Satisfaction: As a Mediation of Content Marketing, WOM, and Price Perception on Trust

Dian Rahmawati[1*], Ira Nuriya Santi[2], Umar Syarifuddin[3], Pricylia Chintya Dewi Buntuang[4]
Universitas Tadulako, Palu, Indonesia[1,2,3,4]
dianrahmawati856@gmail.com[1*] , iranuria80@gmail.com[2], umarmanfebuntad@gmail.com[3], pricyliabuntuang@gmail.com[4]

Abstract

Purpose: This study analyzes the influence of content marketing, word of mouth, and price perception on consumer trust through customer satisfaction as a mediating variable, with a case study on UMKM Ummi Home Baked Palu.

Methodology/Approach: This quantitative research employed questionnaires distributed via Google Forms to 100 respondents using purposive sampling, focusing on customers who had made at least one purchase. A five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) was used. Data were analyzed with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS software.

Results/Findings: The results show that content marketing, word of mouth, and price perception positively and significantly influence customer satisfaction, which then strengthens consumer trust. Word of mouth has the strongest effect, while customer satisfaction mediates and amplifies the relationship between the variables and trust

Conclusions: Content marketing, word of mouth, and price perception significantly enhance customer satisfaction and trust, with satisfaction mediating and strengthening these relationships, underscoring the role of digital marketing strategies for MSMEs.

Limitations: This study only examined one MSME, Ummi Home Baked Palu, in the culinary sector. Hence, results cannot be generalized to other MSMEs, as customer characteristics may differ.

Contribution: The study contributes to academic development in management and business while offering practical implications for MSMEs in designing effective marketing strategies to enhance customer satisfaction and trust.

Keywords: *Content Marketing, Price Perception, Satisfaction, Trust, Word of Mouth*

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1. Introduction

Marketing strategies continue to evolve in line with shifts in consumer behavior in the digital era. Businesses without a clear plan often fail because they lack direction and are unable to anticipate future conditions (Pasaribu *et al*. 2021). Moreover, the marketing environment has undergone major changes owing to the emergence of digital technologies, which have accelerated the speed of information exchange (Mayroza Wiska *et al*., 2022). The Internet has evolved from being a mere communication tool to a crucial component of the business community. Digital marketing has become a popular medium for promoting a wide range of businesses (Bachri *et al*. 2023). Technological and informational advancements have influenced consumer behavior, including in the food industry (Wahyuningsih *et al*.,

2022). These developments have driven the increased use of information and communication technologies in society (Rombe *et al*., 2021).

However, in the marketplace, MSMEs often face intense competition from large or well-established firms (Meldawati *et al*., 2023). In the food sector, MSMEs struggle to gain customer trust due to rising competition and the shift in consumer behavior towards digital platforms. As a result, business actors, especially micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), must adapt to technological changes to remain competitive (Zahara *et al.*, 2023). Maintaining competitiveness depends heavily on building consumer trust, especially for MSMEs that are still developing their reputation.

Consumer trust is a psychological condition indicating the willingness to accept risk or vulnerability based on favorable expectations regarding a company's intentions and behaviors to deliver promised benefits (Parnataria & Abror, 2019). In the culinary business, trust is related to product quality, food safety, consistency of taste, and reliable service. When customers receive products or services that match a company's promotional claims, their trust in the company increases (Rosdiana and Haris, 2018). Customers tend to prefer goods and brands that they trust (Budi Utomo *et al*., 2024). In the age of social media, business owners must not only produce high-quality products but also build emotional connections with customers through targeted communication. In today's digital environment, MSMEs can utilize various new marketing strategies to build consumer trust because trust is shaped internally by the company and externally through marketing strategies that introduce products to the public.

One of the fastest-growing strategies to meet this need is content marketing. The goal of content marketing is to increase customer engagement with the brand by creating and delivering materials designed to inform and stimulate the curiosity of potential customers regarding a product (Dewi *et al*., 2023). Content marketing is a more effective approach for marketers to achieve their communication objectives (Abdjul *et al*., 2022). Through relevant, educational, and engaging content, businesses can attract customers and foster consumer trust in the brand. In practice, consumers perceive social media marketing as more reliable than conventional advertising (Zahara *et al*., 2021). Internet-based marketing, especially through social media, can expand sales reach without incurring substantial marketing costs (Ayu *et al*., 2016). Social media platforms can be used for structured and targeted marketing efforts that help build consumer trust (Zahara *et al*., 2021).

