

THE INFLUENCE OF CONTENT MARKETING ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY: CASE STUDY OF SPOTIFY

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of marketing content dimensions—namely product content, service content, advertising content, and brand culture—on customer loyalty toward Spotify, which encompasses cognitive, affective, conative, and action loyalty. A quantitative research approach was employed, utilizing Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) and bootstrapping techniques, with data collected from 145 Spotify users through an online survey. The findings reveal that not all marketing content dimensions exert a significant impact on every facet of customer loyalty. Service content and brand culture emerged as the most influential factors in driving action and conative loyalty, whereas product content predominantly affected cognitive and affective loyalty. This research underscores the critical need for tailored content strategies to effectively foster specific types of customer loyalty within the digital streaming service context. The managerial implications of these results provide a foundation for developing more effective, user experience-oriented marketing content strategies.

Keywords: Content Marketing, Customer Loyalty, Spotify, PLS-SEM

1. INTRODUCTION

Music streaming services have become an essential part of daily life, particularly in today's digital era. Spotify, as one of the pioneering and largest digital music streaming platforms worldwide, has successfully built a vibrant digital ecosystem that captivates millions of users globally. In the first quarter of 2024, Spotify reported surpassing 239 million premium subscribers, reflecting a 14% increase compared to the same period in the previous year (data.goodstats.id). This growth highlights Spotify's strong appeal and dominance within the music streaming industry. Nevertheless, despite the various marketing content strategies implemented, there remains a lack of research specifically examining how Spotify's marketing content influences customer loyalty.

Content marketing plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences toward a brand, product, or service. Within the music streaming industry,

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content marketing is a promotional tool and a medium to foster emotional connections with customers. This emotional engagement can significantly enhance customer loyalty toward the platform.

Content marketing is considered a vital marketing strategy for capturing the attention of target audiences and fostering interaction and loyalty (Jami Pour & Karimi, 2023). It is a consumer-oriented approach that involves distributing content relevant to its intended audience (wei et al., 2023). The essence of content marketing lies in creating high-quality, engaging, and valuable materials that go beyond direct selling, aiming instead to support customer retention and acquisition (Bubphapant & Brandão, 2024). A content marketing strategy serves as a means for companies to communicate online with their target customers through carefully crafted content (Hasani et al., 2023). Typically, distributed content includes informative or entertaining materials intended to promote products or services (Wall & Spinuzzi, 2018). Common forms of content marketing include blogs, videos, images, website articles, and more. Content marketing involves planning, producing, and publishing significant, compelling, and timely content designed to capture customers' attention at critical moments in their purchasing journey (Lopes et al., 2022). In simple terms, content marketing can be described as “marketing storytelling,” as it centers on delivering information and influencing audiences through content to raise brand awareness or shift perceptions of a product or brand (Human et al., 2018).

Customer loyalty refers to the extent to which customers remain committed to a particular brand, product, or service over time (Gli et al., 2024). It also reflects the degree of satisfaction customers derive from a service or product provider. Loyalty is characterized as a cognitive and emotional attachment that customers develop toward a specific entity (Närvänen et al., 2020). It manifests in customer behaviors strongly influenced by psychological factors, such as repeat purchases of a company's products or services (Malki et al., 2023). According to Watson et al. (2015), customer loyalty encompasses a set of attitudes aligned with systematic purchasing behaviors that consistently favor one entity over its competitors. Customer loyalty can be assessed through customers' positive intentions and attitudes toward purchasing a brand's products or services (Barbosa et al., 2023). Beyond mere behavioral manifestations, customer loyalty represents a deep commitment to continue purchasing from a specific company, thereby enhancing competitiveness in the market. Such loyalty activities positively impact a company's profitability, provide a source of competitive advantage, and foster sustainable business growth (Mansouri et al., 2022). One notable expression of customer loyalty is positive word-of-mouth recommendations about products or services shared with friends, family, and acquaintances (Ismail, 2023).

