
Building Consumer Trust Through Persuasive Communication Qualitative Study on TikTok Content @tonyptra

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Abstract

Consumer trust in review content on TikTok is becoming increasingly complex as the number of influencers on the platform grows. With 108 million active users, Indonesia makes TikTok a strategic space for influencers to build credibility and influence audience perceptions, although not all persuasive messages conveyed are considered credible by the audience. This study aims to analyze the persuasive communication strategies used by @tonyptra in his review content on TikTok, as well as to examine how these strategies contribute to the formation of audience trust in the reviewed products. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach by analyzing @tonyptra's video content, categorized under the hashtags #Matok. The results indicate that persuasive communication in Anthony Yaputra's review content serves not only to convey information but also to shape the audience's perceptions, attitudes, and decisions regarding the products. Consumer trust is built gradually through the experiences depicted, visual reinforcement, and social interactions occurring in the comments section. Thus, this study demonstrates that the persuasive communication strategies employed by @tonyptra through the #Matok content play a crucial role in building consumer trust, confirming that consumer trust on TikTok is the result of a dynamic and interactive communication process, as evidenced through audience responses in the comments section and the experiences depicted in the review content.

Keywords: Persuasive Communication, TikTok, Consumer Trust, Communication, TikTok

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, TikTok has emerged as one of the fastest-growing social media platforms, allowing users to create and share short-form video content that reaches millions of viewers. This has made TikTok a new phenomenon for influencers with large followings and high engagement. TikTok influencers often provide product reviews or recommendations. Since trust is essentially the best approach for consumers. According to Annisa et al., (2024) Digital communication strategies are often used by influencers as an approach strategy with their followers. Through carefully crafted content and social media, this can foster engagement with consumers. Influencers create video content that is highly informative, explains things in detail, and is easy for viewers or audiences to understand, using persuasive language to effectively influence them. Now, purchasing decisions can be made in a matter of seconds after watching a short video or testimonial

from an influencer (Larasati & Siregar, 2025). In this context, influencers act as opinion leaders who can influence the audience's perceptions and attitudes toward a product through the review content they present (Freberg et al., 2011).

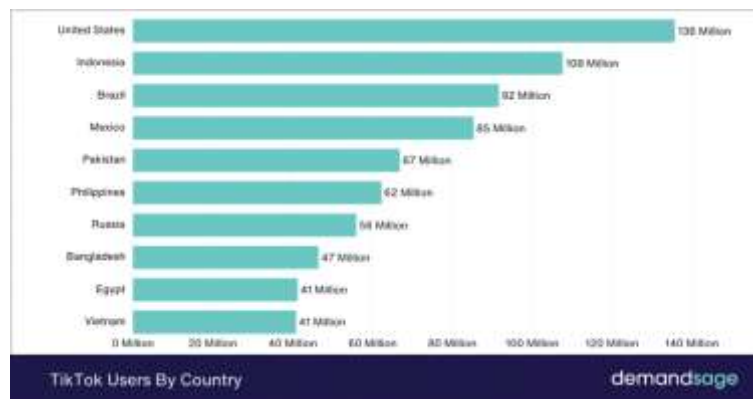


Figure 1 Number of active TikTok users
Source : (Demand Sage, 2026)

According to the website Demand Sage oleh Singh, (2026), with 108 million active users, Indonesia ranks second in the world in terms of TikTok usage. This large user base creates opportunities for content creators and influencers to reach a wide audience, including in the context of product reviews and recommendations. Given this broad reach, the way an influencer conveys a message is a key factor in determining whether the audience will trust the content presented or not.

One of the communication strategies that can be used is persuasive communication. Based on this phenomenon, it is important to examine how persuasive communication applied by @tonyptra in his TikTok content can influence, invite, persuade consumer perceptions and beliefs. According to Muhammad et al., (2024) through this persuasive communication, potential consumers or viewers can learn about the product, realize their needs, and obtain information to continue to the purchase decision on the content presented by @tonyptra. This is supported by research from Muhammad et al., (2024) through the statement that with stimuli or information to influence the behavior of others is a technique called persuasive communication. Every video review he uploads contains strong elements of persuasive communication, from the attention-grabbing opening (attention getter), logical presentation of facts and opinions (logos), to the creation of an image of himself as a credible and competent figure (ethos). He also often utilizes an emotional approach (pathos) by conveying that the products he reviews can help the product needs sought by the audience. Her clear, enthusiastic, and straightforward speaking style makes the message more convincing, inviting, persuasive and easy to understand.

