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How Social Media Marketing Amplifies Brand Equity: Evidence From Nike Footwear Consumers

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Abstract

Increasing competition in the sports shoe industry requires companies to build strong brand equity to maintain a competitive advantage. This study examines the effects of brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty on Nike shoe brand equity, with social media marketing as a moderating variable. A quantitative approach was employed using purposive sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to Nike shoe users and analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings reveal that brand awareness has no significant effect on brand equity, while brand image and brand loyalty positively and significantly influence brand equity. In addition, social media marketing significantly moderates the relationships between brand awareness, brand image, brand loyalty, and brand equity. These results highlight the important role of social media marketing in strengthening brand equity and enhancing consumers' perceptions of the Nike brand.

Keywords: Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Brand Loyalty, Brand Equity, Social Media Marketing.

INTRODUCTION

The global footwear industry has experienced rapid growth alongside the increasing development of the fashion sector and digital technology. Shoes are no longer viewed solely as functional products but have become an important part of consumers' lifestyles, self-expression, and identity. This trend has intensified competition among footwear brands, requiring companies to continuously strengthen their competitive advantage by developing strong brand equity. Brand equity

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represents the added value attached to a brand, influencing consumer preferences, purchase decisions, and long-term loyalty. In Indonesia, the growing demand for fashionable and comfortable footwear has attracted both international and local brands to compete aggressively in the market (Azzahra & 'Aini, 2024; Aditasari et al., 2024). Furthermore, globalization and digital exposure have increased consumers' preference for international brands, particularly among younger generations who associate global brands with superior quality and social status (Weng, 2024).

Although Nike is recognized globally as one of the most valuable sports footwear brands, maintaining strong brand equity has become increasingly challenging. According to the Top Brand Award (2025), Adidas ranked first in Indonesia's sports footwear category with a Top Brand Index of 25.30%, while Nike followed closely with 25.10%. Although the difference is relatively small, these findings indicate intense competition between the two leading brands. In addition, Nike faces challenges from the rapid emergence of local footwear brands that offer competitive prices and products better suited to local consumer preferences. Consumers in regional markets, including Kudus Regency, often perceive Nike products as relatively expensive, while counterfeit products and limited official distribution channels further reduce consumer confidence in the brand (Finance, 2025). These conditions suggest that strengthening brand equity remains an important strategic challenge for Nike.

Table 1. Comparison of Nike and Adidas Tiktok Performance (2025)

Keterangan	Nike (@nike)	Adidas (@adidas)
Followers	7,9 juta	10,2 juta
Jumlah Video	136 video	323 video
Total Like	8,1 juta likes	9,5 juta likes
Total *Views*/Video	±450 ribu views	±1,2 juta views

Source: Official Tiktok Accounts of Nike and Adidas, 2025

Table 1 shows that Adidas outperformed Nike in terms of followers, uploaded content, and average video views on TikTok. These findings indicate that Adidas generated stronger consumer engagement through social media than Nike. This phenomenon suggests that optimizing social media marketing has become increasingly important in strengthening brand equity, thereby providing empirical support for including Social Media Marketing as a moderating variable in this study.

Brand awareness has long been considered an important determinant of brand equity because consumers are more likely to purchase brands they can easily recognize and recall. However, brand recognition alone does not necessarily translate

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into stronger brand equity. Although Nike's iconic "Swoosh" logo is widely recognized, many consumers in Kudus still prefer competing brands, such as Adidas or local footwear brands, because they better match consumers' purchasing power and daily needs (Rahmi et al., 2022). This phenomenon indicates that high brand awareness may not automatically generate favorable consumer evaluations or strengthen brand equity unless it is accompanied by positive perceptions of the brand.

Similarly, brand image has become a crucial factor influencing how consumers evaluate and differentiate products in an increasingly competitive market. Nike has successfully established a premium global image through continuous innovation and high product quality. Nevertheless, this prestigious image does not always correspond with the characteristics of consumers in regional markets. Many consumers perceive Nike products as less affordable and less relevant to their daily lifestyles, while local brands are often viewed as more culturally relevant and economically accessible (Hanbury, 2025; Hidayat et al., 2025). Such conditions indicate that differences between consumers' perceptions and brand positioning may weaken Nike's ability to enhance its brand equity.

Another important factor is brand loyalty, which reflects consumers' commitment to repeatedly purchasing and recommending a particular brand. Loyal customers contribute significantly to sustainable brand equity because they are less likely to switch to competing brands. However, consumer loyalty toward Nike has shown signs of weakening due to rapidly changing fashion trends and the growing popularity of local footwear brands such as Ortuseight, Specs, and Erigo. Young consumers are increasingly influenced by social media trends and tend to prioritize product value and affordability over long-term attachment to global brands (Wibawa, 2022). Consequently, maintaining consumer loyalty has become an increasingly difficult task for Nike amid intense market competition.