This study is motivated by the growing number of users of digital music streaming services, particularly on Spotify, which has sparked an interest in understanding how digital marketing strategies—specifically content marketing—can influence customer loyalty within the music streaming industry. The significance of this research lies in its contribution

to providing deeper insights into the role of product content, service content, advertising content, and brand culture (wei et al., 2023) in shaping customer loyalty, specifically across cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, conative loyalty, and action loyalty dimensions (Harris & Goode, 2004).

The research questions in this investigation are designed to explore the extent to which various dimensions of content marketing interact to shape customer loyalty toward Spotify. To fully grasp the complexity of the relationship between content marketing and customer loyalty, it is essential to examine how emotional, cognitive, conative, and action-related factors contribute to creating a sustainable user experience. In an increasingly competitive digital environment, understanding these factors has become critical for music streaming companies seeking to retain their customer base.

The primary objective of this study is to identify and explain the factors influencing customer loyalty toward Spotify based on various dimensions of content marketing. This research is expected to offer new insights for the music streaming industry in formulating more effective digital marketing strategies that are centered on enhancing the customer experience.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative approach aimed at further examining the influence of marketing content dimensions—namely product content, service content, advertising content, and brand image—on customer loyalty, which is categorized into four dimensions: cognitive, affective, conative, and action loyalty. The following illustrates the conceptual model of the study:

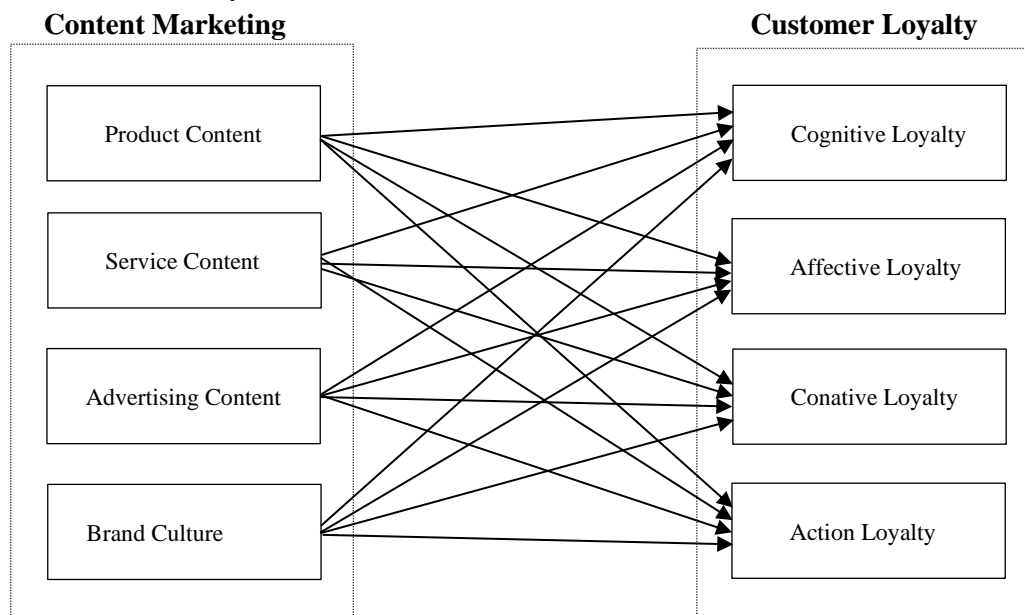


Figure 1 Proposed Research Model

2.2 Data Collection & Research Instrument

The data collection process for this study was conducted using an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire was shared across several social media platforms, including Instagram, WhatsApp, and Twitter, targeting active Spotify users. A total of 145 responses were collected. The sampling benchmark followed the minimum sample size requirement for PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling), which recommends that the sample size be at least five times the number of indicators. This study utilized a total of 24 indicators. All questionnaire items employed a five-point Likert scale, where one indicated "strongly disagree" and five indicated "strongly agree."

