

# **Determining Factors of Brand Loyalty on the Use of Social Media for Marketing with Brand Trust Playing a Mediating Role**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The high level of social media use by Indonesian people has led companies to use it as a means of marketing communication for a brand. The study try to examine the direct and indirect impacts on brand loyalty of the use of social media for marketing activities through brand trust as a mediator. The method used associative research with a research sample of 150 customers of Cafe Kopi Salarea, Bandung. The study proves that there was a direct and indirect effect social media marketing on brand loyalty through brand trust. While content marketing hasn't a direct effect but has an indirect effect through brand trust. The results expand on the findings of earlier research that are still rare and can be used to develop subsequent research models. Marketing through social media is an effective strategy for companies to increase brand trust and brand loyalty. The findings of this study highlight the significant role of social media marketing in fostering brand loyalty, both directly and indirectly through brand trust. While content marketing does not have a direct effect on brand loyalty, its influence is mediated effectively by brand trust. These results emphasize the importance of social media as an impactful marketing strategy for enhancing brand trust and loyalty, providing valuable insights for companies aiming to strengthen their brand positioning in the digital era.

**Keywords : social media, social media marketing, content marketing, brand loyalty, brand trust, cafe**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Business is an activity carried out by an organization to create added value through products and services to consumers in order to earn profits as an effort to maintain its existence. One of the business opportunities that can be taken is coffee shop, considering the high level of coffee consumption in Indonesia and the phenomenon of 'coffee' in cafes has become a new habit or lifestyle (Azzahra, Abdurahman, & Alamsyah, 2023). Along with the high level of coffee consumption, business growth coffee shop is also increasing in various major cities throughout Indonesia (Purwanto, 2024).

A similar condition occurs in the city of Bandung, where business coffee shop experienced significant growth. In 2019, for the Bandung area based on observation data, there are around 600 coffee shops standing. Majority of businesses coffee shop is carried out by the informal sector such as MSMEs (KumparanFOOD, 2019). Of course, with the mushrooming of business coffee shop will increase competition and demand management to determine effective marketing strategies.

Café Kopi Salarea as coffee shop in the Bandung area, struggling to survive after the COVID pandemic which made its sales conditions drop very significantly. The dynamics of changing consumer behavior have made management aware of the need to carry out new strategies by utilizing social media to increase their competitiveness. The

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use of social media for marketing activities has become a new strategy tool for companies. Study katadata In its report, it is stated that the number of social media users in 2024 will reach the number 191million or 73.7% of the total population in Indonesia, where the most popular types of social media are YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp and Tik Tok (Panggabean, 2024).

With such a large number of social media users, it is not surprising that the management of Café Kopi Salarea uses social media to increase its competitiveness. Moreover, it is supported by empirical evidence that social media can increase consumer engagement, through the process of sharing messages, and quickly reach the target market (Gkikas et al., 2022; Huang et al., 2019). The existence of customer experience reviews on social media will have the opportunity to influence the decisions of other potential consumers (Liu, Jayawardhena, Osburg, & Yoganathan, 2021).

Related to this research, management needs to build brand loyalty due to the high level of competition in the business coffee shop and it costs a lot to attract new customers compared to retaining existing customers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). Customer retention and loyalty can be achieved if business units connect through social media with customers (Yadav & Rahman, 2018), so it can be said that social media is an important tool.

One of the efforts to build brand loyalty with social media is through the creation of Social Media Marketing. Empirical studies prove that consumer loyalty can be formed through Social Media Marketing (Faculty, 2020; Puspaningrum, 2020), but there are still differences in results where customer loyalty cannot be formed through marketing activities on social media (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015; Fernandes & Inverneiro, 2021). Another effort to increase brand loyalty through social media is the creation of Content Marketing. Empirical studies prove that Content Marketing at Social media has a positive effect on customer loyalty (Lou & Xie, 2021; Jafarova & Tolon, 2022) however, different results are shown by Hossain & Sakib (2016) which found that marketing content that is updated, popular and new product promotion or sales promotion has no effect on customer loyalty.