Among the many content creators on TikTok, @tonyptra, known as Anthony Yaputra, stands out as a food and beverage reviewer whose #Matok category recorded the highest engagement on his account, reaching 1.9 million likes and 17,200 comments. His distinctive communication style combines persuasive language, storytelling, humor, and expressive delivery to build an emotional connection with his audience. Through this approach, @tonyptra functions as a digital opinion leader who not only informs but also shapes consumer perceptions and trust in the products he reviews.

This also fosters two-way communication between influencers and their followers through TikTok as a platform for interaction. However, a high volume of review content does not always correlate with consumer trust, as not all persuasive messages are perceived as credible and authentic by the audience (Lou & Yuan, 2019). A lack of

product knowledge on the part of influencers can result in inaccurate or unconvincing content, thereby undermining their credibility. Therefore, consumer trust is not automatically built through exposure to content, but rather through a gradual communication process in which persuasive communication serves not merely to convey a message, but as a strategic mechanism that shapes the audience's perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs regarding the product being reviewed.

Other research conducted Sa'adah et al., (2024) focuses on the influence of influencers' persuasive communication on consumers' purchasing decisions, with the final outcome being the influence on purchasing behavior. Meanwhile, the study Larasati Tamara, (2021) focuses on the persuasive communication techniques used by food influencers when sharing reviews of culinary products and how these strategies influence and build trust with the audience. The study Sutisna et al., (2025) focuses on persuasive communication strategies to build consumer trust through a personalized and interactive digital communication approach.

Although previous research has addressed persuasive communication, influencers, and consumer trust on social media, prior studies have not specifically examined how persuasive communication in TikTok review content shapes consumer trust in the reviewed products. Furthermore, previous research has primarily focused on the Instagram context, purchase decisions, and general digital marketing strategies, leaving little exploration of how consumer trust is formed through TikTok review content which is visual, interactive, fast paced, and personal. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the distinctive persuasive communication strategies of @tonyptra through the #Matok categorization system, which serves as a unique identity and evaluation pattern in each of his posts. Unlike other food reviewers, who typically offer only spontaneous reviews or simple product recommendations, Anthony Yaputra has established a consistent communication style through a structured evaluation format, an argumentative tone, the incorporation of personal experiences, and a blend of humor and storytelling that makes it easier for his audience to understand and trust the messages he conveys. The #Matok category is worth studying because it serves not only as entertainment or a content trend but also establishes a consumption reference standard for TikTok audiences when evaluating a food product. This phenomenon indicates a shift in the concept of opinion leadership in the era of media convergence, where influence is no longer held solely by mainstream media or conventional public figures, but also by digital creators capable of building psychological closeness, credibility, and intensive interaction with their audience through social media platforms. In this context, @tonyptra acts as a digital opinion leader who not only influences the audience's consumption preferences but also builds consumer trust through persuasive communication consistently delivered on TikTok. Therefore, it is important to analyze how the persuasive communication strategies he employs in the content @tonyptra creates can build audience trust, as well as which communication elements make his message perceived as credible, relevant, and reliable, thereby fostering consumer trust.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Persuasive Theory

Persuasive communication is a communication process that aims to influence audience attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors through convincing messaging. In the context of social media such as TikTok, persuasive communication plays an important role in shaping consumer perceptions and trust in the content or products being promoted. To understand the mechanism, Persuasive Communication theory is used as a theoretical basis in this study. Persuasion is basically persuading someone by performing an action to influence someone's beliefs or desires using a form of communication, usually language.