2.3 Analysis Method

This study employed the Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach combined with bootstrapping, utilizing SmartPLS 4 software. The rationale for adopting PLS-SEM lies in the complexity of the model, which involves numerous relationships among constructs, indicators, and dimensions under investigation. Within this context, the model was used to assess the influence of various marketing content dimensions on customer loyalty. Model evaluation in PLS-SEM is conducted in two stages: the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). In the measurement model testing phase, convergent and discriminant validity and construct reliability were analyzed. The discriminant validity was tested using indicator loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values. An indicator is valid if it has a loading above 0.7 or more and its AVE value is above 0.5, which means that the common underlying construct explains more than 50% of the variation of all indicators (Hair, Jr. et al., 2022), by comparing the square root of the AVE values with the correlations among constructs. Discriminant validity is established when the square root of the AVE for a construct is greater than its correlations with other constructs. Meanwhile, construct reliability was assessed using Composite Reliability (CR), with a threshold value above 0.7, indicating that the instrument is consistent and reliable for repeated measurements.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Respondent Profile

Based on the results of the online questionnaire distributed to random respondents, a total of 145 individuals participated in this study. The majority of respondents, 131 individuals (90%), were aged between 17 and 26 years, indicating that the sample predominantly consisted of the younger generation. Female respondents dominated the sample, accounting for 115 individuals (80%), suggesting either a greater interest among women in Spotify or a higher engagement rate in survey participation. Most respondents were high school graduates, with 85 individuals (58.6%) falling into this category. In terms

of occupation, the majority were university students, totaling 109 individuals (75.2%). Regarding geographic distribution, most respondents resided in West Java, with 70 individuals (48.3%). Concerning Spotify usage, nearly all respondents (144 individuals or 98.6%) reported being active Spotify users, while only 2 individuals (1.4%) indicated otherwise. These findings reinforce the validity of the study in the context of customer loyalty toward Spotify.

Table 1 Respondent Profile

Table 1 Respondent Profile							
Profile		F	%	Profile		F	%
Age	17 - 26	131	90%	Occupation	Student	11	7,6%
	27 - 35	9	6%		Employee	21	14,5%
	36 - 45	3	2%		College Student	109	75,2%
	46 - 55	2	1%		Freelance	2	1,4%
	> 55				Business Owner	2	1,4%
Gender	Male	30	20%		Unemployed		
	Female	115	80%	Domicile	West Java	70	48,3%
Education	Elementary School				East Java	22	15,2%
	Junior High School	1	0,7%		Central Java	15	10,3%
	High School	85	58,6%		Jakarta	20	13,8%
	Diploma 1-4	16	11%		DI Yogyakarta	5	3,4%
	Bachelor's Degree	43	29,7%		Banten	6	4,1%
	Master's Degree				Outside Java	5	3,4%
	Doctoral Degree				Other	2	1,4%
				Do you use Spotify?	Yes	143	98,6%
					No	2	1,4%

Note: F = Frequency

3.2 Measurement Model Test

The evaluation of PLS-SEM is generally conducted in two distinct stages: the assessment of the measurement model (outer model) and the evaluation of the structural model (Hair, Jr. et al., 2022). The primary focus during the measurement phase is to ensure that the constructs and indicators utilized are both valid and reliable. Validity is assessed through convergent validity, which includes examining the outer loading values and the

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average variance extracted (AVE) as presented in Table 2, along with discriminant validity based on the Fornell-Larcker criterion shown in Table 3. According to standard guidelines, outer loading values should ideally exceed 0.7, and AVE values should be greater than 0.5. In this study, all indicators exhibited outer loadings above 0.7, and all AVE values surpassed the 0.5 threshold, indicating that the constructs meet the required validity standards. Discriminant validity was also achieved, as evidenced by the results in Table 4, where the square roots of the AVE for each construct were higher than the highest correlation with any other construct. Reliability testing was conducted through the calculation of Composite Reliability (CR), with all CR values exceeding 0.7, confirming strong internal consistency among the items. Overall, it can be concluded that the indicators employed in this study are both valid and reliable.

