

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Background

In the fast paced and highly competitive fashion industry, digital advertising has become a vital tool for businesses to engage with consumers and influence purchase decisions. Traditional advertising strategies often emphasize the cognitive aspects of persuasion, such as product features, price, and quality. However, recent research suggests that emotional intelligence (EI) plays a critical role in how consumers perceive and respond to digital advertising messages (Saratian, E. T. P., Efendi, M., & Utami, M. P., 2024).

The fashion industry is a dynamic and influential sector that extends beyond mere clothing it reflects identity, culture, and lifestyle choices. Fashion functions not only as a means of aesthetic expression but also as a symbolic medium through which individuals communicate social status, values, and personal identity (Crane, 2012). As such, fashion is deeply embedded in consumer psychology, making it a compelling context for studying emotional and behavioral responses to marketing.

In the digital age, fashion brands increasingly rely on emotionally engaging advertisements to influence consumer attitudes and behaviors. These emotional appeals are particularly effective in fashion marketing due to the sector's inherent focus on aspiration, beauty, and self expression (Solomon & Rabolt, 2009). With the rise of social media and influencer culture, consumers are constantly exposed to curated fashion content that aims to evoke emotional responses and shape purchase intentions (McNeill & Venter, 2019).

Moreover, fashion consumption is often driven by emotional motivations, such as the desire for self affirmation, belonging, or social approval, making emotional intelligence a key factor in successful advertising (Park et al., 2007). Understanding how emotional factors impact consumer decision making in fashion can therefore help marketers create more effective and meaningful digital campaigns. The creation of fashion items, such as accessories and clothing. This research will be focused on accessory clothing fashion, especially shoes or sneakers.

The fashion industry is renowned for its rapid pace and intense competition. In 2024, the global fashion market is projected to reach approximately US\$770.90 billion, with an expected annual growth rate (CAGR 2024 to 2029) of 8.94%, leading to a projected market volume of US\$1,183.00 billion by 2029 (Statista). This growth is driven by factors such as increasing consumer demand for fast fashion and the expansion of e-commerce platforms. However, brands face significant challenges, including shifting consumer preferences, sustainability concerns, and the need for technological innovation to stay competitive.

In 2022, digital advertising accounted for over 60% of total ad spend and is expected to rise to 72.5% by 2026. During the period from 2014 to 2022, social media ad spend is also on an upward trend, projected to reach \$233.65 billion by 2027, a substantial increase from \$130.24 billion in 2022. Overall, global digital ad spending is anticipated to hit \$835 billion by 2026.

