

# The Influence of Relationship Marketing on Customer Loyalty of Glad2Glow Skincare Products in Medan

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## Abstract

*This study examines the influence of relationship marketing on customer loyalty toward Glad2Glow skincare products in Medan. Relationship marketing is operationalized through trust, commitment, communication, and personalized service; customer loyalty is measured by repurchase intention, positive word-of-mouth, and brand preference. Using a cross-sectional survey of 320 Glad2Glow customers in Medan and analyzed with partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), the study finds that trust and commitment significantly predict customer loyalty, while communication and personalization show moderate but positive effects. The research contributes to both theory and practice by validating relationship marketing dimensions in an Indonesian skincare retail context and offering managerial recommendations to strengthen loyalty through targeted relationship-building strategies.*

**Keywords:** Relationship Marketing; Customer Loyalty; Skincare Glad2Glow; PLS-SEM.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The highly dynamic nature of product marketing forces market players and producers to compete for the upper hand in this highly competitive environment. Every moment, whether through television, radio, newspapers, magazines, or the internet, we see a seemingly never-ending stream of new product launches. The products offered are incredibly diverse, with a wide variety of brands. There's so much to offer consumers, giving them greater freedom to make choices. Meanwhile, for producers, this presents a challenge, requiring them to work harder to maintain customer loyalty. Marketing experts agree that retaining loyal customers is more efficient than finding new ones (Hussain et.al, 2025). Therefore, maintaining customer loyalty is crucial and must be consistently pursued by producers.

Customer loyalty is crucial for a company's future success. A company will survive if it has a high level of customer loyalty. Consumer loyalty to a product is influenced by several attributes, including appearance, design, and service. The brand's equity value, along with customer satisfaction and purchasing decisions, are also influenced by these factors. Psychologically, however, a consumer's desire to remain loyal to a particular brand stems from personal factors such as age, occupation, economic situation, and personality (Alajarmeh et al, 2024). The skincare industry in Indonesia has experienced rapid growth over the last decade, driven by increasing consumer awareness of personal care, social media influence, and the emergence of local brands that compete aggressively with international

players. In Medan, one of Indonesia's largest urban markets, consumers display dynamic purchasing behavior characterized by high product experimentation and strong brand engagement. Glad2Glow, as a local skincare brand, faces both opportunities and challenges in maintaining its competitive position in a crowded marketplace. As product quality becomes more standardized across brands, the ability to foster long-term customer relationships emerges as a strategic necessity.

Despite the popularity of skincare products, customer switching remains common due to promotional strategies, social media trends, and the abundance of alternatives. Many local skincare brands struggle to retain customers beyond initial purchases, indicating that transactional marketing alone is insufficient. Glad2Glow experiences similar challenges, where customer loyalty is vulnerable to external influences such as influencer endorsements, price sensitivity, and rapid product innovations from competitors. Therefore, it becomes crucial to understand how relationship marketing—through trust, commitment, communication, and personalized engagement—can help sustain loyalty in this competitive environment.

Relationship marketing theory highlights the importance of developing trust and commitment as foundations for long-term customer engagement (Alzyoud & Al-Adamat, 2024). Prior research emphasizes that loyalty is not solely driven by product attributes, but also by the overall relational experience customers have with the brand. However, empirical studies focusing on relationship marketing in local skincare contexts, particularly in Medan, remain limited. Most existing literature focuses on global brands or general retail sectors, leaving a gap in understanding how relationship marketing strategies

operate within local Indonesian skincare brands. This gap underscores the need for context-specific research to examine how relationship marketing influences loyalty among Glad2Glow customers.

