The Viral Phenomenon of Ventela Shoes in East Java: Local Brand Strategy Through the Power of Digital Marketing

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Abstract

The strategies of Influencer Marketing, Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM), and focus on Product Quality have enabled the Ventela shoe brand to compete with other Sneakers shoe products, such as Nike, Adidas and Converse, in East Java. The dynamics of local versus international brand competition are changing consumer behavior in the global market. A quantitative approach was used in this study, with regression testing and accidental sampling techniques involving 180 respondents in East Java. The results show that Influencer Marketing strategy is the dominant factor influencing purchase decisions, followed by Product Quality and E-WOM, where all three are proven to have a significant effect on consumer purchase intention for Ventela brand shoes in East Java. The phenomenon of Ventela brand popularity has changed the paradigm of consumer behavior, where the social media era influences purchasing decisions in the teenage and young generation segments in East Java.

Keywords: *Influencer Marketing; Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM); Product Quality; Purchase Intention*

Introduction

The dominance of international shoe brands in the Indonesian market is experiencing serious challenges from the emergence of local brands that can compete competitively. Ventela, as a sneakers shoe brand originating from Indonesia, has created an extraordinary phenomenon among East Java consumers by successfully attracting attention not only from celebrities and content creators, but also successfully winning the hearts of millennials and generation Z throughout the East Java region (Kim et al., 2024; Sardar, 2025).

The contemporary digitalization era has created a revolution in the fashion and lifestyle industry, where local business actors now obtain strategic digital marketing strategies (Aw et al., 2022; Leung et al., 2024).

Technology transformation has significantly changed consumption patterns in East Java society. From the metropolitan area of Surabaya to the educational city of Malang, from Kediri to Jember, Ventela's popularity has spread widely and influenced young generation lifestyle trends (Bukhari et al., 2023; Kamalanon et al., 2022). Mastery of information technology provides strategic opportunities for local brands to market their products through effective digital platforms. The most efficient strategy applied is utilizing the power of social media, marketing through content creators, and digital word of-mouth communication to create significant marketing impact (Zhao et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2024; Shan et al., 2023).

Sneakers shoes have evolved beyond functional footwear, becoming identity statements, status symbols, and personality expressions among East Java's young generation (Rausch & Kopplin, 2021; Bukhari et al., 2023). Ventela has successfully positioned itself not only as a local product alternative, but as a primary choice capable of competing with Nike, Adidas, Vans, and other international brands. With designs that follow the latest trends, reliable quality, and more affordable prices, Ventela has become a source of local product pride capable of penetrating international markets (Liu, 2023; McKinsey, 2025).

Ventela's success in the East Java region did not occur spontaneously, but through the implementation of effective Influencer Marketing strategies. This brand establishes strategic collaborations with public opinion leaders who have credibility and significant influence among the targeted market (Beichert et al., 2023; Wies et al., 2023). These content creators not only showcase products, but also create authentic narratives about the pride of using local products that have quality equivalent to international standards (Aw et al., 2022; Chen et al., 2023).

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) has become a highly effective marketing instrument in Ventela's success. User-generated content on Instagram, TikTok, and other social media platforms has created organic marketing impact that cannot be obtained through financial investment alone (Ismagilova et al., 2022; Hassan et al., 2024). Positive reviews, product unboxing videos, and style inspiration from real users have built extraordinary trust and credibility in the eyes of East Java consumers (Fullerton, 2017; Ruiz-Mafe et al., 2018).

Most importantly, however, Ventela does not rely solely on momentary popularity. Consistent Product Quality becomes a solid foundation that makes consumers not only make one-time purchases, but develop into loyal customers

(Chen et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2024). Material quality, durability, comfort, and design aesthetics that meet modern consumer expectations become the main differentiator from competitors (Wang et al., 2022; Setyadi et al., 2024).