For this reason, it is necessary to further analyze the factors that can be an intermediary between the influence of marketing through social media and marketing content on the Brand loyalty. The intermediate variables are Brand Trust as one of the important elements in maintaining long-term relationships with consumers (Pratiwi, Saerang, & Tumewu, 2015). Related to this research, there is social media interaction with consumers through Social Media Marketing and Content Marketing plays a crucial role in fostering brand trust (Hanaysha, 2022). As consumer trust in the brand grows, marketing messages are easier to convey and create a positive image of the brand in the eyes of consumers (Ebrahim, 2020). The existence of gaps in previous research and the importance of the role of Brand Trust, this study seeks to test the factors that form brand loyalty through marketing activities and marketing content on social media by looking at the role of customer trust in the brand as a mediator.

Although previous studies have explored the impact of social media marketing and content marketing on brand loyalty, inconsistencies remain in the findings. For instance, while some research highlights a direct correlation between content marketing and brand loyalty, others find no significant link. Similarly, the mediating role of brand trust in this relationship has not been adequately examined in the context of the cafe industry, particularly within small and medium enterprises in Indonesia. This study seeks to address these gaps by focusing on the unique dynamics of Cafe Kopi Salarea and providing empirical evidence on the role of brand trust as a mediator.

The rapid rise in social media use and its influence on consumer behavior necessitates businesses to optimize digital marketing strategies to remain competitive. In the saturated cafe industry, particularly in cities like Bandung, building and sustaining customer loyalty is crucial for long-term success. With the changing dynamics of consumer engagement post-pandemic, understanding how social media marketing and content marketing impact brand loyalty, and how trust acts as a bridge in this process, is imperative for devising effective marketing strategies. This urgency is compounded by the increasing reliance of younger demographics on digital platforms for brand interactions.

This study offers a novel contribution by integrating the concepts of social media marketing, content marketing, and brand trust to understand their combined effect on brand loyalty in the cafe industry. Unlike existing studies that often focus on larger industries or overlook the mediating role of brand trust, this research investigates these relationships within the context of an Indonesian SME, Cafe Kopi Salarea. By demonstrating how content marketing indirectly impacts brand loyalty through trust, the study provides new insights into strategic digital marketing practices tailored for small businesses.

The objective of this research is to analyze the direct and indirect effects of social media marketing and content marketing on brand loyalty, with a specific focus on the mediating role of brand trust. This study aims to provide actionable insights for businesses, particularly in the cafe industry, to optimize their marketing strategies and foster stronger customer relationships. The benefits of this research include a deeper understanding of how digital marketing efforts can be effectively tailored to build trust and loyalty, enabling businesses to sustain competitive advantage. Additionally, the findings serve as a foundation for future studies exploring similar dynamics in other industries or regions.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### **Model Development**

#### **Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty**

The concept of trust involves a calculus process that is based on the role of an object to continue to perform its role and the relationship between costs and rewards (Duan, Zhu, & Sarkis, 2024). Brand trust It is a consumer perception of the reliability of a brand in carrying out its function as it should. Thus, brand trust involves the virtue of a company working in the best interests of its customers to improve aspects of trust including safety, reliability, and reliability (Ebrahim, 2020). Increased brand value is formed through consumer trust in the brand, consumers will have feelings for the brand and have an impact on the consumer's decision to buy a brand (Puspaningrum, 2020).

Brand value arises when there is high trust by its users so that they are willing to engage in social media activities carried out by a brand (Chahal & Rani, 2017). When consumers trust a brand, they often develop a sense of belonging and belonging, resulting in a strong emotional connection with the brand and increased attitude loyalty (Na et al., 2023). Empirical studies show that high consumer brand loyalty can be formed through high consumer trust in the brand (Na et al., 2023; Puspaningrum, 2020).

H1: Brand trust affects brand loyalty.

#### **Social Media Marketing, Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty**

Increasing the company's value is carried out through activities social media marketing. This activity covers the entire communication and marketing process by

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utilizing technology and social media channels (Yadav & Rahman, 2018). The two-way communication process with consumers will be easy and fast through this activity so that it produces a positive effect, similar to traditional advertising (Seo & Park, 2018). Therefore, this activity is an effective marketing communication method through social media in seeing consumer perception and understanding (Chen & Lin, 2019).

