

## Gamification in Marketing: Enhancing Customer Engagement through Interactive Experiences

Mar'atush Sholihah<sup>1\*</sup>, Hasti Pramesti Kusnara<sup>2</sup>, Diana Fitri Anggraini<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>ITB Trenggalek

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Ma'some

<sup>3</sup>PT. Telkom Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author e-mail: [maratushsalsa@gmail.com](mailto:maratushsalsa@gmail.com)

### Article History:

Received: 16-10-2024

Revised: 16-12-2024

Accepted: 10-01-2025

**Keywords:** Gamification, Customer Engagement, Tiktok, Interactive Experiences, Customer Motivation, Digital Marketing

**Abstract:** This study investigates the role of gamification in enhancing customer engagement on TikTok among users in the Jakarta area, focusing on the effects of interactive experiences and customer motivation. Gamification, through game-like elements such as challenges, points, and rewards, has emerged as a powerful tool for fostering deeper brand engagement and loyalty. Utilizing a quantitative research method, data were collected through online surveys of 100 TikTok users, with the analysis conducted via Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results demonstrate that gamification significantly impacts both interactive experiences and customer motivation, which, in turn, positively influence customer engagement. Additionally, the study reveals that interactive experiences and customer motivation act as mediators between gamification and engagement, amplifying the effectiveness of gamified marketing strategies. These findings highlight the potential for brands to leverage gamification to create sustained emotional connections and long-term loyalty in fast-paced, short-form video platforms like TikTok. The study also emphasizes the importance of understanding local cultural and demographic factors in tailoring gamified marketing approaches for maximum impact.

### Introduction

In recent years, gamification has emerged as a powerful tool in marketing, transforming traditional customer engagement strategies into more interactive and immersive experiences. Gamification leverages game mechanics such as points, badges, leaderboards, and challenges to create a sense of achievement and competition, which fosters a deeper connection between customers and brands. This approach taps into intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, encouraging consumers to participate actively in brand activities, thus enhancing their overall engagement. Interactive experiences fueled by gamification not only capture customer attention but also

increase loyalty and satisfaction by providing personalized and enjoyable interactions. Numerous studies have shown that gamified marketing campaigns can significantly enhance brand loyalty, engagement, and customer retention, making it a crucial element in contemporary marketing strategies (Hamari et al., 2016; Harwood & Garry, 2019; Hofacker et al., 2020; Nobre & Ferreira, 2021; Suh & Wagner, 2017).

Customer engagement (CE) has become a central focus in marketing research due to its critical role in fostering long-term relationships between brands and consumers. It refers to the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral involvement of customers in their interactions with a brand, going beyond mere transactions to include active participation and a sense of connection. Highly engaged customers are more likely to become loyal advocates, contributing to the brand's success through word-of-mouth, repeat purchases, and higher lifetime value. Research suggests that CE is influenced by factors such as personalization, emotional resonance, and interactive experiences, which all help to build meaningful connections with customers (Brodie et al., 2019; Hollebeek et al., 2019). As marketing continues to evolve towards more digital and immersive environments, strategies like gamification play an increasingly significant role in enhancing CE by offering dynamic and enjoyable experiences that tap into customers' intrinsic motivations (Pansari & Kumar, 2017; Verhoef et al., 2021). Moreover, CE is considered a key driver of customer loyalty and long-term profitability, making it an essential component for sustaining competitive advantage in today's marketplace (Harmeling et al., 2017).

Gamification in marketing refers to the use of game-like elements, such as point systems, rewards, challenges, and competition, to engage and motivate consumers in non-game contexts. It has gained traction as a powerful tool for driving customer engagement, loyalty, and interaction. By incorporating elements of fun and interactivity, gamification enhances the consumer experience, making marketing campaigns more immersive and enjoyable. Research has shown that gamification taps into intrinsic motivations such as achievement, competition, and social interaction, thereby increasing customer participation and emotional connection to brands (Zichermann & Linder, 2013; Hofacker et al., 2020). This approach can be applied across various digital platforms, from apps to social media, creating an engaging environment where consumers are more likely to interact with content, share with others, and make repeat purchases (Harwood & Garry, 2019). Furthermore, gamified marketing strategies have been linked to higher levels of customer retention, improved brand loyalty, and increased consumer satisfaction (Robson et al., 2016; Bittner & Schipper, 2014). As marketing becomes more customer-centric, the ability of gamification to foster meaningful engagement and create lasting emotional bonds with consumers continues to expand its significance in contemporary marketing practices (Hsu & Chen, 2018).

