important mechanism in digital marketing. Consumers who actively engage with online content tend to have a higher level of emotional and cognitive closeness to the brand. Research shows that consumer engagement can amplify the influence of marketing messages on purchase intent and loyalty (Wardana et al., 2024). These findings indicate that effective online marketing is not only focused on delivering messages, but also on creating meaningful interactions. The results of the study also show that most previous studies still focused on the analysis on the direct relationship between digital marketing variables and consumer response. This approach tends to ignore the complexity of the online marketing ecosystem that involves multiple factors simultaneously. Recent literature

emphasizes the importance of integrating digital marketing strategies, message credibility, and consumer behavior in one intact conceptual framework (Dwivedi et al., 2021). These findings indicate a need for a more holistic approach.

Furthermore, the results of the study show that online marketing is increasingly influenced by the use of data and smart technology. Although the technology aspect was not the main focus of this study, the literature confirms that personalization and management of consumer data also influence consumer perception of marketing messages. When digital messages are delivered in a relevant and consistent manner, consumers tend to view the message as more credible and valuable (Haro et al., 2024). This shows that the credibility of the message is also influenced by the context of the delivery.

Based on the overall results of the literature review, the results of the literature show that the effectiveness of online marketing is the result of the interaction between message credibility, consumer engagement, and the behavioral characteristics of digital consumers. Empirical and conceptual studies consistently show that credibility has a central role in shaping consumer attitudes and buying intentions (Nalio et al., 2024). However, there are still limitations in integrating these findings into a comprehensive online marketing framework.

The results of this study indicate that research in the field of online marketing needs to move beyond partial analysis and adopt a more comprehensive perspective. An integrated understanding of message credibility and consumer responses is expected to make a stronger theoretical contribution to the development of the digital marketing literature. Thus, the results of this study become a conceptual basis

for further discussion on the implications of online marketing on digital consumer behavior in the contemporary marketing era.

## **5. Discussion**

The results of the literature review show that online marketing has developed into a complex and integrated marketing system, where the success of the marketing strategy is largely determined by the company's ability to build consumer trust. Digital marketing is no longer only oriented to message exposure, but also to the quality of interaction and consumer perception of the credibility of the information received (Dey & Tanty, 2022). Thus, online marketing needs to be understood as a continuous relational process.

The discussion of the results also shows that digital consumer behavior is increasingly rational and selective. Consumers do not necessarily receive marketing messages, but rather evaluate based on experience, comparative information, and perceptions of the source of the message. This corroborates previous findings that online consumers have a tendency to process information more deeply before making a purchase decision (Chetioui et al., 2020). This condition demands an online marketing strategy that is able to present messages in a relevant and trustworthy manner.

The credibility of the message has proven to be a central factor in bridging the relationship between online marketing and consumer response. The discussion of the results shows that credibility not only serves as an attribute of the source of the message, but also as a mechanism for shaping consumer attitudes towards the

brand. When marketing messages are perceived to have honesty, expertise, and consistency, consumers tend to show a positive attitude and higher buying interest (Wiedmann & von Mettenheim, 2020). These findings strengthen the position of credibility as a strategic element in digital marketing. In addition, this discussion emphasized that less transparent online marketing practices can have a negative impact on consumer trust. Consumer skepticism of digital messaging emerged in response to the rise of promotional content that is considered manipulative. This supports the results of previous research that showed that transparency and clarity of messages are prerequisites for the effectiveness of online marketing (Sahabuddin et al., 2024). Therefore, companies need to prioritize communication ethics in their digital strategies.

Furthermore, this discussion expands on previous empirical findings that the credibility of message sources has a significant effect on consumer buying interest. In the broader context of online marketing, credibility is inseparable from consumer engagement and the digital experience created by brands. Empirical findings on the influence of credibility on consumers' buying interest online support the argument that credibility is the main foundation in building long-term relationships between brands and consumers in the digital environment (Lumbantoruan & Marwansyah, 2023).