Table 2 Outer Loading of the measurement: Loading AVE and Composite Reliability

Code	Measurement Items	Loading Factor
CONTENT MARKETING (X):		
DIMENSION-1: Product Content $\alpha = 0.684$, CR = 0.826, AVE = 0.613		
PC1	Content design contains attractive product displays	0.779
PC2	The information provided in the product content is accurate	0.810
PC3	Product functions (features) are presented clearly in the content	0.760
DIMENSION-2: Service Content $\alpha = 0.618$, CR = 0.795, AVE = 0.564		
SC1	Purchasing guide on online platforms is clear or accurate	0.737
SC2	Content provides complete information regarding after-sales services.	0.770
SC3	Interactive content encourages consumers to interact with the brand	0.745
DIMENSION-3: Advertising Content $\alpha = 0.534$, CR = 0.810, AVE = 0.681		
AC3	Content creates a positive brand image	0.797
AC5	Content successfully increases customer awareness of the brand	0.853
DIMENSION-4: Brand Culture $\alpha = 0.673$, CR = 0.818, AVE = 0.601		
BC1	Content clearly displays/reflects company values.	0.774
BC2	The content reflects the company's positive outlook on life.	0.720
BC3	Content successfully differentiates its own brand personality from other brands.	0.828
CUSTOMER LOYALTY (Y):		
DIMENSION-1: Cognitive Loyalty $\alpha = 0.728$, CR = 0.845, AVE = 0.645		
CL1	Customers believe that the Spotify brand offers better product/service value than other brands.	0.842
CL2	Customers have a good impression of the Spotify brand since the first time I heard it	0.805
CL3	After considering all alternatives, customers believe the Spotify brand is the best choice.	0.760
DIMENSION-2: Affective Loyalty $\alpha = 0.730$, CR = 0.848, AVE = 0.651		
AL1	Customers are satisfied with their experience using Spotify services	0.844
AL2	Customers feel happy when using Spotify services	0.849
AL3	Customers feel that the Spotify brand cares about customer satisfaction.	0.721

DIMENSION-3: Conative Loyalty $\alpha = 0.728$, CR = 0.838, AVE = 0.633		
CO1	I plan to continue using Spotify's services in the future.	0.735
CO2	I am committed to repurchasing Spotify services when needed as long as the quality is maintained.	0.772
CO3	I would recommend Spotify to my friends or family.	0.873
DIMENSION-4: Action Loyalty $\alpha = 0.813$, CR = 0.877, AVE = 0.651		
AO1	I always buy Spotify service when I need it.	0.798
AO2	I still choose Spotify even though there are obstacles in the purchasing process.	0.819
AO3	I prefer the quality on Spotify over the cheaper prices of other brands.	0.819
AO4	I prefer the experience on Spotify to the cheaper prices of other brands.	0.762

Table 3 Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker)

	AC	AL	AO	BC	CL	CO	PC	SC
AC	0,825							
AL	0,521	0,807						
AO	0,471	0,634	0,800					
BC	0,638	0,494	0,506	0,775				
CL	0,444	0,694	0,708	0,433	0,803			
CO	0,491	0,672	0,748	0,498	0,750	0,796		
PC	0,481	0,540	0,400	0,547	0,514	0,430	0,783	
SC	0,589	0,491	0,580	0,527	0,508	0,565	0,541	0,751

3.3 Structural Model Evaluation

The next phase involves evaluating the structural model once the measurement model has been confirmed as valid and reliable. This evaluation aims to assess the strength of the relationships between constructs and the model's predictive power concerning the dependent variables. This analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the assistance of SmartPLS 4 software. Additionally, a bootstrapping procedure was applied to test the statistical significance of the path coefficients.

For the structural model, the evaluation criterion includes the R-square (R^2), Q-square (Q^2), and level of significance (t-statistics and p-value). The R^2 statistic estimates the amount of variance in a dependent construct that can be accounted for by independent constructs. Following the criteria of Hair et al. (2019), R^2 values are cheaply distinguished as weak (0.25), moderate (0.50), and strong (0.75). As Figure 2 demonstrates, although R^2 values correspond to moderate explanatory power, above questions, the four variables present values higher than 0.25. These four loyalty dimensions indicate that the model exhibits a moderate capability to predict loyalty based on perceptions of the categories of marketing content on Spotify. In the dataset's R^2 results, affective loyalty (AL) has the highest score compared to the three constructs, with a value of 0.401. This indicates that

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40% of its variance can be explained by product content (PC), service content (SC), advertising content (AC), and brand culture (BC).

