BUILDING BRAND AWARENESS THROUGH CONTENT MARKETING IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CUSTOMER PATH 5A ON TOUR AGENT PT DOCTOR TRIP INDONESIA

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Abstract

Competition in the tour agent business is increasing in the digital era, especially to increase sales figures. The use of content marketing strategies is carried out to build brand awareness in the customer path process. This research aims to test the influence of brand awareness through content marketing in implementing customer path 5A at the Doctor Trip Indonesia tour agent. Doctor Trip Indonesia is a company that has only been established for 3 years. This research uses quantitative methods by conducting a survey of 190 respondents. The population in this research are consumers who have made a purchase at least once. This research uses accidental sampling with purposive sampling technique. Data collection was carried out from March to April 2024, and processed using the Structural Equation Model Partial-Least Square (SEM-PLS). The research results show that brand awareness through content marketing has a positive and significant effect on customer path 5A. It is hoped that the results of this research can be a reference for managers in determining strategies to increase the effectiveness of content marketing in building brand awareness until it reaches the final level of customer path 5A.

*Keywords: **Brand Awareness, Content Marketing, Customer Path 5A, Tour Agent***

1. INTRODUCTION

The natural beauty of North Sumatra is a special attraction for tourists who want to visit. Through data from the Central Statistics Agency, in 2023, it is known that the number of visits by domestic tourists (wisnus) to North Sumatra in the odd semester of 2023 has increased compared to 2022. BPS data shows that the number of visits by foreign tourists in the January-June 2022 period was 12 million people, increasing to 14 million people in 2023. The increasing number of tourists in North Sumatra opens up business opportunities for travel agents or what can be called tour agents. The tour agent business activity is to combine all aspects of tourism implementation which are packaged in the form of tour packages. In this digital era, business actors such as tour agents use digital marketing to market products. Various digital marketing activities cause high levels of competition. PT Doctor Trip Indonesia is a tour agent business that is building brand awareness. Doctor Trip Indonesia was founded in 2021 and is located in Medan, North Sumatra. Doctor Trip Indonesia provides open trip, private trip, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) and study tour services. The services offered by Doctor Trip Indonesia are in the form of tour packages aimed at interesting tourist attractions spread across the North Sumatra area and also the Special Region of Aceh. Doctor Trip Indonesia helps consumers in planning and organizing holiday plans. Apart from taking care of accommodation and transportation, prospective consumers can consult about holiday plans, so that they can be managed well by Doctor Trip Indonesia according to the desired itinerary. Doctor Trip Indonesia realizes the importance of implementing the best marketing strategy as a new company to be known to consumers and achieve sales targets.

The efforts made include creating marketing content in the form of short product videos, short product articles, re-uploading customer testimonials, customer photos and videos, videos or photos of collaboration with content creators. At its inception, Doctor Trip Indonesia mostly used content in the form of short writing, but later increased its short video content which consumers

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preferred. It is hoped that the content produced on websites and social media will attract consumer interest in using Doctor Trip Indonesia's services. Fadhilah & Galih (2021); Shadrina & Yoestini (2022) stated that content marketing influences consumer purchasing decisions. Doctor Trip Indonesia realizes the importance of building brand awareness because it has an impact on the success and sustainability of the company. Through creative and innovative content marketing, Doctor Trip Indonesia can increase brand awareness. Brand awareness has an important role in the 5A customer path process. Based on the background above, researchers are interested in conducting research on "Building Brand Awareness Through Content Marketing in the Implementation of Customer Path 5A at Tour Agent PT Doctor Trip Indonesia".

Conceptual Framework

The increase in the number of tourists in North Sumatra has led to an increase in the number of businesses*travel agent*. The large number of travel agents causes a high level of competition. Doctor Trip Indonesia is a new businessman who is trying to build*brand awareness*through*content marketing*to improve consumer purchasing decisions.

