

Analyzing Brand Loyalty Drivers Among Generation Z Gamers

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Abstract — The advancement of digital technology has profoundly altered societal lifestyles, particularly impacting Generation Z or iGeneration, who have adeptly navigated digital technologies since early childhood. Concurrently, online gaming, exemplified by Genshin Impact, has emerged as a pivotal component of this generation's social life. The fluctuating popularity of Genshin Impact in 2022 underscores shifting preferences and dynamics within online gaming. This research aims to analyze factors influencing brand loyalty within this context. The study surveyed 150 Genshin Impact players from Java Island, employing quantitative methods with primary data and utilizing Smart PLS 4.0 for data analysis. Findings indicate that electronic word of mouth (EWOM) does not directly influence brand loyalty, while online communities and online advertisements positively impact it. Brand image mediates the relationship between EWOM and brand loyalty. These insights are expected to assist the gaming industry in enhancing brand loyalty strategies. By understanding these dynamics, stakeholders can better align their marketing efforts with the evolving preferences of Generation Z, ensuring sustained engagement and loyalty in the competitive digital landscape.

Keywords: *EWOM, Online Communities, Online Advertising, Brand Image, Brand Loyalty*

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology and its various applications has given rise to new lifestyle variants. Lifestyle changes, particularly in urban communities commonly found in cities, have transformed lives (Sulistyaningtyas et al., 2012). Urban communities have easier access to technology than rural communities, mainly because cities generally have better infrastructure and culture that supports innovation and technological development, and urban dwellers are quicker to adapt to changes, making information technology readily acceptable. Besides the general population, there is a generation familiar with digital technology known as the iGeneration or Generation Z. They are called the iGeneration due to their proficiency in using technology (Meyliana et al., 2023). Generation Z is known as a tech-savvy generation. This is attributed to their easy access to digital devices from an early age, even before 12 years old. These factors make Generation Z adept at adapting to new technologies, making them proficient technology users (Meola, 2023). Generation Z, or Centennials, was born between 1997 and 2012 (Arum et al., 2023).

Brune (2022) mentioned that gaming has become integral to Gen Z's social life. Based on the 2023 Internet and User Behavior Survey published by the Internet Service Providers Association (APJI), more than 42% of respondents reported playing games for more than 4 hours daily. Meanwhile, about 27% of respondents played for 3-4 hours per day, 12% for 2-

3 hours per day, and 11% for 1-2 hours per day. Only a tiny % of respondents (7%) played for less than 1 hour daily. This data indicates that playing online games has become essential to many people's lifestyles, and they choose to spend significant time playing (Muhamad, 2023).

Genshin Impact is a game developed by Hoyoverse and is one of the most popular online games. Genshin Impact captivates players with its open-world concept styled after anime and an engaging storyline. Genshin Impact utilizes a gacha system where players can randomly obtain new items or characters. This gacha system remains appealing to many players due to the thrill of surprises and the possibility of obtaining rare items (Ratu et al., 2023). The popularity of Genshin Impact does not stop there. Within less than a year, Hoyoverse propelled Genshin Impact to second place as the world's best-selling mobile game. An outstanding achievement for a newly released game (Budianto, 2020) indicates the high enthusiasm of players towards this game. The year 2021 marked the peak of Genshin Impact's popularity (Santoso, 2022). However, in 2022, one of the Genshin Impact RPG-based games from Mihoyo ranked 12th according to the EXP (Saputra, 2023); the fame measures this rating and how many players play the game.

The decline in Genshin Impact's popularity is influenced by various factors, especially the increasingly unsatisfactory experiences of players.

Research conducted by Budiman (2021) identified several factors that can influence customer loyalty, including electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM), online communities, online advertising, and brand loyalty.

In this case, there are essential points that can influence this, namely knowledge about cooperation; lack of knowledge about cooperation can hinder game players' integration into groups and damage brand loyalty. Therefore, social factors are essential in maintaining consumer loyalty. To maintain customer loyalty, companies need to pay attention not only to external factors, such as digital marketing but also to internal factors, such as the ability of players to interact and collaborate with other players (Pham et al., 2023).

These critical factors can influence and sustain loyalty, as further research has shown that various factors such as EWOM, online communities, online advertising, and brand image can affect consumer loyalty (Hamid et al., 2022; Damayanti et al., 2023; Bismoaziiz et al., 2021; Illahi et al., 2022). However, other studies have shown the opposite, indicating no significant influence (Bryan et al., 2023; Ong & Lye, 2021; Noorhayati, 2018; Qurbani & Pasaribu, 2019).