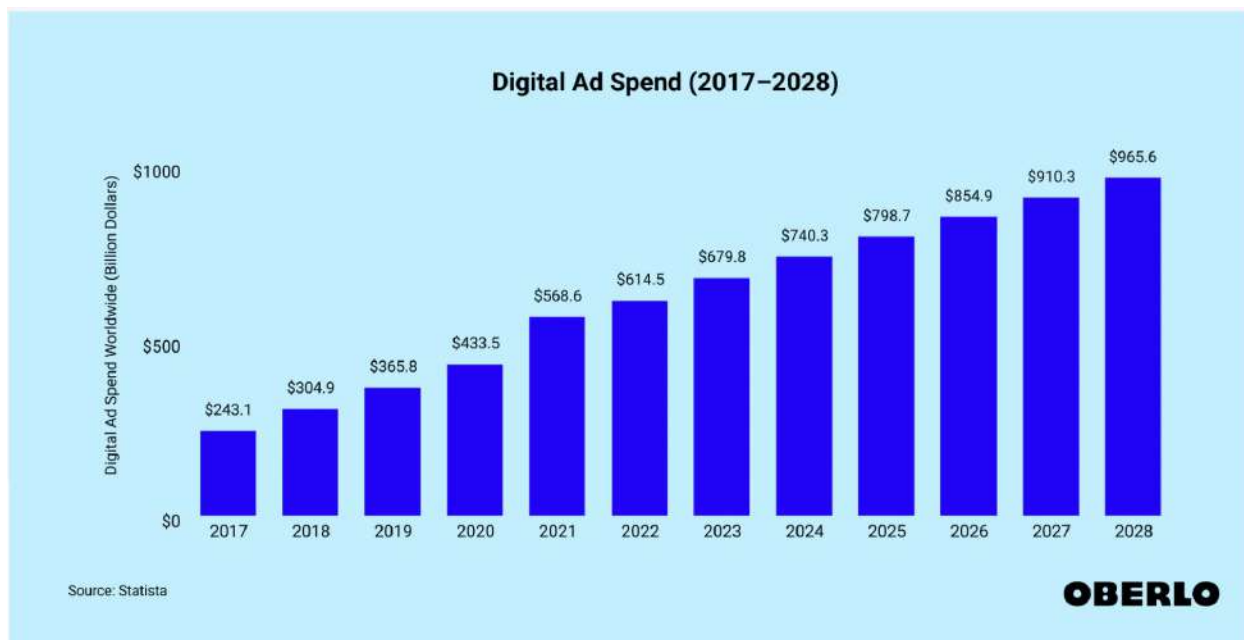


Figure 1.1. Source: Oberlo. Digital ad Spend

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions, as well as to influence the emotions of others (Lopes, P. N., Brackett, M. A., Nezlek, J. B., Schütz, A., Sellin, I., & Salovey, P. 2004). In the context of digital advertising, particularly in the fashion industry, EI can be leveraged to create emotionally resonant content

that appeals to the consumer's sense of identity, aesthetic appreciation, and emotional needs. This approach can lead to a deeper emotional connection with the brand, ultimately influencing purchase intentions (Lopes, P. N., Brackett, M. A., Nezlek, J. B., Schütz, A., Sellin, I., & Salovey, P. 2004).

Psychologist Daniel Goleman popularized the concept, emphasizing that EI is a crucial factor in personal and professional success, often surpassing cognitive intelligence (IQ) in importance (Goleman, 1995). Emotional intelligence consists of five key components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Self-awareness involves recognizing and understanding one's emotions, strengths, and weaknesses, while self-regulation refers to the ability to control emotional impulses and adapt to changing circumstances. Motivation is the inner drive to achieve goals beyond external rewards, whereas empathy allows individuals to understand and share the emotions of others. Lastly, social skills enable effective communication, relationship-building, and conflict resolution (Goleman, 1998) (Harvard Business Review, 2021).

The significance of EI is evident in various aspects of life, particularly in the workplace, education, mental health, and personal relationships. In professional settings, emotionally intelligent leaders build strong teams, manage conflicts effectively, and adapt to dynamic environments. Research indicates that 90% of top-performing employees possess high EI, highlighting its importance in career advancement (Harvard Business Review, 2020). Similarly, students with high EI tend to excel academically, as they exhibit better emotional regulation, lower stress levels, and stronger problem-solving skills (APA, 2019). EI also plays a crucial role in mental well-being, helping individuals cope with stress, reduce anxiety, and build resilience. Studies suggest that emotionally intelligent individuals maintain healthier relationships, communicate effectively, and experience higher levels of life satisfaction (Psychological Science, 2021).

Measuring EI involves various standardized tests, such as the Mayer Salovey Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), which assesses emotional reasoning and problem solving abilities, and the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i 2.0), which evaluates self reported emotional competencies (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Additionally, EI can be developed through

mindfulness practices, cognitive reappraisal techniques, active listening, and communication training. Many organizations and educational institutions now integrate EI training into leadership programs and curricula to enhance emotional awareness and interpersonal effectiveness (Forbes, 2023). Given its profound impact on decision making, leadership, mental health, and social adaptability, fostering emotional intelligence is essential for personal growth and long term success.

Digital advertising in the fashion sector is increasingly shifting from purely informative content to emotionally engaging narratives that resonate with consumers's values and aspirations. This shift aligns with the growing emphasis on emotional branding, which aims to foster long term customer loyalty by creating meaningful emotional associations (Morris et al., 2002). Yet, despite the growing importance of EI in advertising, there is limited empirical research on how EI driven strategies specifically impact customer purchase intentions in the digital fashion space.

The role of emotional intelligence in digital advertising is a touch of advertising that has quite an interesting difference compared to ordinary advertising related to consumer's value and aspiration. And can provide quite different emotionally to the audience. One example of advertising or campaign that includes emotional intelligence in it is the adidas campaign entitled Break free (2016) <https://youtu.be/Aj55pH9pF9E?si=BXqYZ5T400q11HHn>.



Muhamad Fadil Dwihariadi

Figure 1.2. Source: Youtube. One example of advertising or campaign that includes emotional intelligence in it.

In seconds 3 to 17 describes an old man who imagines himself who can still do activities freely and freely like young people who can exercise every day. In seconds 3 to 17 applies the fourth EI aspect, namely Empathy by showing sadness which gives the impression of pity towards the audience.