Promotional techniques, such as word-of-mouth (WOM), play a crucial role in influencing consumer attitudes, alongside content marketing. Word of mouth (WOM) refers to the practice of consumers sharing information about a product or brand with others after experiencing satisfaction with it (Nisa, 2022). Because it is based on direct user experience with a product or service, word-of-mouth promotion is considered more effective (Theng *et al*., 2023). Consumers with positive experiences are more likely to share them with others, which ultimately increases the purchase intentions of potential customers (Wahyuningsih *et al*., 2022a). In the modern digital era, consumers often consider others' experiences and opinions before making a purchase. Thus, one of the most important strategies for ensuring the success of food businesses such as Ummi Home Baked is to encourage positive word-of-mouth promotion. WOM has proven to be an effective free advertising technique.

Conversely, customer trust is strongly influenced by their perceptions of price. Consumers use two main aspects when evaluating the price of goods or services: the listed price and their internal perception of that price (Agung *et al*., 2023). Competitive pricing affects purchasing decisions and company profitability (Budiono, 2021). Typically, buyers choose products they need after considering various factors, including price perceptions (Sinulingga, 2021). When price perception aligns with product quality, it can enhance consumer satisfaction and build brand loyalty. Setting appropriate prices is crucial for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the culinary sector, as it can influence customer perceptions of product value and strengthen their loyalty and trust. In many studies, marketing strategies are linked to consumer trust and satisfaction.

A customer's psychological impression of a product or service after consumption determines their satisfaction level (Christiarini *et al*., 2024). Customer satisfaction measures how pleased consumers are with a product or service and helps businesses assess the likelihood of developing long-term

relationships with customers (Dari & Saputra, 2022). Customer satisfaction can create loyal customers, as repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth can attract new buyers and improve profitability (Hsu *et al*., 2024). This indicates that producers must consistently prioritize customer needs and satisfaction in product and service development (Razak *et al*., 2021).

Therefore, strategies such as content marketing, word-of-mouth, and appropriate pricing are essential for achieving customer trust and satisfaction. In this regard, building positive customer experiences enhances trust, which in turn increases satisfaction with MSME products. Thus, by implementing the right marketing strategies, local culinary businesses such as Ummi Home Baked Palu can improve their competitiveness and market share in the future. Ummi Home Baked is an MSMEs in Palu City that operates in the culinary industry, particularly in bakery products. Located at Jl. Sisingamangaraja No. 14, Besusu Timur, East Palu District, Palu City, Indonesia.

The business has continued to grow since its establishment in January 2019, offering high-quality and affordable products. Ummi Home Baked provides various culinary products, including assorted bread, snacks, donuts, cakes, desserts, brownies, and beverages. In June 2024, Ummi Home Baked launched its steamed brownies ("Brownese Kukus") in several flavors, including butter sprinkle, original, cream cheese, and avocado. From the beginning, the bakery has utilized social media, particularly Instagram, as one of its primary marketing strategies. Marketing activities on social media platforms, such as Instagram, can significantly influence consumer shopping decisions (Prasetiyo & Azura, 2023).

In addition, word-of-mouth from customers who have purchased its products also contributes to increasing the popularity of Ummi Home Baked in Palu City. However, to strengthen customer trust and maintain consumer loyalty, Ummi Home Baked must understand how Content Marketing, Word of Mouth, and Price Perception influence Trust through Customer Satisfaction. Satisfied consumers tend to develop positive views of a brand, which ultimately strengthens their trust and increases the likelihood of recommending products to others.

Previous studies examining the influence of content marketing, word-of-mouth, and price perception on trust through satisfaction as a mediating variable have revealed notable similarities and differences. Although the study by Rafidhi *et al*. (2023) at PT Esta Dana Ventura Makassar Branch found that customer satisfaction is significantly influenced by trust and word of mouth, which in turn has a substantial impact on customer loyalty, the study did not investigate the role of price perception and content marketing in shaping trust through satisfaction as a mediating variable.

Meanwhile, Yuniarti and Sukma (2024) demonstrated that customer trust is influenced by price perception and product quality, and that both factors significantly affect customer satisfaction. However, their research did not address the effects of word-of-mouth and content marketing on trust and satisfaction. The study conducted by Budi Utomo *et al*. (2024) revealed that word of mouth, trust, and social media marketing all positively and substantially impacted customer satisfaction among iPhone users in Surabaya; however, the study did not consider price perception. These comparisons highlight gaps in the current research.