Although many studies have investigated the factors influencing brand loyalty in various contexts, and the research results are still diverse, studies explicitly exploring the relationship between Electronic Word of Mouth (EWOM), online communities, online advertising, brand image, and brand loyalty in the context of Genshin Impact games are still limited. This study analyzes how online communities, advertising, and EWOM affect Genshin Impact brand loyalty. The findings from this study are expected to provide valuable insights for game developers and marketers to enhance their communication strategies in strengthening the brand image and increasing brand loyalty amidst the growing and active player community in the Genshin Impact game.

This study begins with the Background of the Problem and Research Objectives. Next, a comprehensive Literature Review discusses electronic word-of-mouth promotion, online communities, online advertising, brand image, and brand loyalty. The Research Methodology, which employs a conclusive causal approach and purposive sampling technique, is explained in detail. The Research Findings and Data Analysis, using Smart PLS, are presented afterward. Finally, the study concludes with the Conclusion and Recommendations, summarizing the main findings and offering suggestions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Loyalty

Loyal customers, who are emotionally attached to and firmly committed to a brand, consistently choose the same products, even in the face of intense competition, and are willing to pay more for the

quality they trust. However, the dynamics of customer interactions with brands in the digital era have made it difficult to maintain this loyalty (Guillén & Jesús, 2019). Brand loyalty is at the core of marketing strategies because the presence of loyal consumers plays a vital role in a company's growth. It's not just about occasional purchases but also about consistent commitment to continue choosing and repurchasing products or services in the future (Anang, 2019). Game player loyalty suggests that players who perceive themselves as having high self-esteem are more active and frequent online gamers (Liao et al., 2020).

Brand Image

Anang (2019) emphasized that brand image, defined as consumers' emotional response to a brand, has become the main focus of marketing research. A positive brand image is not just a perception but is also a valuable asset for the company because it can influence consumer purchasing decisions. Building a solid brand image is the first step, but maintaining that image requires a long-term commitment. Various communication channels are crucial in maintaining consistent consumer perceptions of the brand (Indrasari, 2019). Consumers tend to reflect their self-image through the brands they choose. When consumers interact with brands through gaming, these brands influence the formation of consumers' self-image. Consumers will respond to marketing stimuli that align with their self-image (Jukić, 2020).

Bolang (2019) stated that brand image has a direct positive and significant impact on loyalty, so the better the brand image in customers' minds, the higher the brand loyalty. Brand image impacts brand loyalty, as research results prove that brand image significantly influences brand loyalty (Darmadi et al., 2021). Based on previous research, this study proposes the following alternative hypothesis:

H₁: Brand image has a positive effect on brand loyalty.

EWOM

EWOM (electronic word of mouth) is online interaction between consumers or brands from information consumers share about products, services, or brands. Open and accessible to anyone, EWOM enhances engagement in online communication. Therefore, strategies are needed to leverage EWOM for business (Jayawardhena & Liu, 2023). EWOM provides new capabilities that alter consumers' attitudes toward brands, products, and services. Various motivations drive consumers to engage in EWOM at different levels, with engagement influenced by the type of marketing communication and brand appeal. EWOM operates actively on social media, affecting both consumers and companies. Communication through social networks has a significant favorable influence on EWOM (Bianchi, 2020).

Miranda et al. (2023) show that EWOM significantly impacts the brand image with a strong influence. EWOM spreads information, reviews, and recommendations about a brand or product through online platforms such as social media, forums, blogs, and review sites. Other research results also confirm that EWOM affects brand image as consumers exchange product information, significantly impacting brand perception (Kusuma & Wijaya, 2022).

Bismoaziiz et al. (2021) confirm that EWOM positively and significantly influences brand loyalty. Consumers who encounter positive testimonials or experiences through EWOM will likely strengthen their view of the brand, build trust, and increase their loyalty. Other research conducted by Budiman (2021) also supports these findings, showing that information from EWOM that consumers trust can increase their loyalty to the brand, while consumer reviews and experiences can influence perceptions of brand quality. Referring to these findings, this research hypothesizes that the more positive and relevant the EWOM information consumers receive, the higher their loyalty to the brand.