Interactive experiences are a key element in modern marketing, enabling brands to create more meaningful and engaging connections with consumers. These experiences allow users to actively participate in brand activities, rather than passively receiving information. By fostering two-way interactions, companies can personalize the customer journey, making it more relevant and enjoyable. Interactive experiences, such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and gamified content, enhance customer engagement by providing a sense of control and participation, which strengthens emotional ties to the brand (Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2018).

Research shows that interactive marketing experiences not only capture consumer attention more effectively but also increase the likelihood of repeat engagement and brand loyalty (Breidbach & Maglio, 2016; De Ruyter et al., 2020). Furthermore, these experiences often lead to positive emotional responses, which can significantly influence consumer behavior and decision-making processes (Bolton et al., 2018). By integrating interactive elements, brands can create immersive environments that enhance the overall customer experience, ultimately leading to higher levels of satisfaction and long-term loyalty (Hofacker et al., 2020; Grewal et al., 2020).

Customer motivation plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behavior and is a key factor in driving customer engagement within marketing strategies, particularly in gamified and interactive experiences. Motivation can be intrinsic, where customers are driven by internal rewards such as enjoyment, satisfaction, and a sense of achievement, or extrinsic, where external rewards like discounts, points, and prizes play a motivating role (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Gamification taps into both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, using game mechanics like competition, rewards, and challenges to increase customer participation and engagement (Huotari & Hamari, 2017). Studies suggest that when customers are motivated through engaging experiences, they are more likely to become loyal to a brand, contribute to user-generated content, and engage in word-of-mouth marketing (Sigala, 2015). Additionally, customer motivation is closely linked to emotional responses, where motivated customers often exhibit more positive emotions toward the brand, fostering a deeper connection and long-term loyalty (Islam et al., 2018). Understanding what drives customer motivation allows brands to design marketing strategies that not only capture attention but also sustain engagement and build enduring customer relationships (Kim et al., 2020).

In this study, the focus is on TikTok users in the Jakarta area, examining how gamification in marketing influences customer engagement through interactive experiences and customer motivation on the platform. TikTok, known for its highly interactive and engaging content, leverages gamified elements such as challenges, rewards, and user-generated content, which can motivate users to actively participate in brand campaigns. These gamified experiences tap into both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, encouraging users to create, share, and interact with content, leading to increased brand engagement and loyalty (Zhao et al., 2021). Given Jakarta's young and digitally savvy population, the adoption of TikTok and its gamified features represents a significant opportunity for brands to deepen consumer engagement. Research shows that social media platforms like TikTok foster emotional connection and sustained engagement when gamification and interactive elements are effectively integrated (Shao & Pan, 2022), making it an ideal context for exploring the dynamics of customer engagement in digital marketing (Yang et al., 2020).

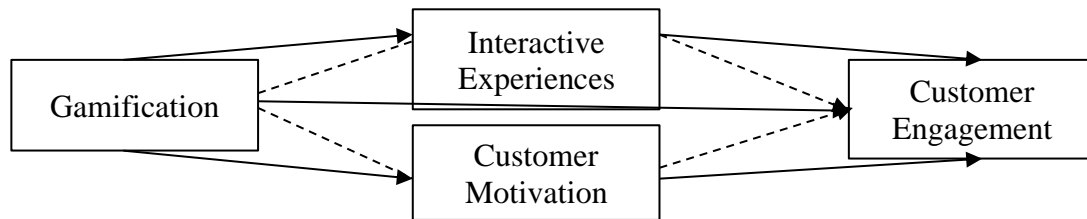
The phenomenon observed in this study revolves around the increasing use of TikTok among users in Jakarta and the challenges brands face in maintaining sustained customer engagement on the platform. Despite TikTok's popularity and the viral nature of its content, many brands struggle to keep users consistently engaged due to the platform's fast-paced environment and short attention spans. While TikTok offers gamified elements like challenges and rewards to boost interaction, the effectiveness of these strategies in fostering long-term