Persuasive communication is delivered by the communicator by not forgetting the elements of attention, understanding, learning, acceptance, and storage. In this model, changes in attitudes made by communicants must be understood as a response to persuasive communication carried out (Mirawati, 2021). Through David K. Berlo's communication model, persuasive communication also occurs through 4 main processes, namely SMCR : Source, Message, Channel, and Receiver (Simbolon, 2014). Within the scope of this study, the focus is on the impact of factors related to the source and message in influencer channels on recipients (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

The role of the communicator is a communicator or message function that is addressed by the individual and can determine certain aspects with the most important credibility (Perloff, 2017). An influencer decides which power resources to use in an effort to influence target consumers (Wha & Ki, 2019). This is reflected in how Anthony Yaputra positions himself as a figure who has expertise in evaluating culinary products while building closeness with his audience. Message is very important in persuasive communication theory, with various persuasive techniques such as message content, structure, language. Messages can influence how customers process persuasive communication, as can the elements that influence them (Orazi et al., 2025). TikTok has become a media channel for delivering persuasive communication messages. The receiver plays an active role in determining the success of persuasive communication. TikTok audiences do not simply receive messages passively, but interpret messages based on their attitudes, knowledge, and personal experiences. The perception of similarity between the audience and content creators increases trust and engagement, allowing persuasive messages to be processed more deeply and effectively.

So that through persuasive theory can support how the content delivered by Anthony Yaputra can influence consumer beliefs, attitudes and behavior through persuasive communication strategies on the review content he presents.

Consumer Trust

Consumer trust in a product is not only built through persuasive messaging, but is also greatly influenced by who is delivering the message and how they do so. Consumer trust is confidence in a person's ability and integrity to fulfill promises and customer expectations, making consumer trust a crucial foundation for forming long-term relationships between communicators and consumers (Pamungkas et al., 2024). In research conducted by Mudzakir, (2022) Trust exists because the people they trust can provide the necessary benefits. Trust will arise if there are signs of confidence in one of the parties involved in the interaction between the two parties, namely the consumer and the communicator, which is carried out with integrity and reliability. Then trust will form naturally. Research by Amelia & Muntazah, (2025) emphasizes that consistency in interaction, transparency of information, and active responsiveness from communicators are key factors in strengthening customer trust.

There are several dimensions and indicators for determining consumer trust. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), there are four indicators of consumer trust : 1). Benevolence (sincerity or honesty) refers to the extent to which a person believes that the seller will behave well towards consumers. The ability of a communicator or message source is an important factor in their persuasiveness in building consumer trust. This is to measure the influence of the source on the effectiveness of persuasive messages (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Where it relates to the recipient's perception of the source as honest, sincere, or trustworthy. 2). Ability: how someone is able to convince buyers of satisfaction and provide security guarantees when giving reviews. Thus, consumer trust in a product is not only built through persuasive message content, but is also greatly influenced by who

delivers the message. 3). Integrity relates to the honesty and consistency of the message source in conveying information, so that people will usually trust and accept messages that are delivered well. 4). Willingness to depend relates to the extent to which consumers are willing to rely on the information conveyed by the message source. When consumers have strong trust in the credibility, competence, and integrity of the source, they tend to use the reviews provided as their main reference in evaluating a product.

The combination of consumer trust elements, which include benevolence, ability, integrity, and willingness to depend, an authentic delivery style, and the interactive and visual characteristics of the TikTok platform, make Anthony Yaputra's review content have a significant influence in building and strengthening consumer trust in the products being reviewed. This is reflected in the audience's responses in the comments section and they play an active role as recipients and their responses serve as indicators of consumer trust itself. Thus, this theory is important in this study to explain how reviews submitted by @tonyptra through TikTok content influence consumer trust in the reviewed products?

Problem Formulation :

Based on this phenomenon, the research questions are as follows: (1) how does @tonyptra use persuasive communication strategies in his TikTok content, and (2) how do the reviews posted by @tonyptra on TikTok influence consumer trust in the products being reviewed.

Research Objective :

So this research has the following research objectives: (1) To find out how @Tonyprta uses persuasive communication patterns in his TikTok content. (2) To analyze how the reviews submitted by @tonyptra through TikTok content can influence consumer confidence in the products reviewed.

METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the patterns of persuasive communication used by Anthony Yaputra (@tonyptra) in building consumer trust in the products he reviews. The analysis method used is qualitative content analysis, with the unit of analysis being the content of TikTok review videos in the #Matok category on the @tonyptra account. This unit of analysis includes verbal and nonverbal elements in the videos, such as review narration, language style, intonation, expressions, supporting visuals, and communicative interactions related to persuasive communication elements and the building of consumer trust.