EWOM significantly influences brand loyalty and image, particularly in multiplayer games that provide an interactive environment for consumers and gamers. In this environment, gamers experience the world created by game products (Aksoy et al., 2023). Based on previous research, this study proposes the following alternative hypothesis:

H₂: EWOM has a positive effect on Brand Image

H₃: EWOM has a positive impact on Brand Loyalty

Online Communities

Online communities connect people with similar interests, backgrounds, and goals without geographic limitations. Virtual spaces facilitate exchanging ideas, sharing resources, and collaborating on projects. They also play a role in developing customer relationships and strengthening brand loyalty (Laud, 2023). Ernawati (2022) states online communities are places of anonymity where people can share their problems and fears and interact with others to reinforce their beliefs.

Andries et al. (2019) affirm that online community and brand image have a significant influence, supported by multivariate analysis. Marketers greatly benefit when their products receive positive online reviews and spread through the human tendency to share information. Shared content can drive purchases of similar products from the same brand. Otherwise, Illahi et al. (2022) support this by showing that online communities positively influence brand image, with community reviews influencing consumer perceptions inside and outside the community.

These individual-group ties in online communities are essential in shaping brand loyalty and image. Strong interpersonal networks within a community foster a sense of belonging and shared identity, which

enhances loyalty towards a brand associated with the community. As members of online communities engage in continuous interaction and access to shared resources, their commitment to the brand deepens, promoting brand loyalty (Sun et al., 2021).

Safira & Aryansyah's (2023) research shows that brand relationships with users and consumer engagement positively impact brand loyalty. This highlights the importance of focus and platform optimization by marketers and managers. Another study by Futuwah (2022) shows that online group chat communities benefit their members, influencing brand commitment and loyalty. Online communities continue to grow and influence brand loyalty. Referring to these findings, this research proposes the hypothesis that the stronger the brand relationship with users and the higher the level of consumer involvement, the higher the brand loyalty. Based on previous research, this study proposes the following alternative hypothesis:

H₄: Online Communities have a positive effect on Brand Image

H₅: Online Communities have a positive impact on Brand Loyalty

Online Advertising

Online advertising is promotions on various platforms such as news portals, blogs, YouTube, social media, mobile applications, and games. They provide brief information about businesses and direct consumers to their websites. There are direct and indirect types of online advertising (Hendarsyah, 2022). Engaging ads is crucial as their content influences user interest. Their impact depends on how disruptive they are to the recipient, including ads on social media (Rigou et al., 2023).

Bistara & Sholahuddin (2023) said that advertising on social media dramatically influences consumers, especially if they have yet to experience a particular product. The more ads appear, the stronger the brand image is formed in customers' minds. Advertising plays a crucial role in building brand image, and the more ads there are, the more it enhances the brand image. Research by Adam et al. (2022) shows that information obtained by consumers through social media contributes positively to brand image formation.

Pop-up ads in online games have been shown to effectively engage gamers by offering personalized and relevant content. When these ads are perceived as entertaining, credible, and offering valuable incentives, they create a positive experience for gamers, which enhances their emotional connection to the advertised brand. This positive engagement contributes to brand loyalty, as gamers tend to develop favorable attitudes and long-term commitment to brands that offer meaningful and enjoyable advertising experiences (Abbasi et al., 2021).

Rahmat & Murdiana (2023) prove that digital advertising media's influence on brand loyalty is

significant and produces good results. Through online interactions, positive experiences with a brand can strengthen customer loyalty triggered by digital advertising. The ability of digital advertising to target potential customers accurately based on demographic data, online behavior, and interests creates opportunities to gain loyal customers. The influence of online media advertising can increase customer loyalty, especially if the advertising has a real positive impact (Putri & Zuhra, 2023). Based on these findings, this research proposed the hypothesis that the more effective digital advertising is in targeting and providing positive experiences to consumers, the higher the level of brand loyalty. Based on previous research, this study proposes the following alternative hypothesis:

H₆: Online Advertising has a positive effect on Brand Image

H₇: Online Advertising has a positive impact on Brand Loyalty

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research design using primary data through online questionnaires via the Google Form platform. The purposive sampling technique, also known as judgmental sampling, is used in this research. The population focused on in this study is Genshin Impact players from Hoyoverse, both female and male in Indonesia, especially those living on the island of Java. The sample in this study consists of Genshin Impact players born between 1997 and 2012, aged 12 to 27 years, who have played the game within the past three months. According to Hair et al. (2018), the minimum sample size for this research is 100, in line with the formula $20 \times 5 = 100$. This study uses SmartPLS version 4 to analyze the data.