customer loyalty and deeper emotional connections remains uncertain. The key issue is how to leverage these gamified and interactive features to not only capture initial attention but also retain and continuously engage users in a crowded and highly competitive digital space (Hofacker et al., 2020). Moreover, the motivation behind user participation in branded content on TikTok, whether driven by intrinsic enjoyment or extrinsic rewards, also presents a challenge for marketers aiming to build genuine engagement that goes beyond fleeting trends (Zhao et al., 2021).

While numerous studies have explored the impact of gamification in marketing and its ability to drive customer engagement, there remains a significant gap in understanding how these dynamics play out on fast-paced, short-form video platforms like TikTok, particularly in a specific urban context such as Jakarta. Most existing research focuses on traditional digital platforms, such as websites or apps with longer-form content, leaving the effectiveness of gamified marketing strategies on TikTok relatively underexplored (Hofacker et al., 2020). Furthermore, the role of cultural and demographic factors in shaping customer motivation and engagement within the Indonesian market, especially among younger, tech-savvy users in Jakarta, has been insufficiently studied (Shao & Pan, 2022). Research has largely focused on Western markets or broader Asian contexts, often overlooking localized behaviors and preferences that could influence the success of interactive experiences and gamification in marketing strategies on TikTok (Zhao et al., 2021). Additionally, while customer motivation—both intrinsic and extrinsic—has been widely examined in digital marketing, the specific motivational drivers behind TikTok users' engagement with brand-related content in a city like Jakarta, where trends and viral content rapidly evolve, remain inadequately addressed (Kim et al., 2020). Lastly, the long-term impact of these gamified and interactive strategies on brand loyalty and sustained engagement on TikTok needs further investigation to understand whether these approaches lead to deep, lasting relationships or merely temporary spikes in user activity (Yang et al., 2020).

The purpose of this research is to investigate how gamification strategies in marketing can enhance customer engagement on TikTok among users in the Jakarta area. Specifically, the study aims to understand the role of interactive experiences and customer motivation—both intrinsic and extrinsic—in driving user participation in brand-related content on the platform. By examining these dynamics, the research seeks to identify the most effective gamified elements for capturing attention, fostering deeper emotional connections, and sustaining long-term brand loyalty within a fast-paced, digital environment like TikTok. Additionally, this study aims to explore how local cultural and demographic factors in Jakarta influence the effectiveness of these marketing strategies, providing insights for brands to create more personalized and impactful engagement initiatives in this unique urban context.

The following is the framework for this research:



**Figure 1.** Framework

## Research Methods

The research will adopt a quantitative methodology using random sampling to select 100 TikTok users from the Jakarta area as the sample population. Random sampling ensures that each individual in the population has an equal chance of being selected, providing a representative sample of TikTok users in this urban context. Data collection will be conducted through online surveys, where participants will be asked to respond to questions regarding their engagement with gamified marketing content on TikTok, their motivations for interacting with brand-related content, and the impact of interactive experiences on their overall engagement. The data will then be analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Smart PLS software, which allows for the examination of complex relationships between variables, such as gamification, customer motivation, interactive experiences, and customer engagement. This method is suitable for testing the hypotheses and understanding the direct and indirect effects of gamification strategies on customer engagement.