In the next second, Adidas gives a picture where the grandfather forces himself to return to free activities by using adidas shoes that he used to wear when he was young to remember how freely he moved in the past with these shoes. This illustrates the second EI aspect, namely motivation, which is a drive to achieve goals beyond external rewards like money or status, which can mean that he still achieves what he wants even when he cannot be said to be a capable person.

Furthermore, Adidas features an old grandfather who finally succeeds in achieving his desire to move freely or break free as the title suggests. The Break Free ad conveys the inspiring message that passion knows no age and that one can regain their passion for life with courage and determination. This video deeply touches the emotions of the audience because it contains elements of hope, struggle, and victory against limitations together with adidas.

The relevance of this research lies in its potential to bridge the gap between theory and practice, offering valuable insights for marketers and advertisers seeking to optimize their digital advertising strategies. Understanding how emotional intelligence can enhance the effectiveness of digital advertising in the fashion industry is crucial for businesses aiming to build strong emotional connections with their target audience and drive purchase behavior.

1.2 Problem Statement

In the dynamic landscape of fashion marketing, footwear particularly shoes has emerged not only as a functional necessity but also as a powerful form of self expression, social identity, and lifestyle alignment (McNeill & Venter, 2019). With the rise of digital platforms, fashion brands increasingly rely on online advertising to influence consumer behavior. However, conventional digital advertising often emphasizes product features and price rather than emotional appeal, which may not effectively engage today's emotionally driven and brand conscious consumers.

Shoes hold symbolic meaning in fashion culture they can reflect personality, aspirations, and social belonging. This makes them highly sensitive to emotional influences in marketing. Emotionally intelligent digital advertising, which incorporates empathy, motivation, and social connection, may therefore play a crucial role in shaping consumer attitudes and driving purchase intentions for shoes (Goleman, 1995; Kidwell et al., 2008).

Despite this potential, limited research has specifically examined how emotional intelligence (EI) components embedded in fashion shoe advertisements impact consumers' psychological engagement and purchase decisions. While broader EI studies exist in general advertising or luxury branding contexts, there is a notable gap in understanding how EI-based strategies like emotionally resonant storytelling, influencer collaboration, and personalized visual cues affect consumer decision making in the fashion shoe segment (Bagozzi et al., 2017; Mehta & Purvis, 2021).

This study seeks to address this gap by investigating how the five key components of emotional intelligence self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills manifest in shoe-related digital advertising and how they influence customer purchase intention. Understanding these relationships will help fashion brands design emotionally engaging shoe campaigns that are more persuasive, personal, and effective in today's competitive digital environment.

1.3 Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the role of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in fashion digital advertising, with a specific focus on shoe products, and how its key

components self awareness, self regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills influence customer purchase intention. Footwear, especially shoes, serves not only as a fashion statement but also as a symbol of identity and lifestyle, making it a compelling category to explore in emotionally driven marketing strategies.

Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Examine the relationship between Emotional Intelligence in Digital Shoe Advertising and Customer Purchase Intention.
2. Analyze the role of Self Awareness in digital shoe advertising and its effect on consumers purchase decisions.
3. Assess the influence of Self Regulation in emotional advertising for shoes on purchase intention.
4. Explore the impact of Motivational Appeals in digital fashion shoe advertising on purchase intention.
5. Investigate the role of Empathy in digital advertising of shoes and its effect on consumer buying decisions.
6. Assess the influence of Social Skills such as influencer use, community building, and brand consumer interaction in digital advertising of shoes on purchase intention.
7. Provide strategic recommendations for fashion brands, particularly in the footwear sector, to enhance digital advertising effectiveness through emotionally intelligent approaches.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for academic research, professional practice, and practical applications by contributing to the understanding of how emotional intelligence (EI) influences consumer behavior in the context of fashion shoe digital advertising.

1.3.1 Academic Significance:

The study addresses a critical gap in the existing literature by integrating emotional intelligence theory with digital advertising research. Although previous studies have explored the role of emotion in marketing and advertising (Aaker, 1997; Morris et al., 2002), limited research focuses on the strategic application of EI in digital advertising within the fashion industry. By examining the mechanisms through which EI impacts consumer purchase intentions, the study contributes to the broader fields of consumer psychology, marketing communication, and emotional branding, offering new insights into the interplay between emotion and advertising effectiveness.