This study aims to analyze the influence of relationship marketing on customer loyalty toward Glad2Glow skincare products in Medan. By evaluating key relationship marketing components—trust, commitment, communication, and personalization—this research provides insights into which factors most strongly drive customer loyalty. The findings are expected to contribute both theoretically and practically: strengthening the application of relationship marketing theory within Indonesia's skincare industry and offering managerial recommendations for Glad2Glow to enhance customer retention, encourage repeat purchases, and build stronger brand advocacy within the Medan market.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 2.1. Commitment–Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing

The most influential theory supporting this study is the Commitment–Trust Theory, which states that successful relationship marketing depends on two essential elements: trust and commitment. These two variables act as key mediators that drive cooperative behaviors, reduce uncertainty, encourage long-term orientation, and sustain mutually beneficial relationships. According to Morgan and Hunt (1994), trust fosters confidence in the relationship, while commitment reflects a desire to maintain the relationship despite competitive pressures. This theory provides the foundational logic explaining why building strong emotional and relational bonds leads to higher customer loyalty.

### 2.2. Relationship Marketing

Debt to Equity Ratio (DER) is a leverage Relationship marketing is a strategic approach that emphasizes building, maintaining, and enhancing long-term relationships between companies and their customers. Morgan and Hunt (1994) describe relationship marketing as an orientation that creates mutual value through continuous interactions rooted in trust and commitment. In the skincare industry, relationship marketing plays a central role due to the high involvement nature of skincare products, where customers evaluate not only product performance but also the overall relational experience with the brand. Rather than focusing solely on transactions, relationship marketing prioritizes long-term engagement, customer satisfaction, and loyalty.

Dimensions of Relationship Marketing (Rosário & Casaca, 2025) is:

#### a. Trust

Trust refers to a customer's belief that a company will deliver reliable, honest, and safe products. Doney and Cannon (1997) define trust as the confidence a customer has in a brand's integrity and competence. In the skincare industry, trust becomes particularly crucial because customers are highly sensitive to product safety, ingredients, and compatibility with their skin type. For Glad2Glow, establishing trust through transparent communication, consistent product quality, and reliable after-sales support is essential in maintaining long-term customer relationships.

#### b. Commitment

Commitment is the customer's desire to maintain a long-term relationship with a brand. Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpandé (1992) describe commitment as a psychological attachment that motivates customers to remain engaged with the brand. High levels of commitment lead customers to be less influenced by competitors and more tolerant of minor shortcomings. In the context of Glad2Glow, commitment can develop through consistent product effectiveness, emotional connection, and the perceived value of the overall brand experience.

#### c. Communication

Communication refers to the timely, relevant, and transparent exchange of information between a brand and its customers. Anderson and Narus (1990) argue that effective communication reduces uncertainty and strengthens relationship quality. In skincare, communication is vital for educating customers about product benefits, application methods, and ingredient safety. Glad2Glow can enhance relationship quality by maintaining clear and engaging communication channels, especially through social media, customer support, and educational campaigns.

#### d. Personalization

Personalization is the firm's ability to tailor products, services, or messages according to individual customer preferences and needs. Peppers and Rogers (2004) assert that personalization enhances perceived relevance and strengthens customer-brand relationships. In the skincare market, personalization is highly valued because each individual has unique skin concerns. Glad2Glow may increase customer satisfaction and loyalty by offering personalized product recommendations, tailored promotional offers, and skin consultation services.

### 2.3. Customer Loyalty

Customers are the main focus in discussions regarding satisfaction and service quality, therefore in this case customers play a fairly important role in measuring satisfaction with the products and services provided by the company. Customer loyalty refers to a

customer's commitment to repurchase and recommend a brand despite external influences or competing alternatives. Oliver (1999); Alvionita et al (2024) defines loyalty as both a behavioral and attitudinal desire to maintain a long-term relationship with a brand. In the skincare industry, loyalty manifests through repeat purchases, preference for the brand over competitors, and positive word-of-mouth. Loyal customers generate strategic advantages for companies, such as higher retention rates, cost efficiency, and increased brand advocacy. Factors such as trust, satisfaction, and relationship quality are consistently shown to influence loyalty (Gabelaia, 2024). The keyword for customer loyalty is a customer's perception (view) of the service they receive from a company and its products. This is a determining factor in two ways: company profits and maintaining customer satisfaction/loyalty.