Developing relationships with customers will be more effective through Social Media Marketing (Ismail, 2017) and the interactions that occur will generate trust, eliminating the uncertainty that hinders customer engagement with the brand (Khadim, Hanan, Arshad, Saleem, & Khadim, 2018). Empirical studies prove that Brand Trust can be created through increased effectiveness Social Media Marketing (Hanaysha, 2022; Puspaningrum, 2020). Increased interaction between customers and brands can shape customer loyalty to a brand as research Ebrahim (2020) and Puspaningrum (2020) successfully proving that strong brand loyalty can be formed through marketing on social media. Based on the above explanation, long-term relationships will be more maintained if trust and positive relationships with brands are formed through consumer engagement on social media (Purwianti & Fionna, 2023). In this case, the impact of marketing on social media on brand loyalty can be mediated by brand trust, As empirically proven by research Tatar & Erdoğan (2016), Puspaningrum (2020) and Yazdanian et al. (2019).

H2: Social media marketing has an effect on brand loyalty.

H3: Social media marketing affects brand trust.

H6: Social media marketing has an effect on brand loyalty mediated by brand trust.

Content Marketing, Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty

One of the important strategies in marketing is activity Content Marketing Through planning, creating, and distributing interesting content on social media in the form of videos, blogs, and website articles so that the company's goals are achieved in the target market by encouraging them to become customers (Bala & Verma, 2018). Content marketing is not a new invention. Companies have been creating and distributing content for years to build new business environments, find new customers, and retain existing customers. Main differences Content Marketing of traditional advertising and marketing is first, Content Marketing using content to make a sale, but not the sale itself. Second, Content Marketing not an advertisement and not classified as a push strategy. Content marketing is a pull strategy where creator producing information that is interesting, entertaining, educational, and useful when consumers need it, and not a kind of rain of messages to consumers (Baydaş, Ata, & Coşkun, 2023).

Content marketing get their audience by offering something of value to consumers. This means that consumers will be looking for Content Marketing that is appreciated by its audience, making them more engaged with both its content and its brand (Hollebeek & Macky, 2019). This will certainly create a high sense of trust in the brand. In other words, activities Content Marketing will have a positive effect on Brand Trust and has been empirically proven by Hollebeek & Macky (2019) and Fog & Indra (2022). Basically Content Marketing A brand is seen as continuous socialization between the brand and consumers to change the attitude of inactive consumers through inconspicuous conversations. During this process, consumers derive value from their exposure to Content Marketing over a brand, which, in turn, has proven to drive Brand loyalty and intent to subscribe (Lou, Xie, Feng, & Kim, 2019). Study Lou & Xie (2021) and Jafarova & Tolon (2022) has empirically proven Content Marketing high-value ones have an impact on the increase brand loyalty. There is a direct influence from Content Marketing towards Brand loyalty and indirect influence through brand trust, so Brand Trust can play

a mediating role in the relationship between Content Marketing and Brand loyalty as the research conducted by Ajina (2019) and Ashrafa et al. (2022)

H4: Content marketing affects brand loyalty.

H5: Content marketing affects brand trust.

H7: Content marketing has an effect on brand loyalty mediated by brand trust.

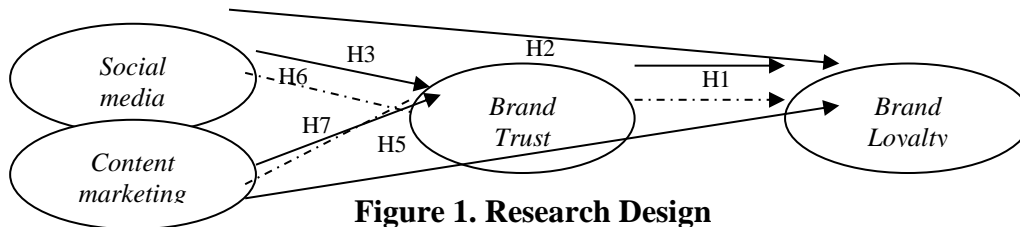


Figure 1. Research Design

Table 1. Variable Operationalization

Variables/ Concepts	Indicators	Scale
Social media marketing (Nazila et al., 2022)	Online communities (MMS1, MMS2) Interaction (MMS3, MMS4) Content sharing (MMS5, MMS6) Credibility (MMS7, MMS8)	1-5
Content marketing (Jalantina & Minarsih, 2021)	Strategy (CON1, CON2) Activity (CON3, CON4) Result (CON5, CON6)	1-5
Brand trust (Pandiangan et al., 2021)	Viability (BT1, BT2, BT3) Intentionality (BT4, BT5, BT6)	1-5
Brand loyalty (Simangunsong et al., 2022)	Brand recommendations (BL1, BL2) Brand commitment (BL3, BL4) Repurchase the same brand (BL5, BL6)	1-5