The value for Q^2 is calculated using the Cross-Validated Predictive Ability Test (CVPAT) process and is applied to determine the extent to which the alternative model is indeed able to provide substantially greater out-of-sample predictive-tolerance performance over the current model and predict out-of-sample with greater accuracy (Hair et al., 2022). A Q^2 value ≥ 0 indicates the presence of predictive relevance, categorized as small (0.02), medium (0.15), and large (0.35). In this study, the Q^2 values were 0.349 for Affective Loyalty (AL), 0.330 for Conative Loyalty (CO), 0.314 for Action Loyalty (AO), and 0.283 for Cognitive Loyalty (CL). All four constructs demonstrated good predictive relevance, with AL showing the strongest predictive relevance, while CL exhibited lower, yet still significant, predictive power.

In sum, the fit of the structural model check in this study indicates the model has good explanatory power and predictive power thus allowing it to explain the relationship between Spotify's marketing content and the customer loyalty.

Table 4 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis		Path Coefficient	T-statistics	P- values	Decision
H1	PC -> AL	0,293	3.321	0.001	Accepted
H2	PC -> AO	0,017	0.165	0.869	Rejected
H3	PC -> CL	0,284	3.045	0.002	Accepted
H4	PC -> CO	0,076	0.871	0.384	Rejected
H5	SC -> AL	0,139	1.339	0.181	Rejected
H6	SC -> AO	0,401	3.551	0.000	Accepted
H7	SC -> CL	0,248	2.083	0.037	Accepted
H8	SC -> CO	0,348	3.661	0.000	Accepted
H9	AC -> AL	0,223	2.292	0.022	Accepted
H10	AC -> AO	0,075	0.507	0.612	Rejected
H11	AC -> CL	0,114	0.890	0.373	Rejected
H12	AC -> CO	0,128	1.142	0.254	Rejected
H13	BC -> AL	0,118	1.365	0.172	Rejected
H14	BC -> AO	0,238	2.285	0.022	Accepted
H15	BC -> CL	0,074	0.677	0.499	Rejected
H16	BC -> CO	0,191	2.198	0.028	Accepted