Particularly in the context of food businesses, such as the Ummi Home Baked bakery in Palu, there remains a lack of studies examining how content marketing, word of mouth, and price perception collectively contribute to building customer satisfaction, which subsequently affects trust. Based on these gaps and limitations, the researcher is interested in examining the combined influence of these three marketing strategies on consumer trust, with customer satisfaction as a mediating variable, in a case study of Ummi Home Baked Palu. The study is titled: "The Influence of Content Marketing, Word of Mouth, and Price Perception on Trust Through Customer Satisfaction: A Case Study of Ummi Home Baked Palu." The following illustrates the conceptual framework developed in this study:
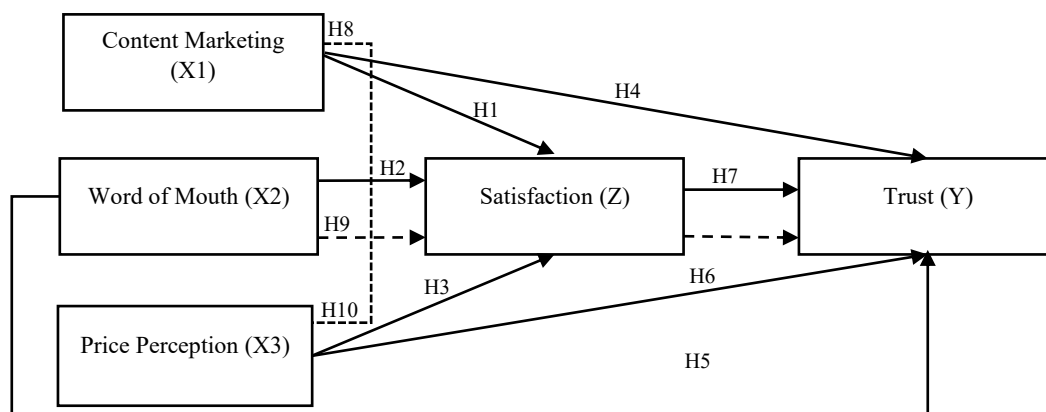
Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
Source: Processed by the researcher (2025)

H1   : Content Marketing has a significant effect on consumer satisfaction at Ummi Home Baked.
H2   : Word of Mouth has a significant effect on consumer satisfaction at Ummi Home Baked.
H3   : Price Perception significantly affects consumer satisfaction at Ummi Home Baked Palu.
H4   : Content Marketing has a significant effect on consumer trust in Ummi Home Baked Palu.
H5   : Word-of-mouth has a significant effect on consumer trust in Ummi Home Baked Palu.
H6   : Price Perception significantly affects consumer trust in Ummi Home Baked Palu.
H7   : Consumer Satisfaction significantly affects consumer trust in Ummi Home Baked Palu.
H8   : Content Marketing has a significant effect on consumer trust through consumer satisfaction as an intervening variable at Ummi Home Baked Palu.
H9   : Word of Mouth has a significant effect on consumer trust through consumer satisfaction as an intervening variable at Ummi Home Baked Palu.
H10 : Price Perception has a significant effect on consumer trust through consumer satisfaction as an intervening variable at Ummi Home Baked Palu.

2. Literature Review
2.1 *Content Marketing*
The production and distribution of informative and engaging content to attract, acquire, and engage potential customers is a key component of a company's marketing plan, known as content marketing (Octaviana *et al*., 2024). The goal of content marketing is to capture the interest of new audiences and introduce them to a company's operations. Its primary purpose is to persuade and retain consumers as loyal customers of the products or services offered by a business (Oktaviani & Wandebori, 2024). Content marketing is strongly linked to social media; producers implement content marketing strategies on various social media platforms, including Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube (Setiawan & Safitri, 2024). Utilizing social media can assist business owners in finding new customers (Rombe *et al*., 2023).

2.2 *Word of Mouth*
Sharing personal experiences and disseminating information about a product or service through individual or group recommendations is referred to as word-of-mouth (WOM) communication (Handayani *et al*., 2025). Word-of-mouth marketing focuses on actively involving customers in supporting a product, service, or brand by encouraging them to share positive opinions with others (Oktaviani & Wandebori, 2024). When customers purchase a product and are satisfied with what they receive, they are more likely to share their experiences with others. This is because WOM naturally originates from the perspective of consumers, who are perceived as more objective and free from specific promotional intentions. Positive testimonials encourage potential customers to purchase a product because favorable reviews about a company increase their interest in buying (Purnawan & Suarmanayasa, 2021).

2.3 Price Perception

Price perception refers to how customers assess a product or service based on the benefits or values they receive from it (Purba *et al*., 2021). Price perception is when consumers fully understand price-related information (Ardiyansyah & Abadi, 2023). Each consumer evaluates price differently, but more affordable prices tend to attract consumer attention and can increase customer satisfaction (Haq *et al*., 2022). Price perception also includes an evaluation of whether the price is reasonable, fair, and justifiable based on the benefits obtained from the goods or services offered (Ekasari & Surip, 2025). Therefore, price perception essentially represents the information received by consumers regarding the selling price of a product and the judgment they form about it based on that information.