Purchase Intention or consumer purchase intention does not appear spontaneously, but is the result of a complex decision-making process influenced by various psychological, social, and cultural factors (Alhadid & Alhadeed, 2017; Kim et al., 2024). In the context of Ventela's popularity in East Java, this purchase intention is triggered by the right combination of content creator support, positive word-of-mouth communication, and product quality that meets expectations (Sardar, 2025; Zhao et al., 2024)

Literatur Review
Influencer Marketing and Purchase Intention

Influencer Marketing has become a highly significant marketing strategy in the digital era, with global spending reaching $24 billion in 2024 (Leung et al., 2024). Recent research shows that influencer attributes such as professionalism, credibility, and interactivity have significant impact on consumer purchase intention (Zhao et al., 2024; Aw et al., 2022). In the context of social media, particularly TikTok, influencer influence on consumer wellbeing and purchase intention is very strong, where argument quality, source credibility, and influencer benevolence become significant positive predictors (Chen et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2024).

Meta-analysis conducted by Shan et al. (2023) identified eight main characteristics of social media influencers that influence customer engagement and purchase intention, namely homophily, expertise, trustworthiness, credibility, congruence with products, entertainment value, informative value, and attractiveness. This research emphasizes that the effectiveness of influencer marketing does not only depend on influencer popularity, but more on the alignment between influencer characteristics with target audience and promoted products (Beichert et al., 2023; Wies et al., 2023).

Recent studies also show that influencer marketing has different impacts on various consumer generations. Generation Z, which is Ventela's main target, shows high responsiveness to authentic content and recommendations from influencers they trust (Sardar, 2025; Bukhari et al., 2023). Research by Kim et al. (2024) reveals that influencer self-disclosure and parasocial interactions have significant

influence on purchase intention, especially when supported by high credibility and informative value (Chen et al., 2023; Kamalanon et al., 2022).

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) in the Digital Era

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) has undergone significant evolution since the introduction of Web 2.0 technology, changing how consumers share and seek information about products (Hassan et al., 2024; Ismagilova et al., 2022). Meta-analysis research involving various studies found that factors such as argument quality, valence, eWOM usefulness, and trust in messages become the best predictors for purchase intention (Ismagilova et al., 2022; Fullerton, 2017).

Recent studies on eWOM impact on Generation Z show that information quality, information credibility, and information quantity have significant influence on online purchase intention (Alharthi et al., 2024; Hassan et al., 2024). In the context of social media platforms, credible and high-quality eWOM plays a crucial role in shaping consumer purchase intention, especially when consumers cannot physically evaluate products before purchase (Kim et al., 2024; Ruiz-Mafe et al., 2018).

Research by Hassan et al. (2024) and Tata et al. (2019) found that eWOM has positive and significant influence on purchase intention, where 93% of consumers indicated that online reviews significantly influence their purchase decisions. This is highly relevant to the Ventela phenomenon, where user-generated content and authentic testimonials from consumers become the main driver of brand popularity (Al Halbusi et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023)**.**

Product Quality as Purchase Intention Determinant

Product quality remains a fundamental factor influencing consumer purchase intention, even in the digital era dominated by online marketing strategies (Liu et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2023). Recent research shows that product quality perception has significant influence on purchase intention, especially in the e-commerce context where consumers cannot directly evaluate products (Wang et al., 2022; Setyadi et al., 2024).

Studies by Chen et al. (2023) and Liu (2023) reveal that consumers tend to prioritize high star ratings, large numbers of reviews, and trusted shopping platforms, even when similar products are available at lower prices. This shows that quality perception formed through digital signals has strong impact on purchase decisions (Hassan et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2024).

In the context of innovative products, research shows that perceived product quality becomes an important mediator between various external factors and purchase intention (Wang et al., 2022; Setyadi et al., 2024). Studies by Nguyen et al. (2024) show that for local brands, the ability to maintain quality consistency is key in building long-term consumer trust and loyalty, especially when competing with established international brands (Liu, 2023; Chen et al., 2023).

Integration of Three Variables in Digital Marketing Context

Contemporary research shows that digital marketing strategy effectiveness depends on harmonious integration between influencer marketing, eWOM, and product quality (Leung et al., 2024; Shan et al., 2023). Recent meta-analysis studies reveal that the combination of these three factors creates a stronger synergistic effect compared to single strategy implementation (Zhao et al., 2024; Chen et al., 2024).

In the Asian market context, particularly Indonesia, research shows that consumers have unique characteristics in responding to digital marketing strategies (Hassan et al., 2024; Al Halbusi et al., 2023). Cultural, social, and economic factors influence how consumers receive and process information from influencers and eWOM (Kim et al., 2024; Sardar, 2025). This explains why strategies successful for Ventela in East Java may require adaptation for other regional markets (Bukhari et al., 2023; Rausch & Kopplin, 2021).