Data collection was conducted through systematic observation of the content on the TikTok account @tonyptra, specifically product review videos. The observation focused on two aspects: first, the delivery of messages, communication style, and persuasive strategies used in the videos; and second, audience feedback in the comments section, which reflects consumers' responses, attitudes, and perceptions of the messages conveyed.

Primary data was obtained through the analysis of a single video in the #Matok category uploaded on July 18, 2023, which had the highest engagement rate based on the number of views, likes, and comments. The video was selected using purposive sampling, as it was considered the most representative of audience responses to the persuasive communication strategies employed by the creator. Furthermore, qualitative research is not focused on sample size but rather on the depth of analysis of the phenomenon under study. Therefore, a single video was selected as the primary sample because it was deemed to comprehensively capture the distinctive communication characteristics of

@tonyptra, such as the use of persuasive language, storytelling, visual expressions, and a consistent pattern of review delivery aligned with the #Matok content identity. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained through documentation and literature reviews relevant to theories of persuasive communication and consumer trust.

Data analysis includes Zaini et al., (2023) : Data Reduction, Data Presentation, Drawing Conclusions, and Verification. In the reduction stage, the coding process in this study involved identifying and assigning codes to key elements in the TikTok videos by @tonyptra, such as narrative reviews, language style, expressions, intonation, supporting visuals, and audience interactions. This was done to identify patterns of persuasive communication and forms of consumer trust that emerge in the videos. Next, for data presentation, the selected videos were transcribed in detail. The study explored the meaning of the messages, narratives, visual and audio content, as well as audience responses in the comment section, which were linked to persuasion theory and the consumer trust framework. Conclusions were then drawn and verified by comparing communication patterns across videos and checking data consistency against the theoretical framework. Data validity was ensured through triangulation, comparing observational results with content archives, screenshots of audience interactions, and relevant literature, as well as source triangulation by comparing messages in the review content with audience responses in the comments section.

Using this method, it is hoped that this study can provide a clear picture of how persuasive communication through persuasion theory in video content, especially on the TikTok platform, can shape consumer perceptions and influence their decisions in consuming products or services.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Research Object and Subject

The subject of this study is Anthony Yaputra's TikTok account, which has 1.1 million followers and 49.3 million likes. This account exemplifies a persuasive communication model based on firsthand experience, which distinguishes it from conventional promotional content. Its casual, spontaneous, and real-time communication style fosters a connection between the influencer and the audiencea dynamic that leads viewers to perceive review messages not as advertisements, but as personal recommendations.

This study specifically focuses on a single video from the #Matok category as the subject of analysis a content category used by Anthony Yaputra to review viral TikTok children's products. The video, uploaded on July 18, 2023, generated the highest engagement, reaching 1.9 million likes and 17,200 comments. The video was selected using purposive sampling based on the assumption that high interaction intensity reflects strong audience engagement in the communication process. It was chosen not as an indicator of popularity, but as evidence of audience participation in interpreting, validating, and reproducing the meanings constructed within the review content. The selected #Matok content is also review content created through persuasive communication arising from the convergence of four factors, which can be mapped into the SMCR model. Within this framework, the trust built does not stand alone but operates through the four dimensions of consumer trust: competence, benevolence, integrity, and willingness to rely, which emerge from the audience's active engagement in the form of comments.

Thus, this study expands on three previous studies findings by demonstrating that on the TikTok platform, trust is built not only through the communicator's verbal strategies but also through the integration of visual transparency, spontaneous expressions, and collective audience validation in the comments section. Drawing on Lou & Yuan, (2019), this study demonstrates that authenticity on TikTok is no longer merely an individual

attribute of influencers but a social construct collectively shaped and verified by the audience through shared interactions and interpretations in the digital space. These findings indicate that the process of forming digital trust on TikTok is participatory, in which the audience is no longer a passive recipient of messages but plays a role in building the legitimacy and credibility of the messages conveyed by the communicator.

Content Analysis TikTok @tonyptra Social Media Part of #Matok



Figure 2 The Battle of Matok Neynis vs. Saladnyoo
Source: TikTok @tonyptra

Based on the results of the observation, the #Matok category content analyzed consists of a 5 minute review video focusing on a comparison of two food products that are popular on the TikTok platform: Saladnyoo and Neynis Food. The video begins by showing visuals of the two products side by side. In the opening segment, Anthony Yaputra also displays proof of purchase to demonstrate that he is acting as an ordinary consumer.

