

The Influence Of Brand Awareness, Customer Engagement, And User Experience On Customer Inquiry In The Early Stage Of Digitalization Of Bumi Makaya Cibodas

Pengaruh Brand Awareness, Customer Engagement, Dan User Experience Terhadap Customer Inquiry Pada Tahap Awal Digitalisasi Di Instagram Bumi Makaya Cibodas

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ABSTRACT

Bumi Makaya Cibodas (BMC), a residential developer in Purwakarta, is currently in the early stage of digital marketing through Instagram (@bumi_makaya). A significant gap exists between the high content reach (52,991 accounts) and the low Customer Inquiry, with only 3 contact link taps recorded during December 2025 to January 2026. This study aims to analyze the influence of Brand Awareness, Customer Engagement, and User Experience on Customer Inquiry, both partially and simultaneously, in the early stage of BMC's digitalization. This study employs a quantitative descriptive-verify approach with purposive sampling. A total of 105 valid respondents were obtained from 118 responses. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4. The findings reveal that Customer Engagement has a positive and significant influence on Customer Inquiry (H2 accepted), while Brand Awareness and User Experience have a positive but non-significant influence (H1 and H3 rejected). Simultaneously, all three variables have a significant combined influence on Customer Inquiry with an R^2 value of 0.651 (H4 accepted). Customer Engagement is identified as the dominant predictor ($\beta=0.648$; $f^2=0.453$). These findings serve as a strategic foundation for BMC to optimize Instagram content strategies to increase Customer Inquiry.

Keywords : Brand Awareness, Customer Engagement, User Experience, Customer Inquiry, PLS-SEM.

ABSTRAK

Bumi Makaya Cibodas (BMC), pengembang perumahan di Purwakarta, berada pada tahap awal *digital marketing* melalui Instagram (@bumi_makaya). Terdapat kesenjangan signifikan antara tingginya *reach* konten (52.991 akun) dengan rendahnya *Customer Inquiry*, dengan hanya 3 ketukan tautan kontak yang tercatat pada periode Desember 2025 hingga Januari 2026. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis pengaruh *Brand Awareness*, *Customer Engagement*, dan *User Experience* Instagram secara parsial dan simultan terhadap *Customer Inquiry* pada tahap awal digitalisasi BMC. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif deskriptif-verifikatif dengan teknik *purposive sampling*. Sebanyak 105 responden valid diperoleh dari 118 respons. Data dianalisis menggunakan *Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling* (PLS-SEM) dengan SmartPLS 4. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa *Customer Engagement* berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap *Customer Inquiry* (H2 diterima), sementara *Brand Awareness* dan *User Experience* berpengaruh positif namun tidak signifikan (H1 dan H3 ditolak). Secara simultan, ketiga variabel berpengaruh signifikan terhadap *Customer Inquiry* dengan nilai $R^2=0,651$ (H4 diterima). *Customer Engagement* merupakan prediktor dominan ($\beta=0,648$; $f^2=0,453$). Temuan ini menjadi landasan strategis bagi BMC dalam mengoptimalkan konten Instagram guna meningkatkan *Customer Inquiry*.

Kata Kunci: Brand Awareness, Customer Engagement, User Experience, Customer Inquiry, PLS-SEM.

1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has fundamentally transformed marketing practices across industries, including the property sector. In Indonesia, the shift toward digital marketing is particularly pronounced, with 52% of total advertising expenditure now allocated to digital channels, reaching a value of USD 3.64 billion (We Are Social &

Meltwater, 2025). Social media platforms have become the dominant arena for brand discovery, with 37.3% of consumers finding new brands through social media advertisements and 32.6% through social media comments. Indonesia currently records 180 million social media user identities, representing 62.9% of the total population, with Instagram emerging as the second most widely used platform at 82.4% (We Are Social & Meltwater, 2025). These conditions create a strategic imperative for property developers to establish digital presence, particularly on Instagram, as a primary marketing channel.

Property is classified as a high-involvement product, requiring substantial consumer trust and detailed visual information before a purchase decision is made (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). In this context, *Customer Inquiry* serves as a critical early-stage conversion indicator, representing consumers' active behavior in seeking information, expressing interest, and initiating contact with a developer. For businesses in the early stage of digitalization, the volume of *Customer Inquiry* reflects the effectiveness of digital marketing strategy more directly than sales figures, given that the consumer journey from awareness to purchase in the property sector is significantly prolonged.

