

## **WHEN THE POP-UP STORE STRATEGY IS QUESTIONED: AN ANALYSIS OF DETERMINANTS OF BRAND AWARENESS ON CAR-FREE DAY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Pop-up stores have become one of the increasingly popular temporary marketing strategies at Car Free Day (CFD) events in Indonesia, particularly in the West Java region. The phenomenon of increasing pop-up store activities at CFD aligns with high public participation and opportunities for direct brand promotion. This study aims to analyze the factors influencing the effectiveness of pop-up stores on brand awareness, considering variables such as location, product innovation, consumer engagement, and customer experience. The method used is a quantitative approach with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis techniques through SmartPLS 4. The sample in this study consisted of 310 respondents who were visitors to CFD in West Java. The research results indicate that the variables of location, product innovation, and customer experience significantly influence the increase in brand awareness through pop-up store activities at CFD. However, the consumer engagement variable does not show a significant impact on brand awareness. These findings imply that business practitioners should prioritize strategic location aspects, enhance consumer engagement, and create positive customer experiences to maximize the effectiveness of pop-up stores in building brand awareness at CFD events.

**Key words:** location; product innovation; consumer engagement; brand awareness; pop-up store

### **INTRODUCTION**

Pop-up stores are an experiential marketing-based strategy that is increasingly used by brands to create an emotional connection with consumers through direct, limited, and exclusive interactions (BOUSTANI 2021). In Indonesia, this phenomenon is frequently observed during Car Free Day (CFD) events, which serve as a strategic public space for companies to promote their brands and products more closely to the community (Fitriyani, Rachman, and Kurniawansyah 2024). Pop-up stores offer advantages such as location flexibility, design creativity, and unique experiences, which can increase brand awareness while supporting economic recovery, particularly for MSMEs (Handayani 2023; Hustia and Bimantara 2024). However, the effectiveness of this strategy is often influenced by location limitations, a lack of product innovation, low consumer engagement, and suboptimal customer experience (Flores and Madrid 2025).

Previous research indicates that pop-up stores have significant potential to influence purchasing decisions and brand awareness through factors such as product innovation, consumer engagement, customer experience, and digital promotion (Alamsyah et al. 2024; Gao 2024; Kim and Cha 2024). For example, Meilani and Wangdra (2024) found that product innovation contributes to differentiation and encourages consumers to make repeat purchases. Meanwhile, Setiawati and Susanti (2022) emphasize that a positive customer experience is a dominant factor in building brand loyalty. However, other studies, such as Ho and Su (2024), reveal that consumer engagement does not always lead to a significant increase in brand recognition, necessitating more meaningful interaction strategies. From these various findings, it is evident that there is a research gap, as most studies still focus on the context of modern retail or e-commerce, while studies on open public spaces like CFD are still limited (Saraswati, Hadi, and Yogatama 2024).

Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap by analyzing the influence of location, product innovation, consumer engagement, and customer experience on brand awareness within the context of pop-up stores at CFD. The novelty of this research lies in its empirical analysis in a dynamic and competitive public space, where direct social interaction becomes a differentiating factor compared to digital marketing or conventional retail strategies. The research results are expected to contribute scientifically to the literature on experiential marketing while also providing practical recommendations for business owners in designing effective pop-up store strategies in open public spaces.

The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which location, product innovation, consumer engagement, and customer experience influence the increase in brand awareness through pop-up stores at Car Free Day events.

## METHOD

This study employed a quantitative explanatory design using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 4. The population consisted of 2,800 visitors of Car Free Day in Cirebon, West Java, from which 310 respondents were selected using purposive sampling and Isaac's formula. Data were collected through questionnaires measuring five constructs: location, product innovation, consumer involvement, customer experience, and brand awareness. Each construct was operationalized through multiple indicators (e.g., accessibility and attractiveness for location; novelty and market relevance for product innovation; cognitive, emotional, participative, and digital aspects for consumer involvement; sensory, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions for customer experience; and unaware of brand, recognition, recall, and top of mind for brand awareness). All items used a five-point Likert scale, and reliability and validity were assessed following SEM standards (Hair et al. 2023).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The outer model evaluation confirmed that all indicators were valid, with factor loadings above 0.70 (see Table 1). Construct reliability was also satisfactory, with composite reliability values ranging from 0.903 to 0.927 and AVE values between 0.714 and 0.761, indicating good convergent validity (Table 2). These results demonstrate that the measurement model was reliable and suitable for further analysis.