Methodology
Research Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature review conducted, this research develops a conceptual framework that describes the relationship between independent variables (Influencer Marketing, Electronic Word of Mouth, and Product Quality) toward the dependent variable (Purchase Intention). The research conceptual framework can be seen in the following:
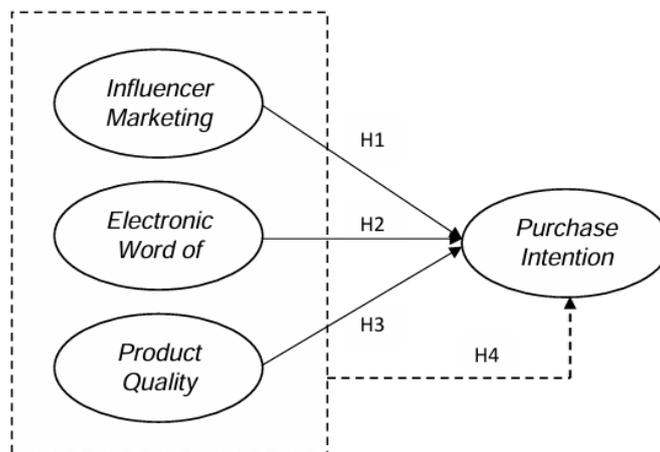
Figure 1.Research Conceptual Framework

Research Hypotheses

H1: Influencer Marketing (X1) has significant influence on Purchase Intention (Y) of Ventela shoes in East Java

H2: Electronic Word of Mouth (X2) has significant influence on Purchase Intention (Y) of Ventela shoes in East Java

H3: Product Quality (X3) has significant influence on Purchase Intention (Y) of Ventela shoes in East Java

H4: Influencer Marketing, Electronic Word of Mouth, and Product Quality (X1,X2,X3) simultaneously have significant influence on Purchase Intention (Y) of Ventela shoes in East Java

Research Design

To analyze the factors behind Ventela's popularity in East Java, this research uses a quantitative approach with a comprehensive survey method. Data collection was conducted through digital questionnaires distributed to 180 Ventela consumer respondents in various cities in East Java using Google Forms containing structured statements according to research variable indicators.

The research instrument uses a Likert scale and applies Ferdinand's formula which states that the number of indicators multiplied by 5 to 10 to obtain a representative sample size (Ferdinand, 2014). Target respondents are actual and potential Ventela consumers in East Java aged 17-35 years, representing the main market segment of this brand. The sampling technique applied is non-probability sampling with the Accidental Sampling method, where respondents are selected based on availability and ease of access at the time of research. This method was

chosen because of its effectiveness in reaching diverse consumer demographics of Ventela in urban and semi-urban areas of East Java.

The collected data is then analyzed using SPSS version 25.0 with multiple linear regression analysis techniques to determine relationship patterns and strength of influence between variables. Analysis is carried out through several testing stages: instrument validity and reliability testing, classical assumption testing (normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, autocorrelation), multiple regression analysis, R^2 determination coefficient testing, and hypothesis testing through t-test (partial) and F-test (simultaneous).

Results And Discussions

Instrument testing was conducted on each variable indicator (Ismunarti et al., 2020). Validity analysis in this study uses correlation testing, namely by observing coefficients at a significance level < 0.05 or 5% so that the item is declared valid (Ghozali, 2018)

Table 1. Validity Test Results

Variable	Statement Item	R-Count	Correlate	Description
Influencer Marketing (X1)	X1.1.1	0,807	0,05	*Valid*
	X1.1.2	0,862	0,05	*Valid*
	X1.2.1	0,850	0,05	*Valid*
	X1.2.2	0,836	0,05	*Valid*
	X1.3.1	0,851	0,05	*Valid*
	X1.3.2	0,857	0,05	*Valid*