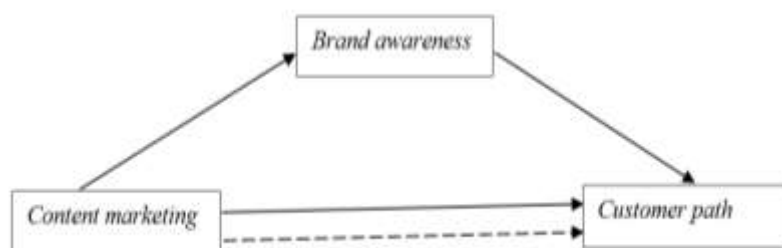The conceptual framework for the research is in the image below.

Figure 1 Conceptual framework

Research Hypothesis

Based on the background and conceptual framework that has been explained, the research hypothesis is:
a. H1: Content marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness
b. H2: Content marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions
c. H3: Brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions
d. H4: Content marketing has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions through brand awareness

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Customer Path 5A

As technological developments progress, there are changes in consumer behavior regarding purchasing decisions. According to Kotler et al (2016) in the current era of connectivity, consumers experience a "customer path" process which consists of aware, appeal, ask, act, and advocate or abbreviated as 5A.
a. Aware, where consumers are passively exposed to a long list of brands from past experiences, marketing communications, and/or suggestions from others.
b. Appeal, where consumers process the information they are exposed to, to create short-term memories or strengthen long-term memories, and become interested in a small list of brands.
c. Ask,Driven by curiosity, consumers actively seek more information from friends and family, from the media, and/or directly from brands.

d. Act,strengthened through more information, consumers decide to buy a particular brand and interact more deeply through the purchase, use, and/or service process.

e. Advocate,Over time, consumers may develop high loyalty to the brand, visible through brand memories, repeat purchases, and ultimately recommending it to others.

2.2 Brand Awareness

A product or service can be known through a brand, usually called brand awareness (*brand awareness*).*Brand awareness*related to the strength of a brand in memory, reflected through consumers' ability to identify various brand elements such as names, logos, symbols, characters, packaging and slogans under different conditions. A unique and simple brand will be easily remembered by consumers, thereby influencing brand awareness (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Brand is an important factor in the process of introducing a product to consumers. Business actors must improve marketing strategies to strengthen brand awareness among consumers (Nurhadi, et al., 2023). Growing brand awareness can be done by sharing product and brand information with consumers. According to Aaker (1991) brand awareness is measured using indicators unaware of brand, brand recognition, brand recall, and top of mind.

a. *Unaware of Brand*(Not aware of the brand) is the lowest level in measuring brand awareness, where someone is not aware of the existence of a brand.

b. *Brand Recognition*(Brand recognition) is the minimum level of brand awareness where recognition of a brand appears again after being reminded through assistance.

c. *Brand Recall*(Recall) are brands that are remembered after mentioning a brand for the first time without needing help.

d. *Top of Mind*(top of mind) is the brand that is mentioned first by consumers or first appears in consumers' minds. This brand is the main of various existing brands.

2.3 Content Marketing

*Brand awareness*is important for companies because it can determine consumer decisions in the purchasing process. Brand awareness can be built through information provided both through digital and electronic media. Product or brand information can take the form of content distributed on platforms such as websites and social media (Boardman et al., 2019). Simona (2017) states that content is an online component of marketing strategies that attract and retain consumers organically. Currently, more and more marketers are switching from using advertising to content marketing. The impact of this change is that marketers are required to distribute content that is useful and valuable to consumers (Kotler et al., 2017). So it can be concluded that content marketing is a digital marketing strategy to build brand awareness, increase engagement and gain potential consumers (Fadli et al., 2023). The content marketing indicators according to Hall (2020) and Milhinhos (2015), namely:

a. *Relevant*, the content provided is in accordance with consumer needs

b. *Accurate*, the content contains correct information in the form of facts and can be trusted

c. *Useful*, content contains information that provides benefits to consumers

d. *Understandable*, the content can be easily understood by consumers

e. *Easy to find*, content can be found easily by consumers

3. IMPLEMENTATION METHOD
3.1 Location and Time of Research

The research was carried out in March-April 2024 at the Doctor Trip Indonesia office in Medan, North Sumatra.