1.3.2 Professional Significance:

For marketing professionals, this research provides a framework for understanding how emotionally intelligent advertising strategies can enhance consumer engagement and brand loyalty. With the increasing saturation of digital advertising platforms, the ability to create emotionally resonant content has become a key differentiator (Kotler & Keller, 2016). This study offers valuable guidance on leveraging EI to develop more effective advertising campaigns, thereby improving customer retention and competitive advantage in the fashion industry.

1.3.3 Practical Applications:

From a practical perspective, the study's findings will offer actionable recommendations for fashion brands seeking to optimize their digital advertising strategies. By identifying the emotional triggers and demographic factors that influence consumer responses, marketers can design targeted advertising content that aligns with consumer emotions and preferences. Additionally, the research will provide insights into how brands can foster deeper emotional connections with consumers, leading to increased purchase intentions and customer loyalty (Kim & Johnson, 2013).

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, this study seeks to answer the following research questions regarding the role of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in fashion digital advertising, with a particular emphasis on shoes, and its impact on customer purchase intention:

1. How does Emotional Intelligence in digital shoe advertising influence customer purchase intention in the fashion industry?
2. In what ways does self awareness in digital shoe advertising affect consumer decision making that drives purchase intention?
3. How does self regulation in emotionally driven shoe advertisements contribute to impulse buying or purchase intention?
4. What is the impact of motivational appeals in digital advertising of shoes on consumer purchase behavior?
5. How does empathy in digital advertising for footwear enhance emotional connection and drive customer purchase intention?
6. To what extent do social skills in brand consumer interaction (e.g., influencer marketing, personalized messaging) in shoe advertising influence consumer engagement and buying decisions (purchase intention)?

These questions aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Emotional Intelligence in digital advertising of shoes affects consumer behavior, particularly in terms of purchase intention. The study will rely on existing theories of Emotional Intelligence, consumer psychology, and digital marketing to develop practical insights for fashion brands in the footwear sector.

1.6 Scope and Limitations

Scope of the Research

This study focuses on exploring the role of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in digital advertising within the fashion industry specifically targeting footwear (shoes) and its impact on customer purchase intention. The research examines how emotionally intelligent advertising strategies such as emotionally engaging content, empathetic messaging, and personalized campaigns affect customer engagement, brand trust, and purchase behaviors, particularly in the context of digital shoe advertisements.

The study targets digital advertising platforms, especially social media channels such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, as these are key touchpoints where fashion brands, including footwear brands, engage consumers with emotionally driven marketing content. The scope is limited to the fashion industry, with a specific emphasis on footwear (shoes) to maintain a focused analysis within a sector that heavily relies on emotional appeal and visual storytelling in its digital marketing strategies.

The geographical scope encompasses online consumers aged 18 to 45 in urban regions, who are more likely to engage with digital advertisements and make online purchases. The study employs quantitative methods using surveys to gather data from consumers exposed to emotionally intelligent shoe advertisements on social media platforms. Relevant literature on emotional intelligence in marketing and consumer behavior forms the foundation for the conceptual framework and hypotheses.

Limitations of the Study

1. Generalizability:

This study is limited to the fashion footwear industry and may not be generalizable to other sectors where emotional appeals in advertising operate differently. For example, in functional industries like technology or healthcare, rational and informational appeals

may play a more prominent role.

(Bagozzi et al., 1999; Goleman, 1998)

2. Subjectivity of Emotional Intelligence:

Emotional Intelligence is inherently subjective and varies across individuals, making it challenging to measure and standardize. Customers' emotional responses to shoe advertising are influenced by personal, cultural, and social factors, potentially leading to diverse and unpredictable reactions.

(Keltner & Gross, 1999; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982)

3. Platform Specific Influence (Limited to Social Media):

This study focuses exclusively on social media platforms, and does not account for the varying effects of emotionally intelligent advertising on other digital formats such as websites or email marketing. Differences in content style and user interaction on platforms like TikTok versus Instagram may influence emotional engagement, but this platform diversity is only partially addressed.

(Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Hollebeek et al., 2014)

4. Limited Timeframe:

The study is cross sectional, gathering data at a specific point in time, which limits insights into long term effects of emotionally intelligent shoe advertisements on customer behavior. A longitudinal approach could provide a better understanding of evolving consumer attitudes.

(Bryman, 2016)

5. Purchase Intention vs. Actual Behavior:

While the study measures purchase intention as a key outcome, it may not always predict actual purchasing behavior. External factors such as budget constraints, product availability, or shifting consumer preferences can impact real purchase actions.

(Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Morwitz et al., 2007)