Electronic Word of Mouth (X2)	*X2.1.1*	0,767	0,05	Valid
	X2.1.2	0,868	0,05	Valid
	X2.2.1	0,828	0,05	Valid
	X2.2.2	0,770	0,05	Valid
	X2.3.1	0,769	0,05	Valid
	X2.3.2	0,772	0,05	Valid
	X2.4.1	0,765	0,05	Valid
	X2.4.2	0,827	0,05	Valid
	X2.5.1	0,808	0,05	Valid
	X2.5.2	0,786	0,05	Valid
Poduct Quality (X3)	*X3.1.1*	0,786	0,05	Valid
	X3.1.2	0,773	0,05	Valid
	X3.2.1	0,812	0,05	Valid
	X3.2.2	0,812	0,05	Valid
	X3.3.1	0,852	0,05	Valid
	X3.3.2	0,814	0,05	Valid

	X3.4.1	0,861	0,05	Valid
	X3.4.2	0,860	0,05	Valid
	X3.5.1	0,820	0,05	Valid
	X3.5.2	0,808	0,05	Valid
	X3.6.1	0,732	0,05	Valid
	X3.6.2	0,820	0,05	Valid
	Y1.1.1	0,764	0,05	Valid
	Y1.1.2	0,735	0,05	Valid
	Y1.2.1	0,764	0,05	*Valid*
	Y1.2.2	0,765	0,05	*Valid*
Purchase Intention (Y)	Y1.3.1	0.864	0,05	*Valid*
	Y1.3.2	0,822	0,05	*Valid*
	Y1.4.1	0,884	0,05	*Valid*
	Y1.4.2	0,848	0,05	*Valid*

Source: SPSS Output Appendix Processed Data (2025)

Based on the table above, all data is declared valid because the significance level > 0.05, so all data is categorized as valid. Reliability testing is an instrument used to measure a questionnaire where the variable is called reliable or

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trustworthy if respondents' answers to the questions asked are consistent over time. Respondents' responses to these statements will be considered reliable if each question measures the same content. If indicator answers are stochastic or random, then the indicator can be said to be not yet reliable. A variable is considered reliable if the coefficient α > 0.60 shows reliable and coefficient < 0.60 shows not reliable or unacceptable, which means that Cronbach's alpha coefficient must be greater than 0.6 (Ghozali, 2018).

Table 2. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Value	Critical Value	Description
Influencer Marketing (X1)	0,807	0,6	*Reliabel*
Electronic Word of Mouth (X2)	0,781	0,6	*Reliabel*
Product Quality (X3)	0,778	0,6	*Reliabel*
Purchase Intention (Y)	0,789	0,6	*Reliabel*

Source: SPSS Output Appendix Processed Data (2025)

The table above shows Cronbach's alpha value greater than 0.60 or 0.6 so that these indicators can be categorized as reliable. To determine efficient regression coefficients using multiple regression equations with the ordinary least square method, then in conducting data analysis must meet classical assumptions using SPSS version 25.0 application.

Data normality testing is used to determine whether a variable in the regression model is dependent or independent, or both have normal distribution or not. The results of this study can be summarized as Non-Parametric Kolmogorov Smirnov (K-S) with a significance level greater than 0.05 (Ghozali, 2018).

Table 3. Normality Test Results

Unstandarized Residual		
N		*180*
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	.0000000
	Std.Devia tio n	3,15454157
	Absolute	0,092
	Positive	0,092
	Negative	-0,082
Monte Carlo Sig. (2- tailed)		0,089

Source: SPSS Output Appendix Processed Data (2025)

The table shows that the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results are indicated by the   Monte Carlo significance level (2-tailed) of 0.089, which indicates that the data used in this study has a normal distribution and meets analysis requirements. Multicollinearity testing functions to detect whether there is correlation between independent variables. A   good regression model must ensure that there is no correlation between independent variables. The commonly used boundary value

to determine multicollinearity is > 0.10 for tolerance or VIF value < 10 (Ghozali, 2018).