3.2 Types of Research

This research uses quantitative methods, with an associative approach. This research explains the influence between content marketing, brand awareness and customer path variables

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that will be studied, called explanatory research (Sugiyono, 2019). This research uses a survey by taking samples from one population (Sujarweni, 2019).

3.3 Research Population and Sample

The population in this study is everyone who has used Doctor Trip Indonesia's services at least once. This research uses accidental sampling with a purposive sampling technique, namely certain people who accidentally meet the researcher and are suitable as data sources based on sample criteria (Sugiyono, 2016). The criteria for being a respondent are:

a. Have used the services of Doctor Trip Indonesia
b. Minimum age 17 years
c. Have you ever seen Doctor Trip Indonesia's marketing content?

Sample calculations used the method of Hair et al. (2022), where the sample size considered representative for use is 5-10 times the number of indicators or a minimum of 100 samples. The number of indicators in the research was 19 so 19 x 10 = 190 samples. So for this research the sample size taken was 190 respondents.

3.4 Types of Data Sources

The data source used is primary data. Primary data in this research was obtained through distributing questionnaires. The measurement used is a Likert scale which can be seen in the table below.

Likert Scale Table

Information	Score
Strongly Agree (SS)	5
Agree (S)	4
Disagree (KS)	3
Disagree (TS)	2
Strongly Disagree (STS)	1

Source: Sujarweni (2019).

Likert Scale which is used to measure the attitudes, opinions and perceptions of a person or group regarding content marketing, brand awareness and customer path (Sudaryono, 2017).

3.6 Data Validity and Reliability Testing

Data validity testing has two dimensions, namely data validity and reliability. Validity testing is carried out to measure the accuracy of the measuring instrument that will be used, whether the measuring instrument is a valid instrument or not, so that later it can produce research that can be accepted according to certain criteria. The data validity test is calculated by comparing the rcount value (correlated items - total correlation) with the rtable value (Situmorang, 2019). The next test is reliability testing to see to what extent the measuring instrument can be trusted or relied upon. Instrument reliability states the degree of precision, accuracy, and level of accuracy in a measurement by looking at the Cronbach alpha value that has been calculated.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

This research uses the Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) analysis technique. Variables that cannot be measured directly in SEM terminology are called latent variables/constructs that must be measured with indicators. Latent variables are divided into two, namely exogenous latent variables (independent variables) and latent variables/endogenous constructs (dependent variables). The exogenous variables in this research are content marketing and brand awareness. Customer path is an endogenous variable. The analysis stages consist of an outer model and an inner model. The outer model (measurement model) is the basis for

determining the relationship between latent/construct variables and the appropriate indicator variables. The outer model aims to see the validity and reliability of the construct. This is to ensure variable measures are valid and reliable before accessing the nature of correlations in the overall model.

3.7.1 Outer Model
Validity Testing

Validity testing aims to measure whether the instrument (questionnaire) used is valid or not, where if the validity value is high and in accordance with the measurement objectives, then the research data can obtain good results. The validity method has two ways of testing, namely:

a. Convergent Validity

Tests that assess the reciprocal relationship between item scores/component scores and construct scores. This test is seen through the loading factor value of each indicator, where the indicator is declared invalid if the loading factor value is ($\alpha<0.05$) so it must be removed from the construct and vice versa.

b. Discriminant Validity

Tests whose calculations are based on the cross loading output value with the construct.

Reliability Testing

Reliability is used to state the extent of consistency and stability of the results of the analysis carried out. The basis of reliability testing is the composite reliability value and Cronbach alpha value for each construct. The research variable is declared to have passed if the output composite reliability has a value of $\alpha>0.07$ and the Cronbach alpha value can be called reliable if it has a value of $\alpha>0.06$.

3.7.2 Inner Model

Meanwhile, the inner model tests collinearity between constructs and the predictive ability of the model. Inner models are used to predict causality (cause and effect) relationships between latent variables or variables that cannot be measured directly (Hair et al., 2021). The condition for testing the PLS structural model is that there are no multicollinearity problems. The condition is that if the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value is <5, then there is no collinearity between constructs (Sarstedt et al, 2017). The next test is Goodness of Fit which is seen through the R-Square value.