Previous studies have reported inconsistent findings regarding the relationships among brand awareness, brand image, brand loyalty, social media marketing, and brand equity. Stevi (2022) and Harahap et al. (2022) found that brand awareness and brand image positively influence brand equity, whereas Fattah (2021) and Dada (2021) reported insignificant relationships. Likewise, Lestari and Yanah (2023) demonstrated that brand loyalty positively affects brand equity, while Putri and Sefnedi (2022) found otherwise. In addition, Daya et al. (2022) concluded that social media marketing directly enhances brand equity, whereas Ramdhani et al. (2023) reported no significant effect. Furthermore, Khan et al. (2024) suggested that social media marketing strengthens the relationships between brand dimensions and customer-based brand equity, while Awad and Aldabousi (2024) argued that its influence

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depends on contextual conditions. These inconsistent findings indicate the need for further investigation into the moderating role of social media marketing.

The increasingly intense competition in the sports footwear industry requires companies to continuously strengthen their brand equity to maintain consumer loyalty and competitive advantage. In the digital era, consumers no longer rely solely on product quality but are also strongly influenced by information and interactions through social media. Consequently, companies must understand the factors that shape brand equity and how digital marketing activities can reinforce these relationships. Although Nike remains one of the leading global sports brands, its market position in Indonesia continues to face pressure from competitors such as Adidas and emerging local brands. Therefore, identifying the determinants of brand equity and the strategic role of social media marketing has become increasingly important for developing effective marketing strategies and sustaining long-term business competitiveness.

Based on these empirical phenomena and research gaps, this study aims to examine the effects of brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty on Nike shoe brand equity, with social media marketing serving as a moderating variable among consumers in Kudus Regency. The novelty of this study lies in the integration of Brand Awareness, Brand Image, and Brand Loyalty with Social Media Marketing as a moderating variable in explaining Brand Equity. Unlike previous studies that mainly focused on direct relationships among these variables, this research investigates whether social media marketing strengthens or weakens the influence of brand dimensions on brand equity. Furthermore, this study specifically focuses on Nike shoe consumers in Kudus Regency, providing empirical evidence from a regional market where competition between international and local footwear brands is becoming increasingly intense. The findings are expected to contribute to the literature on consumer behavior and digital marketing while providing practical insights for Nike in developing more effective branding and social media marketing strategies to strengthen brand equity in increasingly competitive markets.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

Instrument Testing

1) Convergent Validity Test

Table 2. Convergent Validity Test

Construct	Outer Loading
Brand Awareness	0.764 - 0.872
Brand Image	0.785 – 0.843
Brand Loyalty	0.840 – 0.878
Brand Equity	0.785 – 0.876

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Social Media Marketing	0.806 – 0.870

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS V.4, 2026

The convergent validity assessment indicates that all retained indicators have outer loading values ranging from 0.764 to 0.878, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Therefore, all indicators are considered valid and appropriate for measuring their respective constructs.

2) Reliability Test

Table 3. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Notes
Brand Awareness	0,914	0,916	Reliable
Brand Image	0,877	0,879	Reliable
Brand Loyalty	0,911	0,912	Reliable
Brand Equity	0,915	0,917	Reliable
Social Media Marketing	0,904	0,907	Reliable

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS V.4, 2026

Based on the results of the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability tests, all variables obtained values above 0.7. These results indicate that each construct has a good level of reliability, thus all reflective indicators are declared to have met the reliability test criteria and are suitable for use in further analysis.

Outer Model

Multicolinearity Test

Table 4. Multicolinearity Test

Indicator	VIF
X1_1	2,615
X1_2	2,659
X1_3	2,610
X1_5	1,913
X1_6	2,915
X1_7	2,257
X2_1	1,858
X2_2	2,140
X2_3	2,436

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Indicator	VIF
X2_4	2,323
X2_6	1,919
X3_1	2,329
X3_2	2,429
X3_3	2,792
X3_4	2,867
X3_6	2,596
Y1	2,797
Y2	2,435
Y3	2,370
Y4	2,712
Y6	1,891
Y7	3,137
M1	2,605
M2	1,992
M3	2,646
M4	2,345
M6	2,558

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS V.4, 2026

Based on Table 4, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for all relationships among the independent variables range from 1.858 to 3.137. Since all VIF values are below the recommended threshold of 5, no multicollinearity problem is detected in the structural model. This indicates that the independent constructs are sufficiently distinct and do not exhibit excessive linear correlations, enabling each construct to contribute uniquely to explaining the endogenous variable. Accordingly, the structural model meets the multicollinearity assumption and is suitable for further analysis.