2.4 Trust

Trust can be defined as an aspect of a relationship that measures the level of confidence and honesty in the commitments made by a party (Wiedyani & Prabowo, 2019). When producers or sellers provide truthful information about the details of the products or services they offer, it helps to strengthen customer trust (Rosdiana & Haris, 2018). Trust is considered the foundation for building and maintaining long-term customer relationships. Trust established between a company and its consumers results in strong, high-quality, and enduring relationships (Božić, 2017).

2.5 Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is an essential component that influences customer loyalty (Dwi Setiana & Tjahjaningsih, 2024). Customer satisfaction refers to the comparison between consumers' expectations and their actual experiences when using a product (Gultom *et al*. 2020). When a product or service meets customer expectations, they feel satisfied, and positive experiences strengthen consumer trust. When the products or services received do not meet customer expectations, dissatisfaction occurs; however, if performance exceeds expectations, customers may feel delighted (Rizky and Hasbi, 2021).

When customers believe that all their needs have been met in the best possible way, it becomes a key determinant of their satisfaction (Magfira *et al*., 2021). High levels of satisfaction typically foster loyalty and trust, which influence future purchase decisions (Anggetha & Albari, 2024). The gap between what customers expect from a product or service and what they actually receive is often used to measure customer satisfaction (Santi *et al*., 2020).

3. Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research methodology. The survey questions used in this study were distributed directly to respondents through Google Forms. The population of this study consisted of customers who purchased products from Ummi Home Baked Palu. Because the total population was unknown, sampling was conducted. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling approach, where respondents were selected based on specific criteria—namely, customers who had made at least one purchase from Ummi Home Baked and were aged between 17 and 28 years or older. Purposive sampling involves selecting samples based on particular characteristics that are believed to closely represent the known attributes of the population (Riyanto & Hatmawan, 2020). The Lemeshow formula was used to determine the sample size. This formula is appropriate when the total population is unknown (Riyanto & Hatmawan, 2020). The formula is as follows.

$$n = \frac{z^2 p(1-p)}{d^2}$$

Description:
n: Sample size
z: Standard value = 1.96
p: Maximum estimate = 50% or 0.5
d: Margin of error = 10% or 0.10

Thus:

$$n = \frac{1,96^2 \, x \, 0,5(1 - 0,5)}{0,10^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3,8416 \, x \, 0,25}{0,01}$$

$$n = \frac{0,9604}{0,01}$$

$n = 96,04$ or 96 respondents

Based on these calculations, the minimum sample size required was 96 respondents. To simplify the process, this study used 100 respondents, which is considered sufficient to represent consumers who purchased products from Ummi Home Baked Palu. The questionnaire used to measure the variables or constructs was assessed for reliability and validity to ensure its consistency and accuracy. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the indicators (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

The data were analyzed using SmartPLS software to explore the correlations between the variables. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed as the analytical technique because of its capability to assess the mediating effect of satisfaction on consumer trust and to analyze both direct and indirect relationships among variables. The research hypotheses were quantitatively evaluated based on their causal emphasis. Accordingly, this study includes three independent variables: content marketing, word of mouth, and price perception, with customer satisfaction as the mediating variable and consumer trust as the dependent variable.

4. Results and Discussion
4.1 Respondent Characteristics
This study uses primary data collected through an online questionnaire (Google Forms) distributed to Ummi Home Baked customers in Palu City. The data analyzed consisted of 100 completed questionnaires from respondents who met all the criteria required by the instrument. The following table presents the respondents' demographic characteristics.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	33	33%
	Female	67	67%
Age	17–21 years	15	15%
	21–24 years	66	66%
	25–28 years	14	14%
	> 28 years	5	5%
Occupation	Student	77	77%
	Government Employee	2	2%
	Private Employee	11	11%
	Entrepreneur	5	5%
	Others (Housewife)	5	5%
Monthly Income	< 1 million IDR	28	28%
	1–2 million IDR	8	8%
	2–3 million IDR	9	9%
	> 3 million IDR	8	8%
	No income	47	47%

Source: Processed questionnaire data (2025)

Based on the respondent characteristics presented above, participation in this study included two gender groups: male and female participants. The majority of respondents were female, while a smaller proportion were male. In terms of age, respondents were classified into four age groups, with the highest

number falling within the 21–24 age group, followed by the 17–21, 25–28, and those aged over 28. Regarding employment status, most respondents were students, followed by private employees, entrepreneurs, housewives, and government employees.