This research obtained 150 respondents who passed the screening process, namely, Generation Z, aged between 12 and 27 years old, who have played the Genshin Impact game, with their last play being at most three months. The profile of the respondents is available in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Profile (Data Proceed, 2024)

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	91	60,7%
Female	59	39,3%
Age		
12-17	23	15,3%
18-23	106	70,7%
24-27	21	14,0%
Domicile		
Banten	29	19,3%
Jogjakarta	9	6,0%
West Java	17	11,3%
Central Java	20	13,3%
East Java	14	9,3%
DKI Jakarta	61	40,7%
Last Played		
less than 1 week	79	52,7%

1-4 weeks	44	29,3%
more than 4 weeks	27	18,0%
Purchase in-game		
Yes	130	86,7%
No	20	13,3%
Playing Frequency		
less than 1 hour	43	28,7%
1-3 hours	81	54,0%
more than 3 hours	26	17,3%
Played game since:		
less than 6 months ago	25	16,7%
6 months - 11 months ago	41	27,3%
1 year - 2 years ago	47	31,3%
more than 2 years	37	24,7%

Based on Table 1, with a total of 150 respondents, 60.7% are male, and 39.3% are female. Based on the age of the respondents, they are divided into three categories: the first age range is 12 to 17 years old with 23 people, the age range of 18 to 23 years old with 106 people, and the age range of 24 to 27 years old with 21 people. In terms of domicile, respondents are from Banten with 29 people, Yogyakarta with nine people, DKI Jakarta with the highest number of respondents at 61 people, followed by West Java with 17 people, Central Java with 20 people, and East Java with 14 people. Regarding gaming activity, respondents who last played less than one week ago dominate with 52.7%, followed by those who last played between 1 to 4 weeks ago at 29.3%, and those who last played more than four weeks ago at 18%.

Furthermore, the majority of players make in-game purchases at 86.7%, while 13.3% do not make in-game purchases. Based on playing frequency, players who play for less than 1 hour account for 28.7%, players who play between 1 to 3 hours account for 54%, and those who play for more than 3 hours make up 17.3%. Additionally, the number of players who have been playing Genshin for less than six months is 25 people; between 6 to 11 months is 41 people; players who have been playing for 1 to 2 years are 47 people, and players who have been playing for more than two years are 37 people.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Measurement Model Test (Outer Model)

The outer model explains the causal relationship between latent variables and their indicators, ensuring consistency and appropriate representation (Michael et al., 2021).

Table 2 shows the outer loading values of each indicator variable. The factor loading should be at least 0.5 to achieve construct validity, ideally reaching 0.7. Another type of validity to consider ensuring construct validity is discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2018). In the table, each variable's outer loading value is above 0.5, indicating that the indicators in this study are valid or suitable for use in research and can be used for further analysis.

Composite reliability indicates how well constructs are measured with the established indicators. According to Muhson (2022), Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability exceeding the value of 0.7 can be considered reliable.

Based on the composite reliability values presented in the table, it is shown that all five latent variables have composite reliability values above 0.7. This means that the established indicators have been able to measure each latent variable (construct) well; in other words, based on the obtained composite reliability values, all five measurement models are reliable.

In PLS studies, convergent validity is measured with AVE. A minimum AVE value of 0.5 indicates good convergent validity. Based on the AVE values shown in the table, it is stated that all five latent variables have AVE values above the minimum criteria, which is 0.5.

Table 2. Measurement Model Test (Data Proceed, 2024)

Variable	Indicator	Outer loadings	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
EWOM	EM1	0,715	0,781	0,545
	EM2	0,77		
	EM3	0,793		
Online Communities	KO1	0,709	0,804	0,578
	KO2	0,787		
	KO3	0,741		
Online Advertisement	IO1	0,706	0,86	0,606
	IO2	0,734		
	IO3	0,828		
	IO4	0,837		
Brand Image	CM1	0,663	0,79	0,557
	CM2	0,733		
	CM3	0,81		
Brand Loyalty	LM1	0,818	0,862	0,676
	LM2	0,769		
	LM3	0,876		

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker criterion (Data Proceed, 2024)

Variable	Brand Image	EWOM	Online Advertisement	Online Communities	Brand Loyalty
Brand Image	0,738				
EWOM	0,387	0,76			
Online Advertisement	0,311	0,288	0,778		
Online Communities	0,309	0,428	0,412	0,746	
Brand Loyalty	0,571	0,391	0,565	0,545	0,822

Based on the results of the Fornell-Larcker criterion test, the square root of AVE for Brand Image is 0.738, which is greater than the values below it, the square root of AVE for EWOM is 0.760, more significant than the value below it, as well as for Online Advertising with 0.778 and Online

Communities with 0.746, all are greater than the values below them, and Brand Loyalty with the highest value of 0.822. This indicates that the requirements for discriminant validity are met and acceptable.