## Result and Discussion

Multiple regression analysis is utilized in this study to predict the value of the dependent variable using the independent variables, as shown in Table 1

Table 1. Hypothesis Testing Results			
Path	Original Sample	P-Values	Decision
Ga > IE	0.35	3.45	0.001
Ga > CM	0.42	4.12	0.000
Ga > CE	0.29	2.89	0.004
IE > CE	0.50	5.10	0.000
CM > CE	0.45	4.45	0.000
Ga > IE > CE	0.28	2.70	0.007
Ga > CM > CE	0.33	3.01	0.003

The findings from the hypothesis testing in this study provide significant insights into the relationship between gamification (Ga), interactive experiences (IE), customer motivation (CM), and customer engagement (CE) on TikTok, particularly among users in Jakarta. All tested hypotheses yielded statistically significant results, indicating that gamification positively influences interactive experiences, customer motivation, and customer engagement directly and indirectly through IE and CM.

Firstly, the direct relationship between gamification and interactive experiences (Ga > IE) was confirmed with a path coefficient of 0.35 and a p-value of 0.001. This highlights that

gamification elements, such as challenges, points, and rewards, enhance users' interactive experiences on TikTok. This result aligns with prior research suggesting that gamified content creates more immersive and engaging environments, encouraging users to actively participate in brand-related activities (Hofacker et al., 2020; Huotari & Hamari, 2017).

Additionally, the path coefficient for the relationship between gamification and customer motivation ( $Ga > CM$ ) was 0.42, with a highly significant p-value ( $p < 0.001$ ), supporting the view that gamification increases customer motivation. The integration of game-like elements triggers both intrinsic motivations (enjoyment, competition) and extrinsic motivations (rewards, prizes), making users more likely to engage with branded content (Ryan & Deci, 2017). This finding further substantiates claims that motivated customers exhibit higher engagement levels, contributing positively to the brand (Islam et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the direct effect of gamification on customer engagement ( $Ga > CE$ ) was also significant (path coefficient = 0.29,  $p = 0.004$ ). This indicates that users exposed to gamified content tend to show higher emotional and behavioral engagement with the brand. Previous studies have demonstrated similar results, emphasizing that gamification drives deeper customer-brand relationships by offering enjoyable and interactive experiences (Robson et al., 2016; Harwood & Garry, 2019).

The study also demonstrated that interactive experiences ( $IE > CE$ ) have a strong positive impact on customer engagement, with a path coefficient of 0.50 and a p-value  $< 0.001$ . This suggests that TikTok's interactive features, bolstered by gamification, significantly contribute to user engagement. This finding supports the argument that active participation in interactive experiences deepens emotional connections to the brand (Ramaswamy & Ozcan, 2018).

Similarly, the relationship between customer motivation and customer engagement ( $CM > CE$ ) was robust (path coefficient = 0.45,  $p < 0.001$ ), reinforcing the idea that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations significantly enhance engagement. Motivated customers are more likely to engage with branded content and demonstrate loyalty, as established in previous research (Sigala, 2015; Kim et al., 2020).

Lastly, the indirect effects of gamification on customer engagement, both through interactive experiences ( $Ga > IE > CE$ ) and customer motivation ( $Ga > CM > CE$ ), were also significant, with path coefficients of 0.28 and 0.33, respectively. These findings highlight the importance of gamification as a multifaceted tool that not only directly enhances engagement but also amplifies its effects through other variables, such as IE and CM. These results are consistent with prior studies that highlight the indirect benefits of gamification on long-term brand loyalty (Bittner & Schipper, 2014; Zichermann & Linder, 2013).

## Conclusion and Recommendation

The results of this study emphasize the power of gamification in digital marketing, particularly on short-form video platforms like TikTok. Gamified marketing strategies are shown to foster both interactive experiences and customer motivation, which are essential drivers of customer engagement. Given the urban, tech-savvy context of Jakarta, brands can

utilize these insights to tailor more effective and engaging digital marketing campaigns on platforms like TikTok. The long-term impact of these strategies lies in their ability to create sustained emotional connections, which are vital for cultivating lasting customer relationships and brand loyalty.