In terms of monthly income, most respondents reported having no fixed income, which is likely related to their status as students. Among respondents who do have income, the largest group earns less than 1 million IDR per month, followed by those earning 2–3 million IDR, 1–2 million IDR, and more than 3 million IDR.The following section presents the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) based on the results of the analysis conducted.
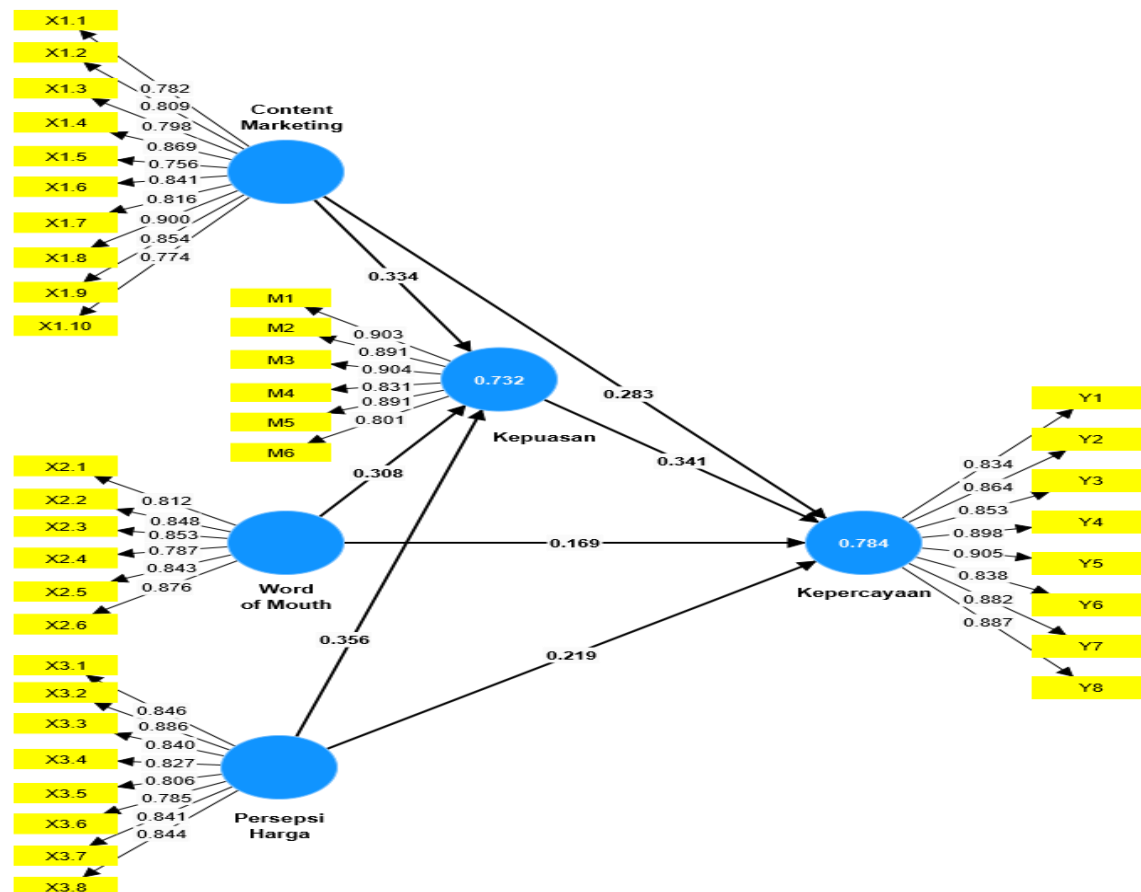

Figure 2. SmartPLS Results (Outer Loading)
Source: Processed SmartPLS Data (2025)

Outer loading values are considered valid when each indicator has a value greater than 0.70, while indicators with outer loading values below 0.70 are considered invalid (Muhson, 2022). Based on the indicator testing above, all indicators met the criteria for convergent validity and can therefore be considered valid. Thus, the analysis can proceed to the next stage of the study.

4.2 Validity Results
The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value must exceed 0.50 for a construct to be considered valid (Hair et al., 2011). Based on the calculation results presented above, all indicators in this study had AVE values greater than 0.50, indicating that all constructs met the validity criteria.

Table 2. Validity Results

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Description
Content Marketing	0.674	Valid

Word of Mouth	0.701	Valid
Price Perception	0.697	Valid
Satisfaction	0.759	Valid
Trust	0.758	Valid

Source: Processed SmartPLS Data (2025)

4.3 Reliability Results

Cronbach's alpha was used to assess whether the data collected in the reliability test could be reused consistently. A Cronbach's alpha value above 0.70 is considered reliable (Hair *et al.*, 2011). The results indicate that all research variables meet the reliability criteria and are acceptable as measurement instruments.