In the opening narration, Anthony states “Selepas drama apapun yang ada di TikTok, di sini aku akan mereview sejujurnya sesuai dengan apa yang aku rasakan dan melupakan hal atau etika personal dari owner.” emphasizes experience-based objectivity

Next, the review process was conducted in stages, starting with Neynis Food: the appearance changes color due to crushed dragon fruit mixed with sauce; ingredients include apple, papaya, melon, and dragon fruit; the taste is “bitter and astringent.” It was diluted with water before continuing.

In his Saladnyoo review, Anthony once again describes the product’s ingredients in detail such as grapes, melon, watermelon, and apples and evaluates the taste, which is more “manis dan gurih”.

After comparing reviews of both products regarding the size of the fruit pieces, Neynis Food tends to have larger pieces, while Saladnyoo has smaller pieces but offers more variety in a single bite. In addition to the size difference, there is also a difference in the types of fruit used: Saladnyoo uses strawberries, while Neynis Food uses dragon fruit. These differences affect the product’s visual appearance, particularly its color. The dragon fruit in Neynis Food causes a more pronounced color change due to its delicate texture, which easily breaks down and mixes with the sauce, resulting in a less visually appealing appearance.

Analysis of Persuasive Communication Elements in @Tonyptra’s TikTok Content #Matok

Anthony Yaputra serves as the primary source, not only conveying information but also directly conveying the review experience through his expressions, intonation, and spontaneous interaction with the product. His consistent presence in the video creates an authentic impression, leading the audience to view the review as a personal experience

rather than mere promotional content. Statement “Selepas drama apapun yang ada di TikTok, di sini aku akan mereview sejujurnya sesuai dengan apa yang aku rasakan dan melupakan hal atau etika personal dari owner...” This serves as a persuasive framing strategy to reduce audience skepticism amid a crisis of influencer credibility and a culture of sponsored reviews on social media. Rather than building persuasion through professional authority, Anthony emphasizes transparency and real-life experiences, reinforced by proof of purchase and his position as an ordinary consumer. Thus, the source’s persuasive power is not built on institutional credibility, but rather on authenticity and a sense of connection with the audience.

The message in #Matok content is crafted through a systematic narrative that combines visual evidence, comparative analysis, and firsthand experience without relying on explicit persuasive commands. Instead of instructing the audience to buy or avoid a product, the persuasion works implicitly through a step by step comparison between Saladnyoo and Neynis Food ranging from taste, texture, fruit composition, to color which encourages the audience to draw their own conclusions. The side-by-side comparison structure reinforces this strategy. Thus, persuasion is not achieved through verbal claims alone, but through the integration of narrative, visual evidence, and the audience’s interpretive participation as a cohesive messaging strategy.

The communication channel in this content is the TikTok platform, which leverages the power of visuals, expression, and video flow as a medium for conveying messages. The channel serves not only as a distribution medium but also as a means of constructing meaning through visual presentation and the direct consumption experience it offers.

The target receivers in this content play an active role in the communication process, not merely as message recipients but as active interpreters of meaning. This is evident in Anthony’s statement “kalian nilai dari ekspresi saya ya...”, which deliberately opens interpretive space for the audience rather than fully controlling the message’s meaning. Furthermore, the TikTok comments section enables two-way communication, where audience responses including expressions of trust, agreement with the review, or intentions to try or avoid the product indicate that the audience not only receives the message but also responds to and reinforces it.

Thus, the persuasive communication strategy employed by the TikTok account @tonyptra is built through the integration of mutually reinforcing SMCR elements. Communication depends not only on the content of the message but also on the credibility of the source, the visual impact of the medium, and the active engagement of the audience as recipients. Consequently, the persuasive communication employed is not direct or explicit but rather relies on an experiential approach, comparisons, and audience participation all of which collectively shape perceptions and influence the audience’s attitudes toward the reviewed product.

Analysis of Consumer Trust Based on @tonyptra's Reviews on TikTok #Matok

Consumer trust is formed through four main elements: benevolence, ability, integrity, and willingness to depend. Thus, the persuasive communication employed by Anthony Yaputra not only influences perceptions but also fosters the development of trust, which impacts consumers’ attitudes and decisions regarding the reviewed product.