3.7.3 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing between variables is seen through the statistical T value or P-value. If the calculated T statistic is > 1.96 (T table) or the p-value of the test result is < 0.05 then there is a significant influence between the variables. There are 2 hypothesis tests, namely direct effect and indirect effect.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
4.1 Results
4.1.1 Measurement Model Testing (Outer Model)

Measurement Model testing was carried out to assess the reliability and validity of the indicators forming the latent construct. Outer Model testing can be carried out with a reflective model through testing indicator reliability, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Hair, et al, 2019). Images of the outer model testing via SmartPLS 4 can be seen below.

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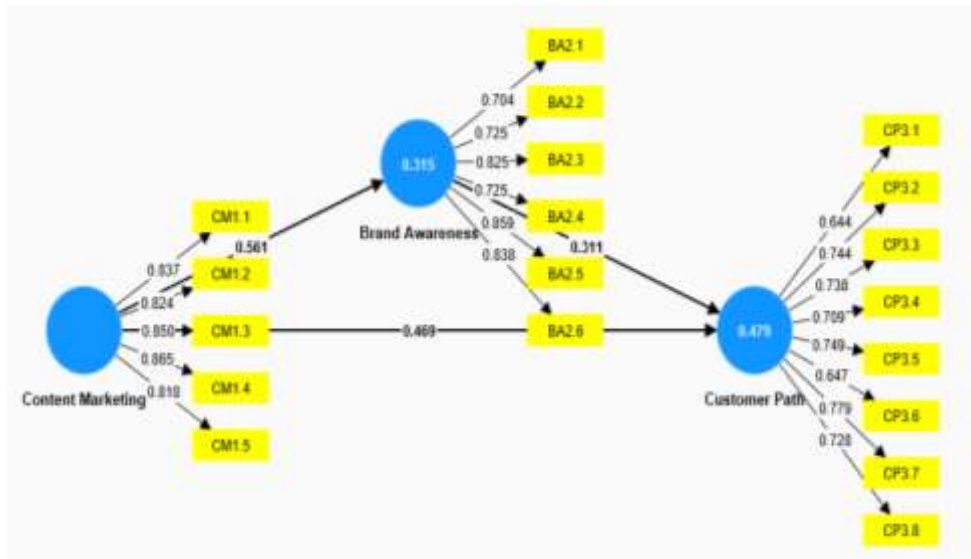*Stifani Emerta Perangin-angin[1], Endang Sulistya Rini[2], Erman Munir[3]*

Figure 1 Outer Research Model processed with SmartPLS 4

Table 1 Reliability and Validity Testing

Variabel	Code	Reliability			Validity	
		Indikator reliability	Composite reliability	Cronbach alpha	Convergent Validity (AVE)	Discriminant Validity
Content	CM1.1	0,837	0,898	0,895	0,704	Yes
Marketing	CM1.2	0,824				
	CM1.3	0,850				
	CM1.4	0,865				
	CM1.5	0,818				
Brand	BA2.1	0,704	0,872	0,871	0,611	Yes
Awareness	BA2.2	0,725				
	BA2.3	0,825				
	BA2.4	0,725				
	BA2.5	0,859				
	BA2.6	0,838				
Customer	CP3.1	0,644	0,871	0,866	0,516	Yes
Path	CP3.2	0,744				
	CP3.3	0,738				
	CP3.4	0,709				
	CP3.5	0,749				
	CP3.6	0,647				
	CP3.7	0,779				
	CP3.8	0,728				

Source: Processed data, 2024

Based on the table above, it is known that the content marketing, brand awareness and customer path indicators have an outer loading value of > 0.6. Based on Chin's (1998) statement, an outer loading value > 0.6 is considered sufficient to meet the requirements for convergent validity.

The next validity test is carried out using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) method. Hair et al (2019) stated that the AVE value was > 0.5. The AVE value of the content marketing, brand awareness and customer path variables is > 0.5 so it can be concluded that all indicators meet convergent validity. The composite reliability value for each variable is > 0.7 and the Cronbach alpha value is > 0.6. Through this data, it can be stated that the content marketing, brand awareness and customer path variables meet the composite reliability and Cronbach alpha values, this shows that respondents are consistent in answering questions.

