

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the present, social media has emerged as a crucial means of connecting individuals globally. People utilize these platforms to engage in conversations, sharing various aspects of their lives with friends. Evans (2008) characterizes social media as a genuine, user-generated discourse centered around shared interests, drawing upon the thoughts and experiences of participants [1]. Alternatively, Touchette & Schanski (2015) define social media as a mode of communication involving users and web publishers, creating a collaborative space for information exchange and collective interaction [2]. Recent research has highlighted the proactive involvement of social media in areas such as advertising, eWOM, customer relationship management, and the branding and performance of businesses. Consequently, the primary purpose of social media is to facilitate connectivity through internet-based interactions. According to the 2023 Indonesia Digital Report, the country boasted 167.0 million social media users in January 2023, representing 60.4% of the total population [3]. This data underscores the significant role played by social media users in Indonesia, particularly on TikTok, in disseminating information to a broader audience.

Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) has emerged as a crucial avenue for delivering information prior to product consumption [4]. The impact of eWOM is particularly noteworthy in reshaping how consumers initiate, convey, and perpetuate the process of purchasing [5]. This form of communication is categorized into three dimensions: intensity, valence of opinion, and content [6]. Within the intensity dimension, there are three subdivisions, this involves how often individuals acquire information from social media, how frequently they interact with users on these platforms, and the volume of reviews generated by social media users [6]. Valence of opinion is characterized by positive and negative aspects, including favorable comments and recommendations from social media users [6]. Lastly, the content dimension involves three indicators: information pertaining to product or service variations, details about product or service quality, and insights into product or service prices [6]. A prior study highlighted that consumers actively contribute to the creation, generation, and dissemination of eWOM independently of marketers [7]. Analyzing consumers' attitudes toward eWOM is crucial for gaining a deeper understanding of their behavioral intentions [8].

According to data by the Indonesian Central bureau of statistic released in June 2022, there were 11,223 food businesses spread throughout Indonesia, and 1.234 of those in Bandung city, in which is the second largest number after Jakarta. It shows that the proportion of food businesses in Bandung is relatively high when compared to other cities. Indonesia is the country with the second highest number of TikTok users in the world, namely 109.9 million aged 18 and above Indonesians are TikTok users [3]. As of April 2023, Tiktok users in Indonesia are 70.8% of the population, compared to 63.1% the previous year [3]. This indicates that Tiktok's popularity in Indonesia is growing rapidly, where the dissemination of information in the eWOM process will be very easy and fast. The easy dissemination of information through Tiktok makes it easy for people to do digital marketing by marketing through interesting videos, and ultimately the product they market does not rule out the possibility of going viral. Lately, many TikTok content creators have focused on promoting food businesses in Indonesia, and much of this content has gone viral. Many of them focus on making food review content and promoting food businesses in Bandung city. These content creators create food review videos with a distinctive story telling style which easily attracts TikTok users who are interested in visiting the restaurants by their positive online reviews. Consequently, given the substantial impact of recommendations and online reviews, or eWOM, on consumer behavior, there is a compelling interest in investigating the influence of eWOM on TikTok on the purchasing decisions within the food business sector in the city of Bandung. The objective is to provide business stakeholders with a deeper understanding of the advantages offered by the phenomenon of eWOM in their marketing endeavors [9].