Table 4. Multicollinearity Test Results

Model	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant) *Influencer Marketing*	0,389	2,571
Electronic Word of Mouth	0,392	2,552
Product Quality	0,436	2,292

Source: SPSS Output Appendix Processed Data (2025)

Based on the table above, multicollinearity does not occur in this study because the tolerance value for each variable is more than 0.10 and VIF is less than 10. Heteroscedasticity testing is used to determine whether in the regression model there is inequality of variance from residuals from one observation to another. A good regression model is one that shows homoscedasticity or no heteroscedasticity occurs. The way to observe the absence of heteroscedasticity testing is if the points are scattered randomly, do not form a certain pattern, and the points are scattered both above and below the number 0 on the Y axis.
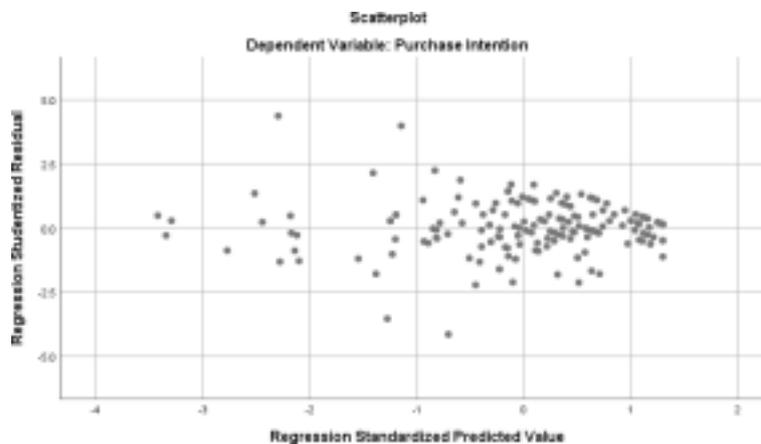

Figure 2. Heteroscedasticity Test Source: SPSS Output Appendix Processed Data (2025) From the figure above, it can be seen that the points are

scattered randomly both above and below zero on the Y axis. This shows that heteroscedasticity does not occur in the regression model.

The purpose of Autocorrelation Testing is to detect whether in the regression model there is correlation between confounding errors in period t with t-1 in the regression model (Ghozali, 2018). Autocorrelation arises because observations made based on time series are related to each other. In the Durbin-Watson test, autocorrelation occurs if the value d < dl or value d > 4 - dl, then there is autocorrelation, if the value du < d < 4 - du, then there is no autocorrelation, if the value 4 - du < d < 4 - dl, then there is no conclusion.

Table 5. Autocorrelation Test Results

Durbin-Watson
2,127

Source: SPSS Output Appendix Processed Data (2025)

The Durbin-Watson (DW) value produced by SPSS is 2.127. Based on the analysis above, it can be known that the du value is 1.7901 and the Durbin-Watson value is 2.127. Thus, it can be concluded that the DW (Durbin-Watson) value of 2.127 is greater than the du value of 1.7901 and less than the 4-du value of 4.2099, so there is no autocorrelation in this study.

Multiple linear regression analysis is made to determine the relationship and how much influence the independent variable has on the dependent variable with the aim of knowing whether there is influence of independent variables on the dependent variable (Duli, 2019). To simplify the calculation using IBM SPSS version 25.0 program assistance.

Table 6. Multiple Linear Regression Test Results

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardize Coefficients
	B	Std. Error	Beta
(Constant)	6,013	1,507	

Influencer Marketing	0,335	0,081	0,270
Elecectronic Word of Mouth	0,191	0,054	0,229
Product Quality	0,232	0,033	0,432

Source: SPSS Output Appendix Processed Data (2025)

Based on the regression equation obtained:

Y = 6.013 + 0.335X1 + 0.191X2 + 0.232X3 + e

This formula reveals important findings about consumer behavior toward Ventela in East Java. The three independent variables - *Influencer Marketing, E-WOM* and *Product Quality* - all have significant positive influence in driving purchase intention. Interestingly, the *Influencer Marketing* coefficient (0.335) shows the greatest influence, followed by *Product Quality* (0.232) and *E-WOM* (0.191).

These findings are highly relevant to the characteristics of East Java consumers who are very responsive to social media influence and support from public figures. The constant of 6.013 shows that even without the influence of these three variables, there is still basic interest in Ventela, which indicates brand awareness and equity that has been formed in the East Java market.

The purpose of the determination coefficient is to measure the extent of the model's ability to explain the variation of the dependent variable (Soedyfa et al., 2020). The determination coefficient value between zero and one that approaches one means showing that the independent variable provides almost all the information needed to predict the dependent variables. A small determination coefficient value shows the ability of an independent variable in explaining the dependent variables (Ghozali, 2018).