**Table 1. Factor Loadings**

Indicators	Loading Factors	Validity
L1	0,817	Valid
L2	0,820	Valid
L3	0,842	Valid
L4	0,864	Valid
PI1	0,899	Valid
PI2	0,830	Valid
PI3	0,887	Valid
PI4	0,858	Valid
CE1	0,837	Valid
CE2	0,893	Valid
CE3	0,879	Valid
CE4	0,854	Valid
CEP1	0,845	Valid
CEP2	0,832	Valid
CEP3	0,827	Valid
CEP4	0,875	Valid
BA1	0,862	Valid
BA2	0,865	Valid
BA3	0,886	Valid
BA4	0,876	Valid

(Source: SmartPLS, 2025)

**Table 2. Construct Reliability and Validity**

Variable	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Location	0,903	0,714
Product Inovation	0,925	0,755
Consumer Engagement	0,923	0,750
Consumer Experience	0,909	0,714
Brand Awareness	0,927	0,761

(Source: SmartPLS, 2025)

The structural model showed that brand awareness was explained by the four independent variables with an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.794 (Table 3), indicating that 79.4% of the variance in brand awareness was accounted for by location, product innovation, consumer engagement, and customer experience. The overall model fit was strong, with a GoF index of 0.766, exceeding the 0.36 threshold for large effect size (Table 4).

**Table 3. R-Square Result**

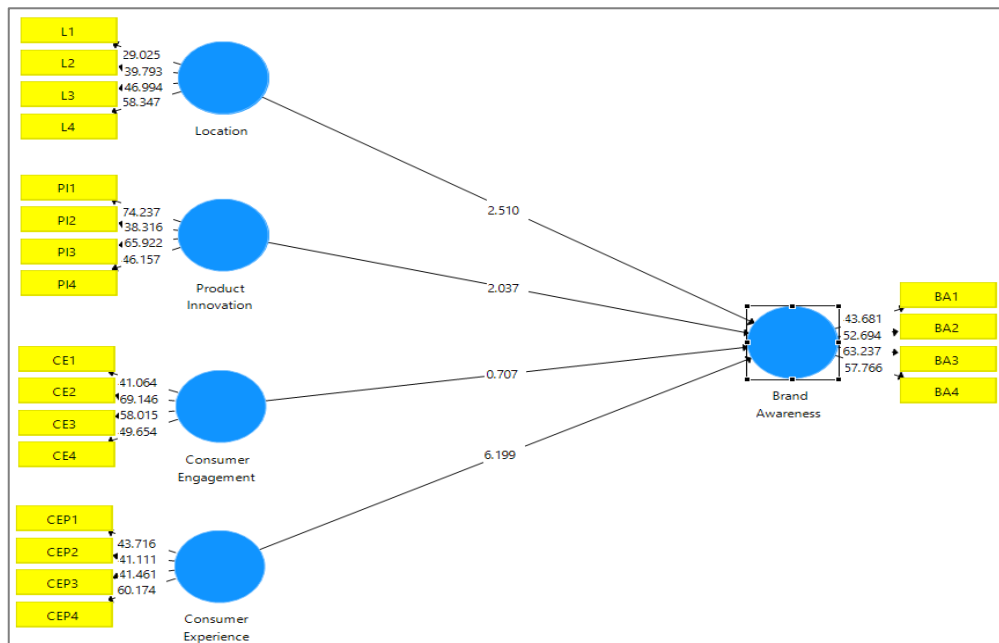
Variable	R-square
Brand Awareness	0,794

(Source: SmartPLS, 2025)

**Table 4. Model Fit Results**

Variable	Average variance extracted (AVE)	R-square
Location	0,714	
Product Inovation	0,755	
Consumer Engagement	0,750	
Consumer Experience	0,714	
Brand Awareness	0,761	0,794
Average	0,739	0,794
GOF	0,766	