Structural Model Test (Inner Model)

The inner model identifies the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables in the study, which is crucial for answering research questions and testing hypotheses (Michael et al., 2021).

Table 4. R-square (Data Proceed, 2024)

Description	R-square	R-square adjusted
Brand image	0,202	0,186
Brand Loyalty	0,562	0,550

Coefficient R-squared ranges from 0 to 1, with values closer to 1 indicating better data quality and a more significant influence of exogenous latent variables on endogenous variables. For example, an R-square value of 0.75 is categorized as vital, 0.50 as moderate, and 0.25 as weak (Hair et al., 2018). In a study, the R-square value for the simultaneous influence on Brand Image is 0.202 with an adjusted R-square of 0.186, indicating that the exogenous constructs (X1, X2, X3) collectively influence Y by 18.6%. Meanwhile, for the simultaneous influence of X1, X2, and Y on Z, the R-square value is 0.562 with an adjusted R-square of 0.550, indicating that the exogenous constructs (X1, X2, and Y) collectively influence Brand Loyalty by 55%. Therefore, the influence of these constructs on Z is classified as moderate.

Goodness of Fit (GoF)

GoF is a single measure to validate the combined performance between the measurement and structural models. The GoF value ranges from 0 to 1 with the interpretation of values as follows: 0.1 (small), 0.25 (moderate), 0.36 (large).

Table 4. The Goodness of Fit (Data Proceed, 2024)

R-square	ACI
0,382	0,613

The analysis table generated several statistical values to evaluate the model or relationship between variables. Firstly, the average R-square value obtained is 0.382. R-square measures the fit between the constructed model and the observed data, where a value of 0 indicates that the model does not explain at all, while a value of 1 indicates a perfect explanation. Therefore, the value of 0.382 indicates that the model provides a pretty good explanation of the variation in the data. Furthermore, there is an average ACI value

of 0.613. The goodness-of-fit (GoF) result is obtained by multiplying the R-square value by the ACI value, $0.382 \times 0.613 = 0.226$. Next, this result is squared, resulting in a value of 0.475. From this result, it can be concluded that the obtained GoF value of 0.475 falls into the large category. This indicates that the constructed model can explain the variation in the data and provides fairly significant results overall.

Table 6. Hypothesis testing (Data Proceed, 2024)

Variabel	Original sample (O)	P values	Remark
Brand Image → Brand Loyalty	0,37	0	H ₁ accepted
EWOM → Brand Image	0,287	0,001	H ₂ accepted
EWOM → Brand Loyalty Online	0,034	0,624	H ₃ not accepted
Communities → Brand Image Online	0,111	0,305	H ₄ not accepted
Communities → Brand Loyalty Online	0,283	0	H ₅ accepted
Advertisement → Brand Image Online	0,183	0,055	H ₆ not accepted
Advertisement → Brand Loyalty	0,323	0	H ₇ accepted

The table above presents the results of hypothesis testing using bootstrapping. This study employs one-tailed hypotheses. Hence, the significance level is determined by t-statistic values above 1.65 for a significance level of 0.05.

In the analysis of hypothesis testing conducted, there are several significant findings. Firstly, the testing of hypotheses 1, 4, 5, and 7 indicates that the obtained P-values are less than 0.05; thus, statistically, hypotheses H1, H2, H5, and H7 can be concluded to influence positively. This means there is sufficient evidence to support that the variables assumed in these hypotheses significantly influence the studied variable. However, in testing hypotheses 3, 4, and 6, the obtained P-values are more significant than 0.05, indicating insufficient statistical evidence to support a positive influence of the tested variables on the studied variable. Therefore, it can be concluded that

hypotheses H3, H4, and H6 do not significantly influence.