Table 2 Testing the Fornell-Larcker Criteria

	Brand awareness(BA2)	Content marketing(CM1)	Customer path(CP).
Brand awareness(BA2)	0.782		
Content marketing(CM1)	0.561	0.839	
Customer path (CP3)	0.574	0.643	0.719

Source: Processed data, 2024

From the table it can be seen that the brand awareness variable has a √AVE value of 0.782 which is greater in correlation than content marketing with a √AVE value of 0.561 and customer path √AVE 0.574. This shows that the discriminant validity of the brand awareness variable is met. The √AVE content marketing value of 0.839 has a greater correlation than customer path with an √AVE value of 0.643. Customer path has a √AVE value of 0.719. Through testing the Fornell-Larcker criteria, it can be concluded that brand awareness, content marketing, and customer path meet the discriminant validity criteria.

4.1.2 Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)
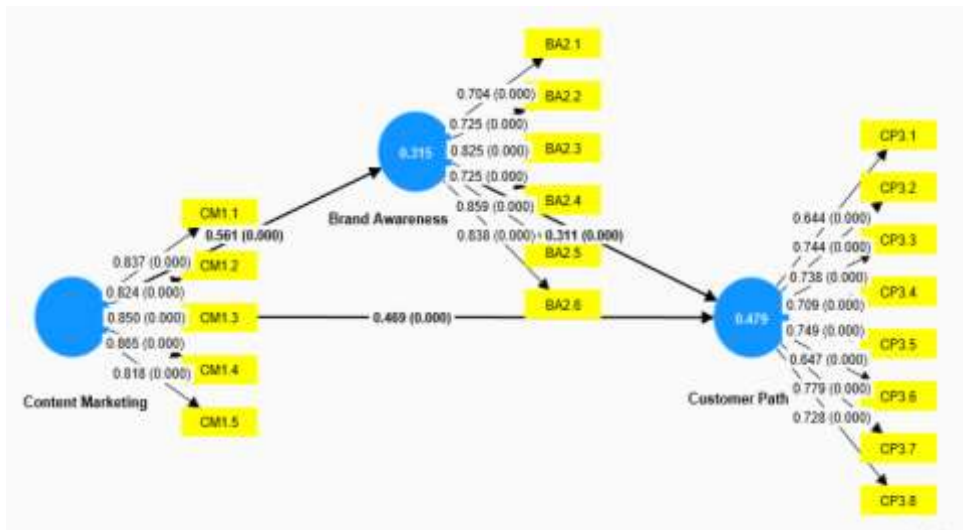
The Inner Research Model image is processed with SmartPLS 4

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Table 3 Multicollinearity (VIF)

	Brand awareness	*Content marketing*	*Customer path*
Brand awareness			1,459
Content marketing	1,000		1,459
Customer path			

Source: processed data, 2024

Multicollinearity is a phenomenon where two or more independent variables or exogenous constructs are highly correlated, causing the model's predictive ability to be poor (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). The condition is that if the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value is <5, then there is no collinearity between constructs (Sarstedt et al, 2017). From Table 3 above, it can be seen that the brand awareness, content marketing and customer path variables have an inner VIF value < 5. The test results show an inner VIF value < 5, so the level of multicollinearity between the variables is low. So it can be stated that the variables in this study are robust (not biased) and meet the requirements for further analysis.

Table 4 R-Square Value

	R-Square	R-Square adjusted
Brand awareness	0.315	0.311
Customer path	0.479	0.474

Source: Processed data, 2024

Through the R-Square value testing table, it can be seen that the brand awareness and customer path variables have R-Square values of 0.315 and 0.479, indicating the magnitude of influence is in the moderate category. The R-Square of the path I model is 0.315, meaning that the ability of the content marketing variable to explain brand awareness is 31.5% (moderate). The R-Square of the path II model is 0.479, meaning that the ability of brand awareness through content marketing to explain the customer path is 47.9%, which is in the moderate category.