(Source: SmartPLS, 2025)



**Figure 1. Bootstrapping Analysis Output**

Figure 1 illustrates the bootstrapping analysis output generated using SmartPLS 4, which visually presents the t-statistics and p-values between exogenous and endogenous variables. The results show that three relationships are statistically significant: Location → Brand Awareness ( $t = 2.510$ ,  $p = 0.012^*$ ), Product Innovation → Brand Awareness ( $t = 1.974$ ,  $p = 0.048^*$ ), and Consumer Experience → Brand Awareness ( $t = 6.496$ ,  $p < 0.001^{**}$ ). Meanwhile, Consumer Engagement → Brand Awareness ( $t = 0.729$ ,  $p = 0.466$ ) is not significant. These results suggest that strategic location, innovative product development, and positive customer experiences play vital roles in enhancing brand awareness, while consumer engagement alone does not contribute significantly.

**Table 5. Path Analysis Results**

Variable	Original sample	T statistics	P Values	Results
Location ⇒ Brand Awareness	0,150	2,510	0,01	H1 Supported
Product Inovation ⇒ Brand Awareness	0,134	2,037	0,04	H2 Supported
Consumer Engagement ⇒ Brand Awareness	0,065	0,707	0,48	H3 Not Supported
Consumer Experience ⇒ Brand Awareness	0,593	6,199	0,00	H4 Supported

(Source: SmartPLS,2025)

These findings provide several scientific insights. First, location and visibility remain central in attracting consumer attention in open public spaces such as Car Free Day, consistent with (Andriany and Arda 2024; Indiani 2022). Second, product innovation stimulates consumer curiosity and increases memorability, aligning with

(Meilani and Wangdra 2024). Third, customer experience emerged as the strongest predictor, reaffirming prior studies (Gao 2024; Setiawati and Susanti 2022) that experiential marketing strategies play a dominant role in building brand awareness. Finally, the non-significant effect of consumer engagement suggests that engagement without meaningful interaction may not translate into lasting brand recognition, echoing findings by (Hoque et al. 2023).

In summary, the results confirm that strategic location, product innovation, and customer experience are critical drivers of brand awareness in pop-up stores, while consumer engagement requires deeper, more emotional strategies to be effective

## CONCLUSION

This study confirms that location, product innovation, and customer experience are critical determinants of brand awareness in the context of pop-up stores at Car Free Day (CFD) events. Strategic placement increases visibility and accessibility, aligning with findings by (Andriany and Arda 2024; Indiani 2022), who emphasize the role of spatial positioning in consumer purchasing decisions. Product innovation stimulates curiosity and differentiation, consistent with (Ganabillah and Handayani 2023; Meilani and Wangdra 2024), who highlight how novelty and relevance drive consumer recall. Meanwhile, customer experience provides the strongest contribution, supporting prior research (Gao 2024; Setiawati and Susanti 2022) that stresses experiential marketing as a dominant factor in shaping emotional connections and reinforcing brand recognition. In contrast, consumer engagement alone does not significantly influence awareness, echoing (Ho and Su 2024), who argue that engagement without meaningful interaction often fails to create enduring brand equity.

These findings underline that the success of temporary marketing strategies such as pop-up stores depends on integrating visibility, novelty, and experiential value rather than relying solely on consumer participation. This resonates with (BOUSTANI 2021; Flores and Madrid 2025), who suggest that pop-up store effectiveness relies on offering memorable experiences while adapting to dynamic consumer behaviors. For practitioners, the implications are clear: location planning, innovative product development, and immersive experiences should be prioritized to maximize brand-building impact in public spaces like CFD (Fitriyani et al. 2024; Wahyuning and Jullianti 2024). Future research may extend this study by incorporating variables such as digital engagement, promotional design, or long-term consumer loyalty (Jamii and Trisnawati 2024; Pipit Mulyah 2024), providing a more comprehensive understanding of how temporary retail formats contribute to sustainable brand strategies in competitive markets.

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