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Model Fit

Table 5. Model Fit

Notes	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0,056	0,057
d_ULS	1,200	1,208
d_G	0,898	0,897
Chi-square	400,527	401,153
NFI	0,810	0,810

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS V.4, 2026

Based on Table 5, the model fit evaluation indicates that the structural model demonstrates an acceptable level of fit with the empirical data. The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) values of 0.056 (saturated model) and 0.057 (estimated model) are below the recommended threshold of 0.08, indicating a good model fit. In addition, the relatively low d_ULS and d_G values suggest only minor discrepancies between the empirical covariance matrix and the estimated model. Although the Normed Fit Index (NFI) value of 0.810 is below the ideal threshold of 0.90, it still reflects an acceptable model fit. Overall, these results indicate that the structural model is adequately fitted to the data and is appropriate for subsequent hypothesis testing.

Inner Model Assessment

1) Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination

Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
Brand Equity	0,759	0,738

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS V.4, 2026

Based on Table 6, the adjusted R^2 value for Brand Equity is 0.738, indicating strong explanatory power. This means that 73.8% of the variance in Brand Equity is explained by the independent variables, while the remaining 26.2% is explained by other factors outside this study.

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2) Effect Size (F-Square / F^2)

Table 7. Effect Size

Variable	Brand Equity
Brand Awareness	0,027
Brand Image	0,147
Brand Loyalty	0,146
Social Media Marketing	0,069
Social Media Marketing x Brand Loyalty	0,047
Social Media Marketing x Brand Awareness	0,033
Social Media Marketing x Brand Image	0,118

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS V.4, 2026

Based on Table 7, all exogenous variables have small effect sizes (f^2) on Brand Equity, as all values are below the threshold of 0.15. Brand Image ($f^2 = 0.147$) and Brand Loyalty ($f^2 = 0.146$) exhibit the largest effects, although both remain within the small category. Similarly, the interaction effects of Social Media Marketing with Brand Awareness, Brand Image, and Brand Loyalty also demonstrate small effect sizes. Overall, these findings indicate that each predictor contributes only a small effect to explaining Brand Equity.

Hipotesis Test

Table 8. Results of Direct Effects Test

Variable	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values	Notes
Brand Awareness -> Brand Equity	1,408	0,080	H_1 Rejected
Brand Image -> Brand Equity	3,243	0,001	H_2 Significant
Brand Loyalty -> Brand Equity	3,337	0,000	H_3 Significant

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS V.4, 2026

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Based on the bootstrapping results presented in Table 8, Brand Awareness has no significant effect on Brand Equity (t = 1.408, p = 0.080); therefore, H1 is rejected. In contrast, Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on Brand Equity (t = 3.243, p = 0.001), supporting H2. Likewise, Brand Loyalty positively and significantly affects Brand Equity (t = 3.337, p < 0.001), indicating support for H3.

Table 9. Moderation Test

Variable	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values	Notes
Social Media Marketing x Brand Awareness -> Brand Equity	2,130	0,017	H4a Significant
Social Media Marketing x Brand Image -> Brand Equity	3,384	0,000	H4b Significant
Social Media Marketing x Brand Loyalty -> Brand Equity	2,084	0,019	H4c Significant

Source: Data processed with SmartPLS V.4, 2026

Based on the bootstrapping results presented in Table 9, Social Media Marketing positively and significantly moderates the relationship between Brand Awareness and Brand Equity (t = 2.130, p = 0.017), supporting H4a. Furthermore, Social Media Marketing significantly moderates the relationship between Brand Image and Brand Equity (t = 3.384, p < 0.001). Since the interaction coefficient is negative (β = -0.307), the moderating effect is negative, indicating that Social Media Marketing weakens the relationship between Brand Image and Brand Equity. Therefore, H4b is supported. Finally, Social Media Marketing positively and significantly moderates the relationship between Brand Loyalty and Brand Equity (t = 2.084, p = 0.019), supporting H4c.

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Brand Awareness on Brand Equity

The findings reveal that Brand Awareness does not significantly influence Brand Equity among Nike shoe consumers in Kudus Regency. Although respondents are generally familiar with the Nike brand and can easily recognize its logo and products, this familiarity alone is insufficient to increase consumers' overall perception of brand value. This finding indicates that recognizing a brand does not necessarily encourage

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consumers to develop stronger preferences, loyalty, or emotional attachment toward the brand.