Source: Theory summary, 2024

### Data Collection

The population is consumers of Café Kopi Salarea, Dago, Bandung with purposive sampling techniques in determining samples. The calculation of the number of samples with the formula for determining the number of representative samples is based on the sample-to-item ratio, which is the number of indicators multiplied by 5. The number of indicators is 26 statements so that the minimum number of samples is 130 (26x5) respondents. The questionnaire was distributed online through the google form application and obtained 153 respondents with 150 respondents who met the requirements and eligibility to be forwarded and analyzed further.

### Analysis Methods

A quantitative approach with associative research is used as a method to achieve research objectives (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), namely researching the effects of marketing activities and Marketing content on social media towards brand loyalty with brand trust as mediation. The data will be analyzed using PLS-based SEM analysis with the SMART-PLS tool.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Respondents

The research sample was customers of Kopi Salarea café, Dago, Bandung, which amounted to 150 respondents. The respondents' profiles are divided into gender, age, domicile, and social media used with the results, namely:

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**Table 2. Respondent Demographics**

Demographics		Sum	Percentage
Gender	Man	85	57%
	Woman	65	43%
Age	< 16 years	2	1%
	16 -25 years old	75	50%
	25-40 years	65	44%
	41-60 years old	8	5%
Domicile	Bandung	98	66%
	Bandung Regency	17	12%
	West Bandung	8	5%
	Other districts in Prov. West Java	8	5%
	Jakarta and Tangerang	2	1%
	Other cities	17	11%
Social Media Used	Facebook	2	1%
	Instagram	127	85%
	Tiktok	17	12%
	Youtube	2	1%
	Twitter	2	1%

*Source: Processed Data, 2024*

Table 1. shows that the majority of respondents who are customers of Kopi Salarea café are 16-40 years old, with male gender and domiciled in the city of Bandung. For the type of social media used to see social media marketing and content marketing activities used by the management of the Kopi Salarea café, the majority use Instagram.

**Analysis**

The results of the measurement model for testing the validity and reliability of the research instrument are seen in table 3.

**Table 3. Convergent Validity and Reliability Testing**

Variable	Items	Outer Loading	Cronbachs Alpha	Composite realibility	AVE
Social Media Marketing	SMM1	0.792	0.920	0.934	0.641
	SMM2	0.689			
	SMM3	0.776			
	SMM4	0.844			
	SMM5	0.802			
	SMM6	0.825			
	SMM7	0.834			
	SMM8	0.831			
Content Marketing	KM1	0.922	0.957	0.965	0.822
	KM2	0.878			
	KM3	0.897			
	KM4	0.911			
	KM5	0.916			
	KM6	0.916			
Brand Trust	BT1	0.910	0.957	0.965	0.823
	BT2	0.903			

	BT3	0.914			
	BT4	0.910			
	BT5	0.906			
	BT6	0.902			
	BL1	0.883			
	BL2	0.888			
Brand Loyalty	BL3	0.952	0.953	0.963	0.812
	BL4	0.920			
	BL5	0.891			
	BL6	0.868			

Source: Processed Data, 2024

Table 3. show Measurement Model with testing convergent validity and Reliability. Testing convergent validity show value outer loading All indicators for each variable above 0.7 mean valid and suitable for use. For the MMS2 indicator the value outer loading (0.689) still below 0.7 will still be maintained due to the AVE value Social Media Marketing greater than 0.5 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2019). All variables have a value greater than or equal to 0.7 on Cronbach Alpha and composite reability, which can be interpreted that all research indicators have been reliable or consistent.