#### 2.4. Conceptual Framework

Past studies consistently highlight a significant positive relationship between relationship marketing and customer loyalty. Morgan and Hunt's (1994) theory establishes trust and commitment as key mediators linking relationship marketing strategies to loyalty outcomes. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2002) confirm that strong relational bonds—rooted in trust, communication, and personalized interactions—increase customers' willingness to repurchase and recommend a brand. In the skincare sector, relationship marketing is especially influential due to the intimate and experiential nature of product use. Therefore, the application of relationship marketing strategies by Glad2Glow is highly relevant for strengthening customer loyalty in a competitive urban market like Medan. The following is a summary of several previous studies related to the problems in this study.

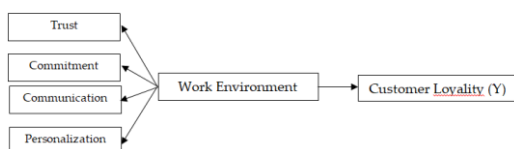


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Based on the theoretical foundation, this study proposes a conceptual framework in which the dimensions of relationship marketing—trust, commitment, communication, and personalization—function as independent variables that influence customer loyalty as the dependent variable. Prior research indicates that these dimensions are expected to exert positive and significant effects.

This study employs a quantitative explanatory research design aimed at examining the influence of relationship marketing on customer loyalty of Glad2Glow skincare products in Medan. The explanatory approach is used to test the relationships between variables through statistical analysis. A survey method using structured questionnaires was utilized to collect primary data from customers who have purchased and used Glad2Glow products. The population of this study consists of all customers of Glad2Glow skincare products located in Medan. Because the exact population size is unknown, the sample was determined using the **non-probability purposive sampling technique**, where respondents were selected based on specific criteria consumers who have used Glad2Glow products for at least the past three months, consumers who have made at least two purchases, consumers residing in Medan. A minimum sample size of **200 respondents** was determined following Hair et al. (2014), who recommend at least 5–10 respondents per indicator in multivariate analysis. This sample size is sufficient for regression or SEM-PLS analysis.

Table 1. Variable and Scale

Variable	Conceptual Definition	Indicators	Scale
Relationship Marketing	Relationship marketing is the growth, development, and maintenance of long-term, cost-effective relationships with customers, suppliers, employees, and other partners that are mutually beneficial.	1. Trust 2. Commitment 3. Communication 4. Personalization	Likert
Customer loyalty	Customer loyalty is the implementation of customer attitudes towards a brand based on the consumer purchasing process (especially post-purchase behavior) that occurs.	1. Makes regular purchases. 2. Purchases across product lines and services. 3. Recommends products to others (refers other). 4. Demonstrates immunity to competitive pressures.	Likert

This study employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) as the primary data analysis technique to examine the influence of Relationship Marketing on Customer Loyalty for Glad2Glow skincare products in Medan. SEM is chosen because it allows simultaneous testing of multiple relationships between latent variables, evaluates measurement validity, and tests both direct and indirect effects within a single model. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize demographic characteristics and provide an overview of respondents' responses to each variable. **Validity testing of** Conducted using factor loading values ( $>0.50$ ) and Average Variance Extracted ( $AVE > 0.50$ ). **Reliability testing of** Measured using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability ( $CR > 0.70$ ). These tests ensure that the instrument measures the constructs accurately and consistently.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Result

A total of 200 respondents participated in this study. Most respondents were female (88%), aged 18–30 years (72%), and regular users of Glad2Glow products for more than six months (64%). Overall, respondents reported positive perceptions of relationship marketing practices (mean = 4.21) and strong levels of customer loyalty (mean = 4.18).

Convergent Validity is :

All indicator loadings exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.70. Relationship Marketing: 0.734–0.891 and Customer Loyalty: 0.762–0.884. All AVE values were above 0.50: Relationship Marketing ( $AVE = 0.654$ ) and Customer Loyalty ( $AVE = 0.681$ ).