Table 3. Reliability Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Content Marketing	0.946	Reliable
Word of Mouth	0.914	Reliable
Price Perception	0.938	Reliable
Satisfaction	0.936	Reliable
Trust	0.954	Reliable

Source: Processed SmartPLS Data (2025)

4.4 Model Fit and Effectiveness Test
4.4.1 Path Coefficient Test / Direct Effect

The Path Coefficient test is used to determine the magnitude and significance of the direct influence of an independent variable on a dependent variable in the structural model. Two key statistical indicators used to assess significance are the T-statistic and p-value, which determine whether the relationships between variables in the research model are significant. According to Hair *et al*. (2010), a T-statistic value greater than 1.96 indicates a significant relationship at the 95% confidence level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Additionally, if the p-value is less than 0.05, the relationship between the variables is considered statistically significant.

Table 4. Path Coefficient / Direct Effect Results

Direct Effect	Original Sample (O)	Mean	T-Statistic	P-Value	Hypothesis
Content Marketing → Satisfaction	0.334	0.333	3.908	0.000	Significant
Content Marketing → Trust	0.283	0.287	2.216	0.027	Significant
Word of Mouth → Satisfaction	0.308	0.304	3.446	0.001	Significant
Word of Mouth → Trust	0.169	0.165	2.256	0.024	Significant
Price Perception → Satisfaction	0.356	0.362	3.799	0.000	Significant
Price Perception → Trust	0.219	0.223	2.098	0.036	Significant
Satisfaction → Trust	0.341	0.338	3.001	0.003	Significant

Source: Processed SmartPLS Data (2025)

H1: Content Marketing has a significant effect on customer satisfaction at Ummi Home Baked Palu.
Based on the hypothesis testing results, the relationship between Content Marketing and Satisfaction shows a T-statistic value of 3.908 and a P-value of 0.000. This indicates that the content strategies implemented by Ummi Home Baked Palu successfully generate customer satisfaction, as evidenced by the substantial and meaningful impact of content marketing on the satisfaction. High-quality marketing content provides relevant and useful information to customers, which in turn enhances their satisfaction level. Content marketing has a greater impact on customer satisfaction when its quality increases (Dwi Setiana & Tjahjaningsih, 2024).

By delivering content that is engaging, informative, and aligned with the audience's needs, a strong emotional connection can be established between the brand and its customers. Therefore, this hypothesis was accepted. These findings are supported by previous studies that demonstrated that content marketing has both partial and simultaneous effects on customer satisfaction and influences consumer loyalty (Dwi Setiana & Tjahjaningsih, 2024). These results are also consistent with earlier research showing that content marketing has a positive and significant impact on customer satisfaction (Satiawan et al., 2023).

H2: Content Marketing significantly affects customer trust at Ummi Home Baked Palu.
The hypothesis analysis shows that the relationship between Content Marketing and Trust has a T-statistic value of 2.216 and a P-value of 0.027. This indicates that content marketing has a significant positive effect on customer trust. Consistent and high-quality content marketing can help build brand trust among consumers. Providing insightful, informative, and transparent content regularly can enhance consumer trust in a brand. Customers tend to trust a brand more when it applies an effective content marketing strategy, as supported by the findings of Surbakti (2024).

H3: Word of Mouth has a significant effect on customer satisfaction at Ummi Home Baked Palu.
Based on the hypothesis analysis, the relationship between Word of Mouth and Satisfaction shows a T-statistic value of 3.446 and a P-value of 0.001. This means that word-of-mouth has a strong and beneficial impact on customer satisfaction. Positive endorsements from other customers who purchased products from Ummi Home Baked Palu play a significant role in shaping consumer satisfaction. Therefore, this hypothesis was accepted. These findings align with previous studies that demonstrate that word-of-mouth communication has a positive and substantial effect on customer satisfaction, both partially and simultaneously (Rafidhi et al., 2023; Sinaga & Realize, 2023). Similarly, WOM has been shown to exert a beneficial and substantial effect on consumer satisfaction in multiple contexts (Aldiana et al., 2020).