**Table 4. R Square and F Square**

Effect	Variable	R Square	f Square
Brand Trust	Brand Loyalty	0.691	0.131
Content Marketing			0.000
Social Media Marketing			0.192
Content Marketing	Brand Trust	0.753	0.458
Social Media Marketing			0.137

Source: Processed Data, 2024

Table 4. shows R value Square from the formed research model consisting of two equation models. Interpretation of R values Square is if R<sup>2</sup> values equal to 0.25 – 0.49 (weak), 0.50 – 0.74 (moderate), and more than 0.75 (strong) (Hair et al., 2019). In the first model, R Square worth 0.691 so that the effect is large Social Media Marketing, Content Marketing and Brand Trust towards Brand loyalty be Moderate. On the second model, R Square worth 0.753 so that the effect is large Social Media Marketing and Content Marketing towards Brand Trust be Moderate.

Table 4. also shows an F value Square from the research model formed. Interpretation of the top effect size is a category small if f Square worth 0.02 – 0.14. Medium category if f Square worth 0.15 – 0.34, and a strong category if F Square values above 0.35. f Square negligible if it is less than 0.02 (Hair et al., 2019). Effect size Brand Trust towards Brand loyalty Categorized small Content Marketing towards Brand loyalty can be ignored or considered non-existent, and Social Media Marketing towards Brand loyalty Categorized keep. Effect size Content Marketing and Brand Trust Categorized strong, and effect size Social Media Marketing and Brand Trust Categorized small.

**Table 5. Relationship Between Variables**

Path Coefficient	Org. Sample	T Value	Sig
Brand Trust-> Brand Loyalty	0.404	3.114	0.002
Soc.Med, Mktng -> Brand Loyalty	0.452	5.100	0.000
Soc.Med, Mktng -> Brand Trust	0.321	3.530	0.000
Content Mktng -> Brand Loyalty	0.021	0.166	0.868
Content Mktng -> Brand Trust	0.586	7.001	0.000

*Source: Processed Data, 2024*

Table 5 shows the value of the path coefficient that can determine the decision making of the research hypothesis. In the relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty, it is known that t counts are valued at 3,114 > 1,996, and the sig is valued at 0.002 (< 5%), meaning that it accepts the hypothesis with a positive influence (original sample value = positive) and significant between brand trust and brand loyalty. In the relationship between social media marketing and brand loyalty, it is known that t count = 5,100 > 1,996, and the sig is 0.000 (< 5%), meaning that it accepts the hypothesis with a positive and significant influence (original sample value = positive) and significant between social media marketing and brand loyalty.

The relationship between social media marketing and brand trust, t calculated to be 3,530 > 1,996, and the sig to 0.000 (< 5%), means that it accepts the hypothesis that there is a significant positive influence on social media marketing and brand trust. The relationship between content marketing and brand loyalty has a t value of 0.166 < 1.996, and a sig value of 0.868 (> 5%), meaning that it rejects the hypothesis with the conclusion that there is no influence between content marketing and brand loyalty. The relationship between content marketing and brand trust is known to be calculated at 7,001 > 1,996, and the sig is valued at 0.000 (< 5%), meaning that it accepts the hypothesis with a significant positive influence on content marketing and brand trust.

**Table 6. Intervening Test**

Mediation Test	Specific Indirect Effect		Direct Effect		Information
Content Mark. -> B. Trust -> B. Loyalty	Content Mark. -> B. Trust -> B. Loyalty		Content Mark. -> B. Loyalty		Indirect-only mediation (full mediation)
	Org. sample	Sig	Org. sample	Sig	
	0.237	0.002	0.021	0.868	
SocMed Mark. -> B. Trust -> B.Loyalty	SocMed Mark. -> B. Trust -> B.Loyalty		SocMed Mark. -> B.Loyalty		Complementary (partial mediation)
	Org. sample	Sig	Org. sample	Sig	
	0.130	0.042	0.452	0.000	

Table 6. showing the value of the pathway coefficient that can determine the decision-making of research hypotheses related to the role of mediation. Effect test intervening Refers Reinhold et al., (2018). Based on Table 5., hypothesis 6 (H6) is accepted because of the aspect of mediated (specific indirect) effect while Direct Effect (c) is insignificant, so the type of mediation is known as full mediation. At Hypothesis 7 (H7) is accepted because of the aspect of mediated (specific indirect) effect significant and Direct Effect significant, so that the type of mediation is known as partial mediation.