Bumi Makaya Cibodas (BMC) is a residential property developer located in Cibodas, Bungursari District, Purwakarta Regency, offering both subsidized and commercial housing products. Since January 2025, BMC has been implementing its digital marketing strategy primarily through Instagram (@bumi_makaya). However, a critical gap has emerged between content exposure and actual consumer response. During the period of December 2025 to January 2026, BMC's Instagram content reached 52,991 accounts with 69,463 views, yet the primary indicator of *Customer Inquiry*, specifically *External Link Taps*, was recorded only 3 times. This represents a severe conversion gap that warrants systematic investigation.

To identify the underlying causes of this phenomenon from the consumer perspective, a preliminary survey was conducted involving 33 respondents aged 22-45 years who were actively considering housing acquisition. The results revealed that 93.9% of respondents had never contacted BMC's marketing team, and while 45.5% reported feeling motivated to inquire after viewing content, only 6.1% had taken actual action. This gap between behavioral intention and actual behavior indicates unidentified barriers in the conversion process. Regarding *Brand Awareness*, 72.7% of respondents were unfamiliar with BMC prior to the survey, placing the brand at the lowest level of Aaker's (1991) brand awareness pyramid. Regarding *Customer Engagement*, although 87.9% of respondents were willing to like content, only 24.2% had shared it, indicating that engagement remained superficial and had not reached the activation level capable of driving inquiry (Brodie et al., 2011). Meanwhile, 27.3% of respondents assessed BMC's Instagram visual layout as insufficiently organized as a digital catalog, suggesting that *User Experience* deficiencies may further impede consumers from initiating contact.

Based on these empirical findings, this study aims to analyze and determine the extent of the influence of *Brand Awareness*, *Customer Engagement*, and *User Experience* on *Customer Inquiry*, both partially and simultaneously, in the early stage of Bumi Makaya Cibodas's digitalization.

2. Literature Review

Brand Awareness

Brand Awareness refers to the ability of potential buyers to recognize or recall that a brand belongs to a particular product category (Aaker 1991). Keller (2013) further defines *Brand Awareness* in terms of the strength of the brand node in consumer memory, encompassing two key components: *brand recognition*, which reflects consumers' ability to confirm prior exposure to a brand, and *brand recall*, which reflects consumers' ability to retrieve the brand from memory when given product category cues. In the context of digital

marketing, Lestari and Kurniawan (2025) demonstrate that consistent exposure to brand content on social media platforms contributes significantly to *Brand Awareness* formation and strengthens consumer intention to interact further with the brand. Kurniawan et al. (2018) confirm that *Brand Awareness* as a component of brand equity exerts a significant influence on consumer decision-making processes. In this study, *Brand Awareness* is measured through four dimensions: *brand recognition*, *brand recall*, *brand association*, and *brand knowledge*. Consumers who are aware of a property brand through Instagram are more likely to seek further information, thereby initiating *Customer Inquiry*. Accordingly, this study proposes:

H1: *Brand Awareness* has a positive influence on *Customer Inquiry*.

Customer Engagement

Customer Engagement is defined as the psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive consumer experiences with a focal agent or object in service relationships (Brodie et al. 2011). Hollebeek (2011) conceptualizes *Customer Engagement* as comprising three core dimensions: *cognitive engagement*, reflecting the level of concentration and information processing directed at a brand; *affective engagement*, reflecting the emotional investment and enthusiasm felt toward the brand; and *behavioral engagement*, reflecting the observable actions taken by consumers as manifestations of their involvement with the brand. Kurniawan and Nurlail (2023) specify that on the Instagram platform, behavioral engagement is expressed through interactions such as liking, commenting, sharing, and saving content. In this study, *Customer Engagement* is operationalized through five dimensions: *affective engagement*, *cognitive engagement*, *behavioral engagement: save*, *behavioral engagement: share*, and *interactive engagement*. Active engagement with brand content on Instagram is expected to increase consumers' motivation to initiate contact, thereby driving *Customer Inquiry*. Accordingly, this study proposes:

H2: *Customer Engagement* has a positive and significant influence on *Customer Inquiry*.