Figure 3 comments on Matok's content
Source: TikTok @tonyptra

On the element of benevolence, the comments indicate the audience's appreciation for the way Anthony Yaputra presents his reviews. This indicates that the audience views the comparison method (battle) as a form of presentation that is considered better, clearer, and more desirable. This response reflects that the audience not only enjoys the content but also appreciates the communicator's efforts to provide helpful and relevant information. These comments indicate that the audience perceives the communicator's good intentions in presenting information that is more objective and beneficial.



Figure 4 comments on Matok's content
Source: TikTok @tonyptra

These comments indicate that the audience perceives Anthony Yaputra's review process as demonstrating "ability" that is, interpret Anthony's expressive and spontaneous review style as more authentic than that of conventional influencers. This reinforces the perception of his ability to provide credible product evaluations. This response also strengthens the dimension of consumer trust in his competence, as the audience views him as capable of evaluating products through firsthand experience and detailed explanations.



Figure 5 comments on Matok's content
Source: TikTok @tonyptra

In one section of the review regarding integrity, following the review itself, this statement was further reinforced by a viewer's comment stating, "Suruh kupas kulit buahnya bang," indicates the existence of a negotiated reading. Although the audience agreed with Anthony's assessment of the product's quality, they also added their own interpretations and suggestions. This response relates to the dimension of integrity, as the audience viewed the review as honest and consistent with the product's actual condition as depicted visually.



Figure 6 comments on Matok's content
Source: TikTok @tonyptra

In terms of willingness to rely on the product, these comments reflect the audience's emotional response and interest in Saladnyoo after watching the content presented by Anthony Yaputra. From a consumer trust perspective, this response creates visual appeal and fosters positive perceptions regarding freshness and taste. This serves as the first step toward willingness to rely on the product, where reviews shape consumer preferences.

These findings reinforce Lou & Yuan, (2019) and Mudzakir, (2022) confirming that authenticity on TikTok is built not only through verbal honesty but also through visual transparency, spontaneous expressions, and direct product comparisons. The comments section further demonstrates that audiences are active participants who collectively construct and validate the credibility of review content, rather than passive message recipients. Together, these elements show that persuasive communication on TikTok is collectively constructed through the communicator's performance, platform interactivity, and audience participation. In addition, the findings regarding competence and integrity are consistent with Orazi et al., (2025) This study expands our understanding of digital trust by demonstrating that persuasive communication on TikTok is collectively constructed through the communicator's performance, platform interactivity, and audience participation in interpreting review content.

CONCLUSION

This study analyze how Anthony Yaputra's TikTok account employs persuasive communication strategies in its review content and analyzes how these reviews influence consumer trust in the products being reviewed. Based on the analysis of content in the #Matok categories, it was found that the persuasive communication employed utilizes mutually reinforcing elements of the SMCR model Source, Message, Channel, Receiver Simbolon, (2014). In the source element, the communicator serves as both the messenger and the embodiment of a firsthand experience, which is vividly conveyed through expressions, language, and active participation in the review process. In the message element, the message is systematically structured through direct experience, visual evidence, and comparisons between expectations and reality, thereby strengthening its persuasive power. In the channel element, the TikTok platform serves as the medium for conveying the message through visuals and expressions within the video content. Meanwhile, in the receiver element, the audience plays an active role in interpreting and responding to the message via the comments section, thereby fostering two-way communication.

The results of the study indicate that the reviews provided can influence consumer trust through four key elements: benevolence, ability, integrity, and willingness to depend Mutiara et al., (2020). Benevolence is formed through the audience's perception of the communicator's sincerity in providing useful information. Ability is evident in the communicator's capacity to test and explain the product in detail and based on experience. Integrity is reflected in the alignment between the narrative, visuals, and the audience's interpretation, which demonstrates the honesty and consistency of the message. Meanwhile, willingness to depend is evident in the audience's tendency to use reviews as a reference in making consumption decisions, whether in the form of interest in or avoidance of the product.

Thus, it can be concluded that persuasive communication in review content serves not only to convey information but also as a mechanism that shapes the audience's perceptions, attitudes, and decisions regarding the product. Consumer trust is built gradually through the experiences shared, visual reinforcement, and social interactions that take place in the comments section.

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