4.1.3 Hypothesis test

Hypothesis testing is a decision making method based on data analysis. Hypothesis testing between variables is seen through the statistical T value or P-value. If the calculated T statistic is > 1.96 (T table) or the p-value of the test results is < 0.05 then there is a significant influence between the variables.

Path Analysis Table

	T statistics	**P-values**	**Conclusion**
Brand awareness-> Customer path	4,473	0,000	Accepted
Content marketing-> Brand awareness	10,247	0,000	Accepted
Content marketing-> Customer path	6,847	0,000	Accepted

Source: processed data, 2024

Through SmartPLS4 analysis, there are 3 hypothesis testing results listed below, namely:
a. First Hypothesis Testing

The first hypothesis (H1) states that content marketing has a positive effect on brand awareness. Based on the results of hypothesis testing, it is known that the T statistic value > T Table, namely 10.247 > 1.96 and the P value < 0.05, namely 0.000 < 0.05. Thus, content marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness.

b. Second Hypothesis Testing

The second hypothesis (H2) states that content marketing has a positive effect on customer path. Based on the results of hypothesis testing, it is known that the T statistic value > T Table, namely 6.847 > 1.96 and the P value < 0.05, namely 0.000 < 0.05. Thus, content marketing has a positive and significant effect on customer paths.

c. Third Hypothesis Testing

The third hypothesis (H1) states that brand awareness (BA) has a positive effect on customer path (CP). Based on the results of hypothesis testing using SmartPLS4, it is known that the T statistic value > T Table, namely 4.473 > 1.96 and the P value < 0.05, namely 0.000 < 0.05. Thus, content marketing (CM) has a positive and significant effect on customer path (CP).

Indirect Effect Table

	P-values
Content marketing-> Brand awareness -> Customer path	0,000

Source: processed data, 2024

Indirect Effect Analysis is useful for testing the hypothesis of the indirect influence of a variable that influences (exogenous) on the variable that is influenced (endogenous) which is mediated (intervening) by a variable. Through the results of indirect effect testing, it can be seen that the influence of content marketing on customer paths through brand awareness has a P-value of 0.000, which means that if the P-values < 0.005 then content marketing has a significant positive influence on customer paths through brand awareness. This shows that the fourth hypothesis (H4) is accepted.

4.2 Discussion
4.2.1 The Influence of Content Marketing on Brand Awareness

Based on the results of research hypothesis testing, the results obtained show that the P-values that form the influence of content marketing on brand awareness are 0.000 and the T statistic value is 10.247 which is positive, so it can be stated that content marketing has a positive and significant influence on Doctor Trip Indonesia's brand awareness. . This is in line with the research results of Prasojo and Sri (2024); Azizah et al (2022); Greece and Zahra (2023) state that content marketing has a positive and significant influence on brand awareness. Doctor Trip Indonesia uses content marketing on social media and websites. The social media used by Doctor Trip Indonesia are Instagram and Tiktok. Currently, there is more focus on using Instagram content marketing to build consumer brand awareness because of the large number of users, reaching 104.8 million people in Indonesia (Databoks, 2023). Doctor Trip Indonesia aims to provide relevant and useful information through the content presented. Content on Instagram is in the form of quotes, testimonials, giveaways, interesting facts, questions, holiday tips and recommendations, product articles, highlights of open customer reviews and private trips. Content is created using interesting keywords so that it is easier to find, then uploaded according to the schedule and targets that have been set. It is hoped that various types of uploaded content can reach the targeted audience. Through observation and evaluation, Doctor Trip Indonesia can find out the type of content that is most liked, the right time to upload content, the routine schedule for uploading types of content within a time period. This activity aims to increase the audience's desire to share so that it can increase brand awareness.