User Experience

User Experience refers to the totality of a user's perceptions and responses resulting from the use or anticipated use of a product, system, or service (Garrett 2011). Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) emphasize that in digital marketing contexts, *User Experience* encompasses the quality, navigability, and visual appeal of digital touchpoints, all of which directly influence consumer behavior. Hervina and Kurniawan (2026) demonstrate that *User Experience* on social media platforms influences consumer engagement and subsequent purchasing intentions. Kurniawan et al. (2024) further affirm that positive digital user experiences strengthen consumer confidence and accelerate the decision to seek further information from a brand. In this study, *User Experience* of BMC's Instagram profile is measured through four dimensions: visual quality, information completeness, ease of navigation, and content appeal. A well-designed Instagram profile experience is expected to reduce friction and motivate consumers to initiate contact. Accordingly, this study proposes:

H3: *User Experience* has a positive influence on *Customer Inquiry*.

Customer Inquiry

Customer Inquiry refers to active consumer behavior in seeking information and initiating contact with a brand as part of the pre-purchase decision-making process. Within the AIDA framework (Kotler and Keller 2016), *Customer Inquiry* represents the transition from the *interest* stage to the *action* stage, where consumers move beyond passive awareness to proactively engaging with a brand. Schiffman and Wisenblit (2019) position *Customer Inquiry* at the information search stage of consumer decision-making, characterizing it as the most critical early conversion indicator for high-involvement products such as property. Dalimunthe

et al. (2023) affirm that for businesses in the early stage of digitalization, measuring *Customer Inquiry* provides a more realistic and actionable assessment of marketing effectiveness than measuring purchase decisions directly, given the extended purchase cycle in the property industry. In this study, *Customer Inquiry* is measured through five dimensions: *information seeking intention*, *contact intention*, *actual inquiry behavior*, *inquiry urgency*, and *inquiry follow-through*. The simultaneous influence of *Brand Awareness*, *Customer Engagement*, and *User Experience* on *Customer Inquiry* is proposed as follows:

H4: *Brand Awareness*, *Customer Engagement*, and *User Experience* simultaneously have a positive and significant influence on *Customer Inquiry*.

The conceptual framework of this study is presented in Figure 1.