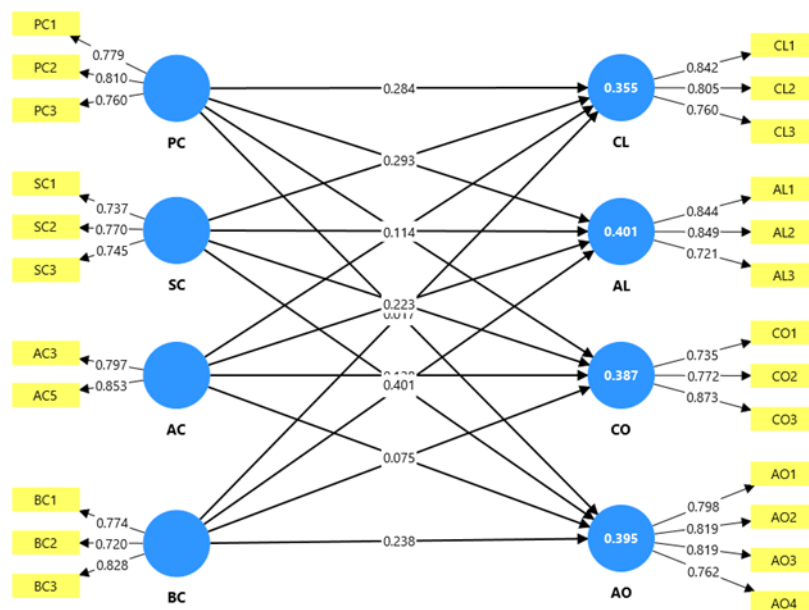


Figure 2 Outer Model & Structural Model

3.4 Hypothesis Testing

The testing procedure employed the bootstrapping technique to ensure the stability of parameter estimates and the accuracy of statistical inferences. It was accepted those hypotheses that satisfied the two conditions, that is, a t-statistic higher than 1.96 and a p-value lower than 0.05 (Hair, Jr. et al., 2022). As presented in table 4, out of 16 postulated hypotheses, 8 were statistically significant and therefore accepted, the rest of hypotheses (n = 8) were refuted at the decided upon levels of significance.

In this model the path coefficients take values between -1 and +1. The closer to -1 the coefficient, the wider the negative relationship and, the closer to +1 the coefficient, the stronger is the positive relationship (Hair, Jr., et al., 2022). According to the results of the testing, all significant relations showed positive coefficients close to +1, illustrating that Spotify's content marketing dimensions have a positive effect on customer loyalty in terms of each dimension.

3.5 Discussion

This study's findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the effects of different content marketing dimensions on customer loyalty among users of digital music streaming services, especially Spotify. The PLS-SEM results showed that 8 of 12 predefined hypotheses were supported.

Product content (PC) dimension had a large effect on affective loyalty (AL) and cognitive loyalty (CL). It seems that information about the product that is written in terms

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of content (feature: user interface) plays a role in forming customers' perceptions and beliefs of Spotify. Quality product content is Informative and engaging content instils in customers the impression that Spotify is the better choice over competing products.

The service content (SC) dimension makes a significant impact on action loyalty (AO), cognitive loyalty (CL), and conative loyalty (CO). This suggests that content delivering clear and interactive service-related information can encourage customers not only to understand and trust the brand but also to commit to engaging in tangible actions when using Spotify. It indicates that service interaction through digital content plays a crucial role in fostering active customer loyalty.

Advertising content (AC) demonstrates a significant influence on affective loyalty (AL). Advertising content that successfully builds a positive and emotionally appealing brand image has been shown to foster feelings of satisfaction toward Spotify's services. However, AC does not exhibit a significant impact on the other dimensions of customer loyalty.

Meanwhile, brand culture (BC) exerts a significant influence on both action loyalty (AO) and conative loyalty (CO). This suggests that the values and identity embedded within brand-related content can foster customer commitment and loyal behaviors. A strong brand cultural identity plays a pivotal role in cultivating a deeper emotional connection between the customer and the brand.

It can be concluded that not all dimensions of marketing content exert an equal influence on every aspect of customer loyalty. This variation in impact underscores the importance for companies to tailor their content marketing strategies according to the specific loyalty outcomes they aim to foster—whether cognitive, affective, conative, or behavioral.

4. CONCLUSION

This study aims to identify the influence of various dimensions of marketing content—namely product content, service content, advertising content, and brand culture—on customer loyalty toward Spotify, measured across four loyalty dimensions: cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, conative loyalty, and action loyalty.

Based on the data analysis conducted using the PLS-SEM approach and hypothesis testing through bootstrapping, it was found that half of the proposed hypotheses (8 out of 16) demonstrated statistically significant relationships. Specifically, the dimensions of service content and brand culture emerged as the most consistently influential factors on customer loyalty, particularly in relation to action loyalty and conative loyalty. Meanwhile, product content exhibited a strong association with cognitive and affective loyalty, whereas advertising content showed a more limited effect, being significant only for affective loyalty. These findings suggest that marketing content that is not only informative but also strongly

reflects brand values and identity is more effective in fostering comprehensive customer loyalty.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to expanding the understanding of content marketing strategies within the digital industry context, particularly in music streaming. These findings can serve as a foundation for companies like Spotify to design more personalized, interactive, and emotionally resonant content strategies aimed at strengthening customer engagement and fostering long-term loyalty.

For future research development, it is recommended that mediating variables such as customer engagement or perceived content quality be incorporated, along with an expansion of respondent demographics to enable broader generalization of the findings across other sectors of the digital industry.

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