One possible explanation is that consumers in Kudus tend to consider other factors, such as product affordability, product value, and suitability with their purchasing power, before evaluating Nike positively. Despite Nike's strong global reputation, consumers may choose competing brands such as Adidas or local footwear brands because they perceive these alternatives as offering better value for money. Consequently, high brand awareness does not automatically translate into stronger brand equity unless it is accompanied by positive brand experiences and favorable consumer perceptions.

This finding supports the studies of Lego and Widjaya (2021) and Fattah (2021), which reported that brand awareness alone is insufficient to strengthen brand equity. However, it differs from Stevi (2022), who found a positive relationship between brand awareness and brand equity. These inconsistencies suggest that the influence of brand awareness depends on market characteristics and consumer behavior, particularly in highly competitive markets where consumers evaluate multiple product attributes before making purchasing decisions.

The Effect of Brand Image on Brand Equity

The results demonstrate that Brand Image has a positive and significant effect on Brand Equity. This indicates that consumers who perceive Nike as an innovative, high-quality, and prestigious brand tend to assign higher value to the brand. A favorable brand image strengthens consumers' trust and confidence, ultimately enhancing brand equity.

Nike has consistently positioned itself as a premium sports brand through continuous product innovation, technological advancement, and collaboration with internationally recognized athletes. These branding strategies contribute to positive consumer perceptions regarding product quality, performance, and prestige. As consumers develop stronger confidence in the brand, they become more willing to purchase Nike products and recommend them to others, thereby increasing overall brand equity.

These findings are consistent with previous studies conducted by Ayu (2022), Harahap et al. (2022), Stevi (2022), and Islamia and Trinanda (2023), which concluded that a positive brand image significantly enhances brand equity. The results further support the theoretical perspective that brand image represents an important intangible asset capable of creating sustainable competitive advantage.

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The Effect of Brand Loyalty on Brand Equity

Brand Loyalty is found to positively and significantly influence Brand Equity. This result indicates that consumers who repeatedly purchase Nike products and remain committed to the brand contribute substantially to strengthening its overall brand value.

Loyal consumers are less likely to switch to competing brands despite the availability of alternative products. They also tend to recommend Nike to others through positive word-of-mouth communication, thereby improving the brand's reputation and reinforcing consumer trust. Such behaviors create long-term relationships between consumers and the brand, which ultimately enhance brand equity.

These findings support Harahap et al. (2022) and Nurhidayah et al. (2023), who argued that loyal customers represent one of the most valuable strategic assets because they generate sustainable sales, reduce marketing costs, and strengthen brand competitiveness over time.

The Moderating Role of Social Media Marketing

The findings indicate that Social Media Marketing significantly moderates the relationships between Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Brand Loyalty, and Brand Equity. This suggests that social media activities strengthen consumers' perceptions of Nike and increase the effectiveness of branding strategies in developing stronger brand equity.

Interactive social media content enables consumers to obtain product information, interact directly with brands, and share purchasing experiences with other users. Such interactions increase consumer engagement, strengthen emotional attachment, and encourage positive electronic word-of-mouth, ultimately enhancing brand equity. Therefore, social media marketing serves not only as a promotional tool but also as a strategic platform for developing long-term consumer relationships.

These findings support Khan et al. (2024) and Le et al. (2024), who emphasized that social media marketing enhances customer engagement and reinforces customer-based brand equity. From a managerial perspective, Nike should continue investing in creative digital marketing strategies through platforms such as TikTok and Instagram by producing engaging content, collaborating with influencers, and encouraging user-generated content to strengthen consumers' perceptions of the brand and maintain its competitive position in the sports footwear market.

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CONCLUSION

This study examined the effects of brand awareness, brand image, and brand loyalty on brand equity, with social media marketing serving as a moderating variable among Nike shoe users. The findings reveal that brand awareness does not have a significant effect on brand equity, indicating that consumers' familiarity with the Nike brand alone is insufficient to strengthen its brand equity. In contrast, both brand image and brand loyalty have positive and significant effects on brand equity, suggesting that consumers' positive perceptions and commitment to the brand play a crucial role in enhancing brand value. Furthermore, social media marketing significantly moderates the relationships between brand awareness, brand image, brand loyalty, and brand equity, indicating that effective social media marketing strategies strengthen the influence of these factors on brand equity. Overall, the results highlight the strategic importance of building a favorable brand image, fostering customer loyalty, and optimizing social media marketing to enhance Nike's brand equity.

For practical implications, Nike should strengthen its digital marketing activities by creating engaging and interactive social media content, maintaining a positive brand image through continuous product innovation and quality improvement, and implementing customer loyalty programs to reinforce long-term relationships with consumers. Future research is recommended to examine additional determinants of brand equity, such as brand trust, perceived quality, and brand attitude, while expanding the research setting and sample size to improve the generalizability and comprehensiveness of the findings.

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