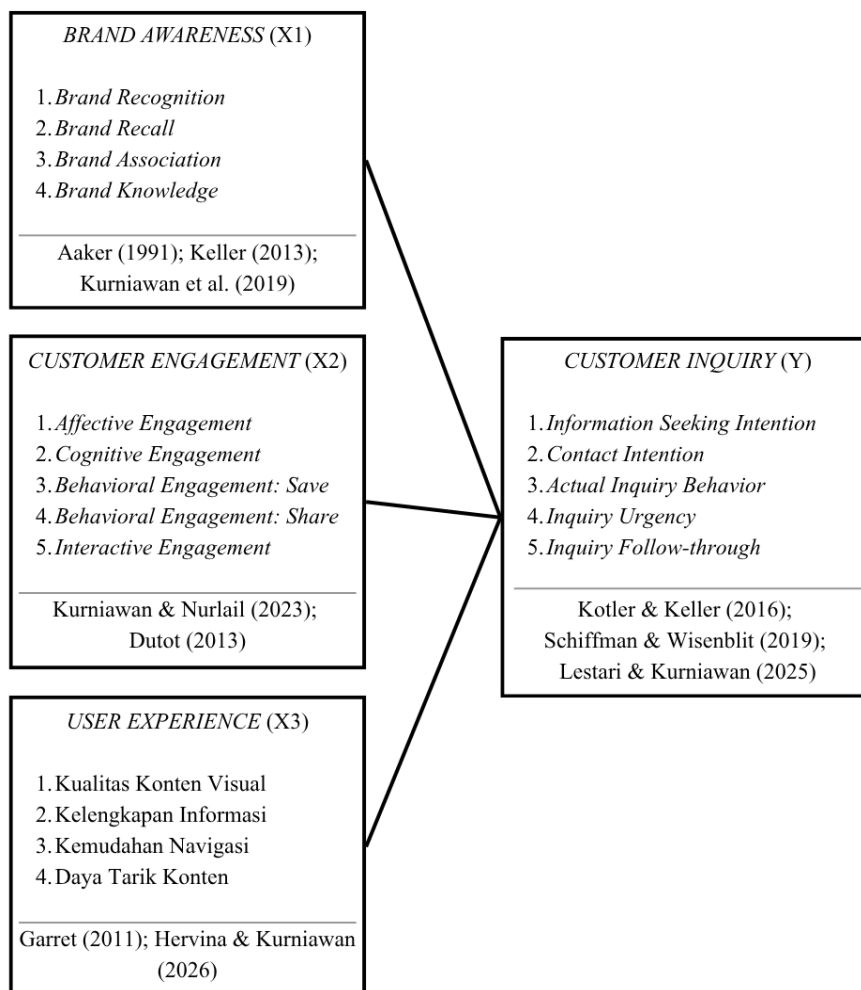


Fig 1. Conceptual Framework

3. Research Methods

This study employed a quantitative research approach with a descriptive and verificative design. The descriptive component aims to provide an overview of the conditions of *Brand Awareness*, *Customer Engagement*, *User Experience*, and *Customer Inquiry* at Bumi Makaya Cibodas based on respondents' perceptions, while the verificative component aims to test and measure the extent of the influence of the three independent variables on *Customer Inquiry*, both partially and simultaneously. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4 software. PLS-SEM was selected

because it is appropriate for examining complex relationships among latent variables, accommodates relatively small sample sizes, and does not require data to be normally distributed (Hair et al. 2017).

Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed online via Google Forms. Prior to completing the questionnaire, respondents were directed to visit BMC's Instagram account (@bumi_makaya) to standardize exposure to the research stimulus. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria: active Instagram users aged 22-45 years who were actively considering housing acquisition. A total of 105 valid respondents were obtained from 118 responses collected, with 13 responses excluded due to incomplete data or failure to meet the sampling criteria.

The questionnaire consisted of statements measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The measurement model comprised four latent variables: *Brand Awareness* (X1) with 8 indicators, *Customer Engagement* (X2) with 10 indicators, *User Experience* (X3) with 8 indicators, and *Customer Inquiry* (Y) with 10 indicators. The analytical procedure consisted of two stages. First, outer model evaluation assessed convergent validity through outer loading values (threshold >0.70) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE >0.50), discriminant validity through the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT <0.90) (Henseler et al. 2015), and reliability through Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha (both >0.70). Second, inner model evaluation assessed the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and hypothesis testing through bootstrapping procedures with 5,000 subsamples. A hypothesis was accepted when the t-statistic exceeded 1.96 and the p-value was below 0.05 at a 95% confidence level (Hair et al. 2017).

4. Results and Discussions

Respondent Characteristics

Of the 118 responses collected, 105 valid respondents were used for analysis after excluding 13 responses that failed to meet the sampling criteria. The sample was predominantly female (63.8%), aged 22-30 years (61.9%), and employed in the private sector (39.0%). Geographically, 77.1% of respondents resided in the Karawang, Purwakarta, and Subang areas, which constitute the primary catchment area of Bumi Makaya Cibodas.

Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

The measurement model was evaluated to assess the reliability and validity of the research instruments. Five indicators were eliminated during the process (X1.4, X1.6, X2.5, X2.9, X3.6) due to low outer loading values. All remaining indicators demonstrated outer loading values above 0.50, meeting the convergent validity requirement at the indicator level. Table 1 presents the results of the convergent validity and reliability assessments.

Table 1. Outer Model Evaluation Results.

Construct	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_a	rho_c (CR)
Brand Awareness (X1)	0.510	0.807	0.810	0.862
Customer Engagement (X2)	0.517	0.866	0.867	0.895
User Experience (X3)	0.513	0.841	0.848	0.880
Customer Inquiry (Y)	0.580	0.919	0.922	0.932

Source: SmartPLS 4 output, 2026

All constructs obtained AVE values above 0.50, satisfying convergent validity at the construct level (Fornell and Larcker 1981). All Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (rho_c) values exceeded 0.70, confirming satisfactory internal consistency reliability (Hair et al. 2017). Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), as the Fornell-Larcker criterion demonstrated limitations in detecting discriminant validity among

theoretically related constructs. As presented in Table 2, all HTMT values were below the 0.90 threshold (Henseler et al. 2015), confirming adequate discriminant validity.