Table 7. Determination Coefficient Test Results

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0,840[a]	0,705	0,700	3,181

The determination coefficient shown through the Adjusted R Square value of 0.700, shows that regression on the dependent variable, *Influencer Marketing (X1), E WOM (X2),* and *Product Quality (X3),* which influences the independent variable, *Purchase Intention (Y)*. This regression has a variation coefficient of 0.700 or 70%, and the rest is explained by the dependent variable or from other factors not included in the conceptual analysis model or not included in the model being studied. The R Square result is around 0.705 or 70.5%. The determination coefficient value (R) of 0.840 shows a very strong correlation.

The t-test is used to determine whether independent variables have influence on the dependent variable (Ghozali, 2018). This test is conducted by comparing the significance level (Sig.) against the alpha value (0.05). The decision-making criteria are, if the research significance level < 0.05 then H1 is accepted and H0 is rejected, if the research significance level > 0.05 then H1 is rejected and H0 is accepted.

Hypothesis:
H0 = Independent variables do not significantly influence the dependent variable.
H1 = Independent variables significantly influence the dependent variable.

Table. 8 t-Test Results

Model	t	Sig.	Kesimpulan
Influencer Marketing (X1)	4,117	0,000	Has influence
Electronic Word of Mouth (X2)	3,509	0,001	Has influence
Product Quality (X3)	6,966	0,000	Has influence

From the results above, it can be concluded that:
1. For the *Influencer Marketing* variable (X1) Sig. value 0.000 < 0.05 then H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted, showing that the *Influencer Marketing* variable (X1) influences *Purchase Intention* (Y).
2. For the *E-WOM* variable (X2) Sig. value 0.001 < 0.05 then H0 is rejected and

H1 is accepted showing that the *E-WOM* variable (X2) influences *Purchase Intention* (Y).

3. For the *Product Quality* variable (X3) Sig. value 0.000 < 0.05 then H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted, showing that the *Product Quality* variable (X3) influences *Purchase Intention* (Y).

The F-test is used to determine whether the model used in this research is significant or not, so it can be known whether the model can be used to predict the influence of independent variables together on the dependent variable (Ghozali, 2018). If the Sig. value < 0.05 then H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted, so the coefficient can be continued or accepted.

Hypothesis:
a. H0 = All independent variables do not significantly influence the dependent variable.
b. H1 = All independent variables together influence the dependent variable.

Table 9. F-Test Results

Model	F	Sig.
Regression	140,301	$0,000^b$

Source: SPSS Output Appendix Processed Data (2025)

The table above shows a significance level of 0.000 < 0.05. Based on these results it can be concluded that hypothesis H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. It can be known that the variables *Influencer Marketing* (X1), *E-WOM* (X2), and *Product Quality* (X3) influence the variable *Purchase Intention* (Y).

CONCLUSION

This research successfully identified the determinant factors behind Ventela's popularity in East Java that is able to compete with the dominance of international brands. The main findings show that *Influencer Marketing* becomes the most influential factor in influencing East Java consumer purchase decisions. Collaboration strategies with public opinion leaders are proven effective in creating desire and urgency to own Ventela products.

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) becomes a strong reinforcement in spreading positive sentiment about the brand. User-generated content and organic recommendations from real consumers are proven to be more trusted and influential compared to conventional advertising. This phenomenon shows that in the digital era, authentic voices from consumers are more influential than

corporate messages.

Consistent *Product Quality* becomes a solid foundation for sustainable growth. Without quality that meets expectations, even the best marketing strategy will not be able to maintain consumer loyalty in the long term. Ventela successfully proves that local brands are able to present quality that is equal to or even superior compared to international competitors.

Simultaneously, the combination of these three factors creates ideal conditions that transform Ventela from an ordinary local brand into a cultural phenomenon in East Java. This success story proves that with the right strategy, local products can not only survive but also thrive rapidly in competitive markets.

The strategic implications of this research are that other local brands can apply Ventela's success formula: investment in marketing through authentic content creators, encouraging positive word-of-mouth communication through extraordinary consumer experiences, and most importantly, never compromising on product quality. The globalization era is not a threat, but an opportunity for local brands that have big vision and are able to execute with excellence.

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