## **Discussion**

### **The Relationship Between Social Media Marketing, Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty**

Empirical evidence shows the high Brand Trust will have an impact on the height of brand loyalty. High consumer trust in a brand is a key factor that can increase the value of the brand itself, make consumers have a sense of ownership of a brand and can influence consumers in forming brand loyalty. These findings are in line with research Na et al., (2023) and Puspaningrum (2020). Testing other hypotheses on social media use factors that affect Brand loyalty is just marketing through social media that have positive relevance to Brand loyalty. The existence of this positive influence means high intensity Social Media Marketing to consumers, then consumer loyalty to Brand Cafe Kopi Salarea will be even higher. Marketing activities through social media are an effective management strategy for communicate, interact, and engage with customers. Increased interaction between customers and Café Kopi Salarea can form high customer loyalty. This finding is in line with the evidence carried out Ebrahim (2020) and Puspaningrum (2020). The next hypothesis test is the use of social media for marketing activities has a positive effect on consumer trust in the brand. These results show that marketing through social media can be an effective strategy in developing relationships with customers through the interaction process in increasing trust as it is in line with the evidence carried out by Hanaysha (2022) and Puspaningrum (2020).

### **The Relationship Between Content Marketing, Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty**

Empirical studies prove that Content Marketing has no relevance to brand loyalty. Absence of influence Content Marketing towards brand loyalty, The same is true of the empirical evidence presented by Schivinski & Dabrowski (2015) and Fernandes & Inverneiro (2021). However, the results of other statistical analyses show that Content Marketing is the most influential factor in the emergence of Consumer trust in the brand Than social media marketing. These results can be interpreted Content Marketing presented by Café Kopi Salarea is able to offer something of value to consumers, thus making consumers more involved not only with the content presented but further with the brand so that consumers feel more confident in Café Kopi Salarea. These results are in line with research Hollebeek & Macky (2019) and Fog & Indra (2022)

### **The Role of Brand Trust as a Mediation for the Influence of Social Media Marketing and Content Marketing on Brand Loyalty**

There is a mediation from Brand Trust be Novelty presented in this study. There are still limitations in research related to the role of mediation from Brand Trust on the influence of Content Marketing towards Brand loyalty. For this reason, the contribution of this research is to expand the results of previous research. The analysis of this study successfully proved that Brand Trust can play a mediating role, be it a relationship Social Media Marketing and Brand loyalty (partial mediation) or relationship Content Marketing and Brand loyalty (full mediation). Consumer trust in brands plays a mediating role in line with the results of the proof Tatar & Erdoğan (2016), Puspaningrum (2020) and Yazdaniyan et al. (2019). Moreover The mediation role of Brand Trust over the relationship Content Marketing and Brand loyalty align with empirical proof by Ajina (2019) and Ashrafa et al. (2022)

## **CONCLUSION**

This study was carried out as an attempt to prove the hypothesis that had been designed and succeeded in finding an effect Direct and Indirect Social Media Marketing and Brand loyalty with brand trust plays a mediating role (partial mediation). While Content Marketing has no effect Direct towards Brand loyalty but it has an effect indirect through Brand Trust (full mediation). The theoretical implication of this study is that consumer trust in brands has a mediating role in the relationship between marketing activities and marketing content through social media to brand loyalty. These results contribute to the expansion of the development of subsequent research models. The practical implications of these findings are first, effective and high-intensity social media marketing activities can be the right tool for increasing consumer celebration and loyalty to the brand. Second, Content Marketing that offers value to consumers can increase consumer trust in a brand that is more effective than social media marketing.

This study has limitations, first, the research sample is a customer of Café Kopi Salarea, Bandung. Second, the research variables are limited to antecedents to brand loyalty such as marketing activities and marketing content through social media with brand trust as mediation. Third, there are no restrictions on the type of social media used by the management of Café Kopi Salarea, Bandung, so it is not known for sure which social media is effective for social media marketing and content marketing activities. Suggestions for the next research can expand the research sample in the form of adding coffee shop brands, expanding the research area, or expanding to the type of industry. In addition, future research can focus more on one type of social media because each type has a different audience.

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