Table 2. HTMT Results

Construct Pair	HTMT
Customer Engagement <-> Brand Awareness	0.881
User Experience <-> Brand Awareness	0.887
User Experience <-> Customer Engagement	0.867
Customer Inquiry <-> Customer Engagement	0.872
Customer Inquiry <-> User Experience	0.742
Customer Inquiry <-> Brand Awareness	0.717

Source: SmartPLS 4 output, 2026

Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

The structural model was evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), model fit (SRMR), and collinearity (VIF). The R^2 value of 0.651 indicates that the three independent variables jointly explain 65.1% of the variance in *Customer Inquiry*, reflecting a moderate-to-strong level of explanatory power (Hair et al. 2017). The effect size analysis reveals that *Customer Engagement* produced a large effect ($f^2=0.453$), while *Brand Awareness* ($f^2=0.000$) and *User Experience* ($f^2=0.033$) produced negligible and small effects, respectively. The Q^2 predict value of 0.602, which substantially exceeds zero, confirms the model's adequate predictive relevance. The SRMR value of 0.095 falls below the 0.10 threshold, indicating acceptable model fit (Henseler et al. 2015). All VIF values were below 3.3 (BA=2.717; CE=2.662; UX=2.702), confirming the absence of multicollinearity concerns.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples. A hypothesis was accepted when t-statistic ≥ 1.96 and p-value < 0.05 . The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	β	T-Statistic	P-Value	Decision
H1	Brand Awareness -> Customer Inquiry	0.026	0.211	0.833	Rejected
H2	Customer Engagement -> Customer Inquiry	0.648	6.221	0.000	Accepted
H3	User Experience -> Customer Inquiry	0.176	1.570	0.117	Rejected
H4	BA + CE + UX -> Customer Inquiry ($R^2=0.651$)		13.531	0.000	Accepted

Source: SmartPLS 4 output, 2026

Discussion

The finding that *Brand Awareness* has a positive but non-significant influence on *Customer Inquiry* ($\beta=0.026$; $p=0.833$) departs from the theoretical propositions of Keller (2013) and the empirical findings of Lestari and Kurniawan (2025) and Kurniawan et al. (2019), who demonstrated that brand awareness significantly influences consumer behavioral intentions. This result is contextually explained by the early-stage nature of BMC's digitalization. The pre-survey data revealed that 72.7% of respondents were unfamiliar with BMC prior to the study, positioning the brand at the lowest level of Aaker's (1991) brand awareness pyramid. At this stage, the brand recognition that does exist is insufficient to independently trigger active consumer inquiry. *Brand Awareness* thus serves as a prerequisite condition rather than a direct driver, requiring the mediating role of engagement before translating into *inquiry* behavior.

Customer Engagement demonstrated a positive and significant influence on *Customer Inquiry* ($\beta=0.648$; $T=6.221$; $p=0.000$), emerging as the sole significant predictor and the dominant variable in the model. The large effect size ($f^2=0.453$) confirms the substantive magnitude of this relationship (Cohen 1988). This finding aligns with Kurniawan and Nurlail (2023), who demonstrated that consumer engagement on digital platforms significantly influences behavioral intentions. Within the context of Instagram-based property marketing, active engagement behaviors, particularly saving and sharing content, reflect a deeper level of consumer involvement that directly motivates inquiry initiation. This implies that content strategies designed to elicit active responses, such as interactive Q&A sessions, content that prompts saving as a reference, and shareable content, are far more effective in driving *Customer Inquiry* than reach-oriented strategies alone.

User Experience showed a positive but non-significant influence on *Customer Inquiry* ($\beta=0.176$; $p=0.117$). This finding diverges from Hervina and Kurniawan (2026) and Kurniawan et al. (2024), who established significant effects of digital user experience on subsequent consumer behavioral intentions. The non-significant result is attributable to the standardized nature of Instagram's interface, which limits cross-brand differentiation in user experience. Unlike branded websites or mobile applications where interface design varies substantially between companies, all Instagram accounts share the same navigational structure. Content quality differentiation, rather than interface differentiation, thus becomes the primary driver of consumer response. The relatively high descriptive mean of *User Experience* ($M=4.11$) further suggests that respondents were generally satisfied with BMC's Instagram profile, yet satisfaction alone was insufficient to trigger active *inquiry* without adequate engagement stimulation.