## **6. Conclusion**

This research aims to examine online marketing by focusing on the role of message credibility and consumer response in the context of contemporary digital

marketing. Based on the results of the literature review that has been conducted, it can be concluded that online marketing has developed into a complex marketing system, where the success of a marketing strategy is not only determined by the intensity of the message delivery, but also by the quality and credibility of the information received by consumers. The findings of the study show that digital consumer behavior is increasingly active, critical, and selective in processing marketing information. Consumers tend to evaluate digital messages based on the level of trust in the source of information before forming buying attitudes and intentions. In this context, message credibility plays a key role as a key factor that bridges the relationship between online marketing strategy and consumer response.

In addition, this study confirms that effective online marketing requires a holistic approach that consistently integrates message credibility, consumer engagement, and digital experiences. A partial approach that focuses only on one aspect of digital marketing is considered inadequate in explaining the dynamics of consumer behavior in the digital era. Overall, this research makes a conceptual contribution to the development of online marketing literature by emphasizing the importance of credibility as the main foundation in building long-term relationships between brands and consumers. These findings are expected to be the basis for further research and a reference in designing a digital marketing strategy that is oriented towards trust and value for consumers.

## References

- Adnan, S. E., Murhaban, S. E., Eva Fitria Ningsih, S. M., TM, A., SP, M., Suryani, S. M., ... & Muhammad Whasil Mufti Ulwan, S. M. (2024). *Strategi Pemasaran dan Perilaku Konsumen di Era Digital*. Sumedang: Mega Press Nusantara.
- AlFarraj, O., Alalwan, A. A., Obeidat, Z. M., Baabdullah, A., Aldmour, R., & Al-Haddad, S. (2021). Examining the impact of influencers' credibility dimensions: attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise on the purchase intention in the aesthetic dermatology industry. *Review of International Business and Strategy*, 31(3), 355-374.
- Chetioui, Y., Benlafqih, H., & Lebdaoui, H. (2020). How fashion influencers contribute to consumers' purchase intention. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 24(3), 361-380.
- Dey, S. K., & Tanty, G. Setting the Future of Complete Digital and Social Media Marketing Research: Perspectives and Research Propositions. *Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship*, 16(2), 105-112.
- Dwivedi, Y. K., Ismagilova, E., Hughes, D. L., Carlson, J., Filieri, R., Jacobson, J., ... & Wang, Y. (2021). Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions. *International journal of information management*, 59, 102168.
- Haro, A., Kushariyadi, K., Widyawati, W., Fauziyah, N. N., & Judijanto, L. (2024). *Perilaku Konsumen: Esensi, Posisi, dan Strategi*. Jambi: PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia.

- Lumbantoruan, A., & Marwansyah, M. (2023). Pengaruh Kredibilitas Influencer Terhadap Minat Beli Konsumen Pada Produk Makanan. *Jurnal Riset Bisnis dan Investasi*, 9(3), 143-152.
- Nalio, O. E., Octavianti, M., & Nurfadila, F. (2024). Kredibilitas beauty influencer dalam membentuk minat beli followers. *Sintesa*, 3(02), 84-102.
- Sahabuddin, R., Arif, H. M., Lestari, W., Alviolin, E., & Dzaky, M. N. (2024). Transparansi informasi sebagai mediator dalam hubungan etika pemasaran digital dan kepercayaan konsumen di e-commerce. *Maximal Journal: Jurnal Ilmiah Bidang Sosial, Ekonomi, Budaya Dan Pendidikan*, 2(1), 27-37.
- Wardana, A. K., Handayani, D. S., Kaunang, R. R., & Parani, R. (2024). Komunikasi Pemasaran Terpadu dalam Era Digital: Peran Teknologi dan Respons Masyarakat. *Co-Value Jurnal Ekonomi Koperasi Dan Kewirausahaan*, 14(12).
- Weismueller, J., Harrigan, P., Wang, S., & Soutar, G. N. (2020). Influencer endorsements: How advertising disclosure and source credibility affect consumer purchase intention on social media. *Australasian marketing journal*, 28(4), 160-170.
- Wiedmann, K. P., & Von Mettenheim, W. (2021). Attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise—social influencers’ winning formula?. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 30(5), 707-725.