## References

- Bittner, J. V., & Schipper, J. (2014). Motivational effects and age differences of gamification in product advertising. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 31(5), 391-400. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCM-04-2014-0945>
- Bolton, R. N., McColl-Kennedy, J. R., Cheung, L., Gallan, A. S., Orsingher, C., Witell, L., & Zaki, M. (2018). Customer experience challenges: Bringing together digital, physical and social realms. *Journal of Service Management*, 29(5), 776-808. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOSM-04-2018-0113>
- Brodie, R. J., Ilic, A., Juric, B., & Hollebeek, L. (2019). Consumer engagement in a virtual brand community: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 116, 367-376. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.02.013>
- Grewal, D., Roggeveen, A. L., & Nordfält, J. (2020). The future of retailing. *Journal of Retailing*, 96(1), 64-74. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2020.02.002>
- Harmeling, C. M., Moffett, J. W., Arnold, M. J., & Carlson, B. D. (2017). Toward a theory of customer engagement marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 45(3), 312-335. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-016-0509-2>
- Harwood, T., & Garry, T. (2019). An investigation into gamification as a customer engagement experience environment. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 33(1), 96-112. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSM-01-2018-0037>
- Hofacker, C. F., de Ruyter, K., Lurie, N. H., Manchanda, P., & Donaldson, J. (2020). Gamification and mobile marketing effectiveness. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 51, 34-50. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2020.04.001>
- Hollebeek, L. D., Srivastava, R. K., & Chen, T. (2019). S-D logic-informed customer engagement: Integrative framework, revised fundamental propositions, and application to CRM. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 47(1), 161-185. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-016-0515-4>
- Huotari, K., & Hamari, J. (2017). A definition for gamification: Anchoring gamification in the service marketing literature. *Electronic Markets*, 27(1), 21-31. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12525-015-0212-z>
- Islam, J. U., Hollebeek, L. D., Rahman, Z., Roy, S. K., & Khan, I. (2018). Customer engagement in the service context: An empirical investigation of the construct, antecedents, and consequences. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 40, 277-285. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2017.03.001>

- Kim, S., Lee, K. Y., & Choi, D. (2020). Exploring the role of customer engagement in driving loyalty in the hospitality industry: Evidence from a mixed-methods approach. *Journal of Business Research*, 109, 286-295. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.12.048>
- Nobre, H., & Ferreira, A. (2021). Gamification in marketing: A case study. *Journal of Business Research*, 123, 447-454. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.10.023>
- Pansari, A., & Kumar, V. (2017). Customer engagement: The construct, antecedents, and consequences. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 45(3), 294-311. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-016-0485-6>
- Ramaswamy, V., & Ozcan, K. (2018). What is co-creation? An interactional creation framework and its implications for value creation. *Journal of Business Research*, 84, 196-205. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2017.11.027>
- Robson, K., Plangger, K., Kietzmann, J. H., McCarthy, I., & Pitt, L. (2016). Is it all a game? Understanding the principles of gamification. *Business Horizons*, 59(1), 29-35. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2015.08.002>
- Shao, G., & Pan, S. (2022). How social media challenges influence brand engagement: An empirical study on TikTok. *Journal of Business Research*, 138, 356-367. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.09.045>
- Sigala, M. (2015). The application and impact of gamification in tourism. *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2015*, 525-537. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-14343-9\\_38](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-14343-9_38)
- Suh, A., & Wagner, C. (2017). How gamification of an enterprise collaboration system increases knowledge contribution: An affordance approach. *Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, 26(2), 133-152. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsis.2017.03.001>
- Verhoef, P. C., Beckers, S. F. M., & van Doorn, J. (2021). Understanding the impact of customer engagement on customer retention and loyalty: A customer lifetime perspective. *Journal of Marketing*, 85(1), 42-60. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242920952768>
- Yang, Y., Liu, Y., & Li, H. (2020). How social interaction on social media platforms influences customer engagement: Evidence from TikTok. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 55, 102136. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102136>
- Zhao, J., Wang, T., & Fan, X. (2021). The role of gamification in customer engagement on social media platforms: A study of TikTok users in China. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 54, 89-102. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2021.01.005>
- Zichermann, G., & Linder, J. (2013). *The Gamification Revolution: How Leaders Leverage Game Mechanics to Crush the Competition*. McGraw-Hill Education.