4.2.2 The Influence of Content Marketing on Customer Path

Based on the results of research hypothesis testing, the results obtained were that the P-values that form the influence of content marketing on customer path were 0.000 and the T statistic value was 6.847 which was positive, so it was stated that content marketing had a positive and

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significant influence on customer path at Doctor Trip Indonesia . This is in line with the research results of Terho et al (2022), namely that marketers must build customer paths based on internal and external data, use technology to map customer path stages and track consumer engagement at each customer path stage. This statement is supported by the results of research by Salonen et al (2024) which states that marketers must highlight the importance of content marketing as a driver of sales performance by involving customers in the customer path stages. The content marketing strategy set by Doctor Trip Indonesia begins with identifying the audience. At the beginning, the target audience to be reached was students and office employees by prioritizing open trip packages, now the target audience has become wider, including companies. Through identifying the target audience, the team can find out the needs, interests and characteristics of the audience. The content created is not only in the form of writing or photos but also videos, both taken by consumers themselves and by Doctor Trip Indonesia. This content is created with an attractive appearance and design so that the audience spends time looking at other uploads. Videos, photos, mentions, collaborations and testimonials from individual consumers, groups and companies are then uploaded to feeds, stories and highlights on Instagram social media. By uploading this content, the audience can find out about products and consumers who have used Doctor Trip Indonesia's services, creating trust and a desire to try so that it becomes a consideration when making purchasing decisions. Success in determining a content marketing strategy for the right audience will have an impact on the customer path.

4.2.3 The Influence of Brand Awareness on Customer Path

Based on the results of research hypothesis testing, the results obtained were that the P-values which form the influence of brand awareness on customer path were 0.000 and the T statistic value was 4.473 which was positive, so it was stated that brand awareness had a positive and significant influence on customer path at Doctor Trip Indonesia . This is in line with Cheng et al's (2017) statement that brand awareness is the initial stage of the customer path which will determine consumers' decision to make purchasing decisions. One of the strategies used by Doctor Trip Indonesia to instill brand awareness in the minds of consumers is: always displaying the company's logo, banner and slogan on every form of content, whether in the form of videos, images or writing. This will make it easier for consumers to remember Doctor Trip Indonesia. The unique Doctor Trip Indonesia brand name also increases consumers' curiosity to learn more. Especially the younger generation who like the open trip concept to refresh the mind which is becoming a trend. Apart from that, Doctor Trip Indonesia also collaborates with influencers from outside North Sumatra. Collaborative content with celebrities or influencers is certainly able to build brand awareness from the influencer's social media followers. Brand awareness that arises accompanied by trust in the brand because influencers collaborate is a form of "advocate" or recommendation that will facilitate purchasing decisions in the customer path.

4.2.4 The Influence of Brand Awareness on Customer Path through Content Marketing

Based on the results of research hypothesis testing, the results showed that the P-values were 0.000 and the T statistic value was 4.109, illustrating that the influence of content marketing on customer paths through brand awareness is positive, so it is stated that brand awareness has a positive and significant influence on customer paths through brand awareness on Doctor Trip Indonesia. This is in line with Cheng et al's (2017) statement that brand awareness can increase consumer purchasing decisions in the customer path stage through content marketing. The research results show that content marketing has an indirect influence on customer paths through brand awareness on Doctor Trip Indonesia. This shows that using content marketing as a marketing tool can influence consumer decisions in the customer path process. The success of content marketing depends on the creativity of content creators in presenting information and describing products. Interesting content will convince or arouse consumers' interest in trying or buying the product. Distribution of content to the right audience will grow brand awareness among consumers. Top of

mind brand awareness has an important role for consumers when making purchasing decisions. This means that the brand is the main choice, consumers are loyal to the brand and will recommend it to others. So the ultimate goal of content marketing is to reach the top of mind level to increase sales.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Conclusion
The research results show that *content marketing* has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness. Content marketing has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions. Brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions. And content marketing has a positive and significant influence on purchasing decisions through brand awareness as an intervention.

5.2 Suggestion
a. Suggestions for companies are to evaluate the content produced, either through web analytics, or feedback in the form of anonymous surveys, or random interviews with consumers. Next, feedback data from consumers is needed to determine the level of brand awareness of Doctor Trip Indonesia. This information can be used as an evaluation in creating content that suits consumer needs and determining strategies to increase brand awareness.
b. This research is limited to only examining the influence of content marketing on brand awareness and customer path. Future research can measure the influence of content marketing on brand image, brand loyalty or customer engagement. How brand image, brand loyalty or customer engagement affects the customer path.

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