H4: Word of Mouth has a significant effect on customer trust in Ummi Home Baked Palu.
The hypothesis testing results show that the relationship between Word of Mouth and Trust has a T-statistic value of 2.256 and a P-value of 0.024. This indicates that word-of-mouth has a strong and beneficial impact on customer trust. Recommendations shared by one customer with another play an essential role in building trust. Such consumer trust can subsequently contribute to promoting product recommendations to potential customers. Word-of-mouth communication is generally considered more credible because people tend to trust authentic experiences shared by others who have previously purchased the product. Therefore, this hypothesis was accepted. These findings are consistent with previous research showing that Word of Mouth (WOM) has a positive and significant effect on consumer trust (Hendarto et al., 2022). These results also align with studies indicating that word-of-mouth communication positively influences factors related to consumer trust (Hendarto et al., 2022).

H5: Price Perception significantly affects customer satisfaction at Ummi Home Baked Palu.
The hypothesis analysis indicates that the relationship between Price Perception and Satisfaction has a P-value of 0.000 and a t-statistic of 3.799. This shows that price perception has a strong and substantial effect on customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction increases when they believe that the price they pay reflects the value and quality of the products purchased. Consumers tend to be more satisfied with a product or service when they feel that they are receiving good value for their money.

Thus, this hypothesis was accepted. These findings are consistent with previous research that identified a strong correlation between price perception and customer satisfaction and demonstrated a significant impact on satisfaction through purchase decisions (Aprilia & Rivera, 2023). Moreover, price perception has been shown to have a significant and positive effect on customer satisfaction, which, in turn, influences customer loyalty (Haq et al., 2022). This result also aligns with prior studies, indicating that consumers' perceptions of price have a direct and substantial impact on their level of satisfaction (Putri & Nainggolan, 2024). Similarly, this is supported by findings showing that Price Perception significantly affects satisfaction (Yulihapsari et al., 2025).

H6: Price Perception significantly affects customer trust in Ummi Home Baked Palu.
Based on the hypothesis testing results, the relationship between Price Perception and Trust shows a T-statistic of 2.098 and a P-value of 0.036. This indicates that price perception has a meaningful and substantial effect on customer trust. Fair and transparent pricing helps build customer trust in a brand. Customers are more likely to trust the integrity and reliability of a business when they perceive its prices to be fair and reflective of the product's quality. Thus, this hypothesis was accepted. These findings are consistent with previous research showing a positive and substantial relationship between price perception and trust, with a T-statistic of 2.748, which exceeds the threshold of 1.96 (Dika *et al*., 2023). This is also aligned with earlier studies that demonstrated a direct and significant correlation between customers' price perceptions and the degree of trust they place in a company (Putri & Nainggolan, 2024).

H7: Satisfaction significantly affects customer trust at Ummi Home Baked Palu.
According to the hypothesis analysis, the relationship between Satisfaction and Trust yields a T-statistic of 3.001 and a P-value of 0.003. This indicates that customers tend to trust brands more when they experience higher levels of satisfaction. When customers trust a product or service, their satisfaction reinforces this trust and influences their future purchase decisions (Gultom *et al*. 2020). Customer satisfaction creates a strong foundation of trust in future business relationships.

This study elaborates on the psychological mechanisms through which consumers satisfied with their experience at Ummi Home Baked are more likely to develop trust in the brand. These findings highlight the crucial role of customer satisfaction in establishing a long-term trust. These results are consistent with those of previous studies that showed that customer satisfaction has a positive and substantial influence on trust (Zahara, 2011). These findings are also in line with studies reporting a strong correlation between trust and customer satisfaction, with a T-statistic of 1.994, slightly below 1.96 (Dika *et al*., 2023). Furthermore, earlier research has confirmed that customer satisfaction significantly enhances customer trust (Gultom *et al*., 2020).

4.4.2   Indirect Effect Test
Table 5. Indirect Effect Test Results

Indirect Effect	Original Sample (O)	Mean	T-Statistic	P-Value	Conclusion
Content Marketing → Satisfaction → Trust	0.114	0.114	2.151	0.031	Significant
Word of Mouth → Satisfaction → Trust	0.105	0.105	2.097	0.036	Significant
Price Perception → Satisfaction → Trust	0.121	0.119	2.679	0.007	Significant

Source: Processed SmartPLS Data (2025)

H8: Content Marketing has a significant effect on trust through the mediation of Customer Satisfaction at Ummi Home Baked Palu.
The hypothesis analysis indicates that the relationship between Content Marketing and Trust, mediated by satisfaction, shows a T-statistic value of 2.151 and a P-value of 0.031. This means that Content Marketing significantly influences customer satisfaction, which subsequently contributes to the formation of trust in the brand. Content marketing plays an essential role in increasing consumer satisfaction, which ultimately helps build brand trust. When consumers receive content that is informative, relevant, and provides real value, they feel satisfied. This sense of satisfaction becomes the foundation upon which trust is built. Positive experiences arising from well-crafted content create satisfaction, which develops into trust.