The simultaneous influence of all three variables on *Customer Inquiry* was positive and significant ($R^2=0.651$; $T=13.531$; $p=0.000$), confirming H4. The phenomenon whereby *Brand Awareness* and *User Experience* are non-significant in isolation yet collectively significant can be explained through inter-variable synergy. *Brand Awareness* provides the foundational recognition that renders content meaningful; *User Experience* provides the conducive environment for content consumption; and *Customer Engagement* converts that exposure and experience into active motivation to inquire. The three variables thus operate as an integrated digital ecosystem aligned with the AIDA framework (Kotler and Keller 2016), wherein Awareness and Interest created by *Brand Awareness* and *User Experience* are catalyzed by *Customer Engagement* to produce Action in the form of *Customer Inquiry*.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the influence of *Brand Awareness*, *Customer Engagement*, and *User Experience* on *Customer Inquiry* in the early stage of Bumi Makaya Cibodas's digitalization on Instagram, using the PLS-SEM method with 105 valid respondents. The findings demonstrate that *Brand Awareness* has a positive but non-significant influence on *Customer Inquiry* (H1 rejected), indicating that brand recognition formed at the early stage of digitalization has not yet reached a depth sufficient to independently drive active consumer contact. *Customer Engagement* has a positive and significant influence on *Customer Inquiry* (H2 accepted), emerging as the dominant predictor with a large effect size ($f^2=0.453$), confirming that active consumer involvement with Instagram content is the most effective lever for driving inquiry at this stage of digitalization. *User Experience* has a positive but non-significant influence on *Customer Inquiry* (H3 rejected), which is attributable to the standardized interface nature of the Instagram platform that limits cross-brand user experience differentiation. Simultaneously, all three variables exert a positive and significant combined influence on *Customer Inquiry* (H4 accepted), explaining 65.1% of its variance and demonstrating that the three variables form a complementary digital ecosystem wherein

Brand Awareness and *User Experience* function most effectively when catalyzed by *Customer Engagement*.

These findings carry several practical implications for Bumi Makaya Cibodas management. Regarding *Brand Awareness*, the lowest-scoring indicator was *Brand Recall*, suggesting the need for content strategies that consistently present the brand name, tagline, and visual identity in every post, supplemented by the use of location-specific hashtags and collaboration with local Purwakarta content creators to increase brand exposure frequency. Regarding *Customer Engagement*, the lowest-scoring indicator was *Interactive Engagement*, indicating that BMC's content has not sufficiently invited active consumer responses. Management is advised to design content that actively solicits interaction, including questions in captions, Q&A sessions in Instagram Stories, housing preference polls, and educational content about the KPR process that prompts questions in the comments section. Regarding *User Experience*, the lowest-scoring indicator was information completeness and accuracy, suggesting that all published content including unit pricing, types, location, and legal documents should be consistently updated and verifiable. Regarding *Customer Inquiry*, the lowest-scoring indicator was *Inquiry Urgency*, indicating that consumers frequently delay contact after viewing content. The addition of clear call-to-action prompts, limited-availability unit notifications, and time-bound promotional offers with direct WhatsApp links can substantially reduce the gap between consumer interest and actual inquiry behavior.

This study acknowledges several limitations. The research was conducted exclusively on a single platform (Instagram) and a single developer in the early stage of digitalization, limiting the generalizability of findings to more mature digital brands or other social media platforms. The cross-sectional research design also restricts causal interpretation of the findings over time. Future research is encouraged to incorporate mediating variables such as *Brand Trust* or *Customer Satisfaction*, which may explain the indirect pathway from *Brand Awareness* to *Customer Inquiry* that was not significant in this study. Longitudinal studies comparing the early and mature stages of digitalization for the same brand would also provide valuable insights into how the relative influence of each variable evolves over time. Additionally, expanding the scope to include multiple digital platforms such as TikTok, WhatsApp Business, and company websites would yield a more comprehensive understanding of digital marketing effectiveness in the property sector.

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