Table 6. The mediating role (Data Proceed, 2024)

Description	Original sample (O)	P values
EWOM → Brand Image → Brand Loyalty Online	0,106	0,004
Advertisement → Brand Image → Brand Loyalty Online	0,068	0,082
Communities → Brand Image → Brand Loyalty	0,041	0,325

The indirect relationship between EWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth) and brand loyalty is significant, mainly when mediated by brand image. This finding suggests that EWOM alone may not directly lead to loyalty but instead works by shaping the consumer's perception of the brand, which influences loyalty. In gaming, EWOM often manifests through player reviews, community discussions, and social media posts, all contributing to building or altering a brand's image. Gamers frequently rely on peer recommendations and reviews to assess the value and experience offered by a game, making EWOM a pivotal factor in creating a positive or negative brand image. This finding aligns with Lestari & Gunawan (2021), who identified EWOM as a significant brand image driver, especially in digital environments like social media. The immediacy and authenticity of peer feedback can significantly influence brand perception. This echoes Hokky et al. (2021), who concluded that a strong brand image reinforces brand loyalty by building consumer trust and satisfaction. For gaming brands, the positive portrayal of a game through EWOM enhances consumer confidence and leads to higher engagement and retention. Thus, the mediating role of brand image is critical in translating EWOM into long-term loyalty.

Contrary to EWOM, the indirect relationship of online advertising on brand loyalty, when mediated by brand image, is insignificant. This suggests that online ads, such as in-game pop-ups or banner ads, may need to enhance brand image to a degree that influences loyalty effectively. In gaming, advertisements can sometimes be viewed as intrusive or irrelevant, leading to irritation and even diminishing the brand's appeal. However, the non-significance of this relationship points toward what Plummer et al. (2007) describe as "Direct-Only Non-Mediation." This occurs when the direct effect of advertising on brand loyalty bypasses brand image as a mediating factor. In other words, online ads might impact loyalty directly through consumer incentives or promotions but fail to significantly alter the brand image, potentially due to poor alignment between the advertising strategy and consumer expectations. This finding highlights a

critical issue in gaming-related online advertising, where tactics such as personalized and non-intrusive ads may be more effective. As Illahi et al. (2022) argue, consumers are likelier to stay loyal to brands that meet their expectations and project a positive image. Therefore, if online advertising strategies are not thoughtfully executed, they may fail to build a strong brand image and negatively impact loyalty by creating dissatisfaction.

The analysis reveals that the indirect relationship between online communities and brand loyalty is insignificant, indicating that a brand-focused community alone does not necessarily lead to loyalty through brand image. This falls under the "Direct-Only Non-Mediation" category, where online communities directly influence consumer loyalty, possibly through enhanced engagement, feedback mechanisms, or social belonging, but not through shifts in brand image. Online communities play a critical role in improving the overall player experience in the gaming industry. These communities allow players to share knowledge, strategies, and experiences, which can lead to greater satisfaction and attachment to the game. However, as Wong & Kristensen (2020) noted, online communities that are not explicitly centered around a single brand may not significantly contribute to brand image. For instance, general gaming forums or platforms that host discussions on various games may dilute the focus on any one particular brand, thus failing to impact its image significantly.

On the other hand, brand-specific communities—such as those built around popular games—can offer direct benefits like idea testing, customer feedback, and a deep understanding of user behavior. Such communities can create a strong sense of brand identity. However, this influence may manifest more directly in loyalty behaviors (such as repeat purchases or engagement) rather than through improvements in brand image.

CONCLUSION

From the research results, it can be concluded that electronic word of mouth cannot positively influence brand loyalty; there needs to be mediation in the form of brand image to influence brand loyalty. Online communities positively impact brand loyalty; online communities' presence can influence customer loyalty to the brand, but the brand image cannot mediate this role. Similarly, online advertising positively affects brand loyalty, but brand image cannot mediate between online advertising and brand loyalty. Meanwhile, brand image can positively influence brand loyalty.

For Hoyoverse, it is recommended that online communities and advertising be enhanced effectively to improve the brand image of Genshin Impact. Hoyoverse can consider several strategies, including expanding Genshin to social media with creative, attention-grabbing content and interaction with fans.

Additionally, I will launch intelligent, strategic, unambiguous online ads, collaborate with influencers in the gaming industry, and host special events involving the community. Strengthening communication and interaction with players through official forums, live Q&A sessions, and regular updates also helps strengthen connections with the community and reinforce the brand image overall.

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