H9: Word of Mouth has a significant effect on trust through the mediation of Customer Satisfaction at Ummi Home Baked Palu.

The hypothesis analysis shows that the relationship between Word of Mouth and Trust, mediated by Satisfaction, has a T-statistic value of 2.097 and a P-value of 0.036. Word-of-mouth communication has a strong influence on consumer satisfaction, which, in turn, contributes to the development of trust in a brand. When customers hear positive recommendations from others who have already tried a product or service, they tend to develop higher expectations and greater confidence in making a purchase decision. If their experience matches or exceeds these expectations, satisfaction naturally emerges as a result. Satisfaction is a critical foundation for building brand trust. In this context, testimonials and real customer experiences play an important role in shaping positive perceptions among potential consumers.

H10: Price Perception significantly affects trust through the mediation of Customer Satisfaction at Ummi Home Baked Palu.
Consumers' perception of price strongly influences product satisfaction, which, in turn, enhances brand trust. Customers tend to feel more satisfied when they believe that the price they pay aligns with the value and benefits they receive. This satisfaction may develop into deeper trust in the company and is not merely temporary in nature. When customers perceive prices as fair and reasonable, they are more likely to trust the brand, believing that they are receiving fair value for their money and are not treated unfairly. According to Yuniarti and Sukma (2024), consumer trust is significantly influenced by price perception and product quality, which subsequently affects customer satisfaction. These findings are consistent with those of the present study.

4.4.3   R-square Test
Table 6. R-square Results

Variable	R-square	R-square Adjusted	Description
Satisfaction	0.732	0.724	Moderate
Trust	0.784	0.775	Strong

Source: SmartPLS Processed Data (2025)

The satisfaction variable has an R-square value of 0.732 (73.2%), indicating that 73.2% of the variance in satisfaction can be explained by the independent variables in the model, while the remaining 26.8% is influenced by other factors not included in this study. Meanwhile, the trust variable has an R-square value of 0.784 (78.4%), meaning that 78.4% of the variance in trust is explained by the predictor variables, and 21.6% is influenced by other variables. According to Hair *et al*. (2011), the R-squared values for endogenous latent variables in a structural model can be categorized as strong (0.75), moderate (0.50), and weak (0.25). Based on these criteria, the R-squared values for both satisfaction and trust fell within the moderate-to-strong category. This indicates that the research model has adequate predictive capability, demonstrating that appropriate marketing strategies can significantly influence consumer attitudes and behavior. Beyond its theoretical contribution, the findings also offer practical implications for MSMEs in designing marketing strategies that enhance positive and long-lasting customer experience.

5. Conclusion
This study aimed to examine how the independent variables—price perception, word of mouth, and content marketing—affect consumer trust, with customer satisfaction serving as a mediating variable at MSME Ummi Home Baked Palu. The findings indicate that all three independent variables have a significant and positive impact on customer satisfaction, suggesting that Ummi Home Baked successfully provides products and services that meet customer needs. Furthermore, customer satisfaction is a key factor mediating the relationship between marketing strategies and consumer trust.

Previous studies have also highlighted that customer testimonials and digital marketing strategies play crucial roles in shaping positive customer experiences. The findings of this study further show that product quality strongly influences the ability to build consumer trust, and community communication and customer perceptions also play important roles. Overall, this study demonstrates that integrated marketing strategies focused on customer experience are essential for building consumer trust in the digital era. To maintain competitiveness in an increasingly crowded market, small and medium enterprises such as Ummi Home Baked must implement high-quality content marketing, encourage positive word-of-mouth, and set appropriate prices aligned with product quality.

5.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, future research should expand its scope by including MSMEs from different sectors and geographical locations and employing mixed-method approaches to obtain deeper insights. Increasing the number of respondents is also essential for generating more representative and accurate data. For MSME practitioners—especially in the food sector—it is crucial to optimize content marketing by providing useful and consistent information, leveraging positive word-of-mouth through loyalty programs or customer engagement initiatives, and setting competitive prices that reflect product quality. Moreover, maintaining and improving customer satisfaction should remain a top priority, as satisfaction has been shown to significantly contributes to building consumer trust.

5.2 Limitations and Future Studies

This study is limited to one MSME, Ummi Home Baked Palu, in the culinary sector. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to other MSMEs, as their customer characteristics may vary. Consequently, further research involving multiple business units from diverse backgrounds is needed to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between marketing strategies, customer satisfaction, and customer trust within MSMEs. While the findings are relevant to the local context, a mixed-method approach is recommended to provide a more holistic analysis.

5.3 Acknowledgements

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