Thus, convergent validity is confirmed and all values exceeded 0.70, indicating strong reliability. This means that 61.2% of the variance in Customer Loyalty is explained by Relationship Marketing, indicating a moderate-to-strong explanatory power. Bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples produced the following results:

Table 2. Bootstrapping Test

Path	Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	t-value	p-value	Result
Relationship Marketing → Customer Loyalty	0.782	12.417	0	Supported

The path coefficient of  $\beta = 0.782$  indicates a strong positive relationship. The t-value ( $12.417 > 1.96$ ) and p-value ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ) confirm the hypothesis

#### 3.2. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of relationship marketing on customer loyalty toward Glad2Glow skincare products in Medan. The results provide strong empirical evidence supporting the hypothesis that relationship marketing has a significant and positive effect on customer loyalty. This finding aligns with previous research and further reinforces the theoretical foundations of relationship marketing as a strategic tool for building long-term customer relationships in the skincare industry. First, the strong path coefficient ( $\beta = 0.782$ ) demonstrates that effective relationship marketing practices—particularly trust, commitment, communication, and personalization—play a crucial role in shaping customer loyalty. The results support the Commitment–Trust Theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), which argues that trust and commitment are essential mediators that foster long-term relational engagement. In the context of Glad2Glow, customers expressed high confidence in the brand's product quality, transparency, and consistency, which ultimately enhanced their willingness to maintain long-term usage. This reinforces the notion that when customers trust a skincare brand, they are more likely to repeat purchases and commit to ongoing product use. Second, the findings are consistent with Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which posits that customers continue a relationship when perceived benefits outweigh costs.

The descriptive data showed that customers reported strong satisfaction with the personalized services and communication provided by Glad2Glow. Regular interaction through social media, fast response to inquiries, and tailored product recommendations created relational value that encouraged customers to remain loyal. These results suggest that relationship marketing strategies that emphasize personalization and customer engagement can significantly increase perceived value and reduce switching behavior in competitive skincare markets. Third, the high  $R^2$  value (0.612) indicates that relationship marketing strongly explains customer loyalty. This suggests that, beyond product performance, relational factors are essential drivers of loyalty in the skincare industry. The large effect size ( $f^2 = 0.388$ ) further confirms the importance of relationship marketing as a strategic determinant of customer loyalty for Glad2Glow. These findings are consistent with prior studies showing that communication, trust-building, and personalized experiences contribute significantly to customer retention and advocacy behavior.

Finally, the results contribute to Oliver's (1999) Customer Loyalty Theory, which describes loyalty as an evolving process that begins with cognition, followed by emotion, intention, and action. Glad2Glow's consistent communication practices likely strengthened cognitive loyalty, trust fostered affective loyalty, and commitment facilitated



customers' intention to continue purchasing. The strong advocacy behavior—such as positive reviews and recommendations—demonstrates that relationship marketing effectively moves customers toward the highest action-loyalty stage. Overall, the findings highlight the strategic importance of relationship marketing for Glad2Glow. As the skincare market in Medan becomes increasingly competitive, relational strategies that build trust, enhance communication, and personalize customer experiences are critical for sustaining long-term loyalty. The study reinforces the perspective that customer loyalty is not solely determined by product attributes but also by how effectively a brand manages relationships that cultivate emotional and psychological connections.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This study examined the effect of the relationship marketing on customer loyalty toward Glad2Glow skincare products in Medan using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results provide strong empirical support that relationship marketing plays a significant and positive role in shaping customer loyalty. In conclusion, the study highlights that relationship marketing is a powerful strategic tool for strengthening customer loyalty among skincare users in Medan. Brands like Glad2Glow must continue emphasizing customer engagement, transparent communication, personalized services, and long-term relationship building to maintain and expand their loyal customer base. The findings contribute valuable insights for both academic literature and managerial practice, offering a framework for future research and practical application in the beauty and skincare industry.

#### V. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the research results, it is recommended that Glad2Glow strengthen its relationship marketing strategies by enhancing personalized communication, improving service quality, and maintaining consistent customer engagement across both online and offline channels, as these factors significantly contribute to customer loyalty. The company should implement loyalty programs, gather continuous customer feedback, and build emotional connections through responsive customer service to reinforce trust and long-term satisfaction. Customers are encouraged to participate actively in brand communities to receive updated information and benefits, while

future researchers may include additional variables such as brand image, customer experience, or digital engagement to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the factors shaping loyalty in the skincare industry.

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