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Article

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Impact of user-generated content in digital platforms on purchase intention: the mediator role of user emotion in the electronic product industry

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ABSTRACT

User-generated content (UGC) has increasingly been recognized as a valuable instrument for organizations aiming to evaluate marketing efficacy and develop a nuanced understanding of their target demographics. UGC influences both the positive sentiment towards a brand and the intention to purchase its products. This study aims to investigate the effects of UGC on user emotions and purchase intentions within the electronics sector in Vietnam. Additionally, the study explores the mediating role of user emotions in the relationship between UGC and purchase intention. The research findings indicate that UGC has a significant positive impact on both user emotions and purchase intentions. The study also addresses whether user emotions influence purchasing intentions and highlights the mediating role of user emotions in the relationship between UGC and purchase intention. By examining the relevance of theories related to UGC, user emotions, and purchase intentions in the context of contemporary trends, this study contributes to the understanding of consumer attitudes and behaviors towards electronics products, a topic that has not been extensively explored. Furthermore, the study offers practical managerial implications based on its findings.

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1. Introduction

Vietnam has emerged as a prominent hub for electronic component manufacturing, attracting global technology giants such as Samsung, Intel, LG, and Canon. This growth is paralleled by an increasing domestic demand for consumer electronics and household appliances. According to Statista Market Insights (2024), the revenue in Vietnam's electronics market is projected to reach \$5 billion in 2023, with a forecasted increase to \$6.9 billion in 2024. The market is expected to experience an annual growth rate of 2.16% from 2024 to 2029. The COVID-19 pandemic has altered consumer behaviors, leading to a decline in in-store shopping frequency. Consumers are now gravitating towards digital platforms, particularly e-commerce sites, which offer a safer and more convenient means for product information, reviews, and comparisons. Digital platforms facilitate both the consumption and creation of content related to products, necessitating a strategic shift for electronic brands to address the transition from in-store to online shopping. Additionally, third-party digital marketplaces such as Shopee, Lazada, Facebook Marketplace, and TikTok Shop have become crucial for brands to establish their presence and engage with consumers across online and offline channels. These platforms enhance brand visibility, engage a broader audience, and drive purchase intentions by expanding touchpoints and fostering customer interaction. To effectively leverage these opportunities, brands need to utilize user-generated content (UGC) to stimulate authentic discussions and consumer engagement.

User-generated content (UGC) encompasses various forms of media, including text, images, videos, audio, and reviews, that are posted on digital platforms such as social media, e-commerce sites, and forums. UGC is characterized by its originality, authenticity, specificity, and relevance to brands, serving as a trust signal for other consumers. It facilitates brands in constructing their communities, attracting the appropriate target audience, and gaining deeper customer insights to enhance in-person customer experiences. Furthermore, the frequent appearance of a brand's identity elements (e.g. logo, packaging, color scheme) within UGC contributes positively to brand recognition and equity. UGC provides valuable insights into the real-life usage of products, thereby assisting consumers in evaluating options and making purchase decisions. Additionally, UGC has a notable impact on consumer emotions, which are considered a significant determinant of purchase intentions. Brands have invested in digital platforms that offer users multiple opportunities to interact, create, and disseminate content within the user community. This investment has fostered the development of a structured and diverse interactive digital ecosystem, which has significantly enhanced marketing, communication, and branding efforts. Despite the shift from in-store to online shopping, there are limitations regarding the types of products frequently added to online shopping carts. Electronic products are less commonly featured in e-commerce compared to fashion, cosmetics, and household goods, which dominate daily search queries. Therefore, it is crucial to further explore and discuss purchase intentions regarding electronic products.

The investigation of user-generated content (UGC) is a critical area of focus in this research, given its substantial influence on purchasing intentions. The theoretical framework of this study is grounded in a substantial body of literature indicating a positive correlation between UGC and purchase intentions (Cheong & Mohammed-Baksh, 2021; Chou & Lu, 2022; Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023; Lijie Zhou & Xue, 2022; Mayrhofer et al., 2020; Park et al., 2023; Ray et al., 2020; Weber et al., 2021; Wei et al., 2023; Yamagishi et al., 2023). Notably, Mayrhofer et al. (2020) demonstrated that UGC exerts a more significant positive impact on purchase intentions compared to brand-generated content. This underscores the pivotal role of UGC in shaping customer behavioral intentions and enhancing brand equity and competitive advantage. Recent research has further explored the effects of UGC on user emotions and the mediating role of these emotions in the relationship between UGC and purchase intentions (Duan, 2021; Lv et al., 2024; Mathur et al., 2022; Xiong et al., 2022). Within the context of Vietnam, this study aims to investigate how UGC on social media affects consumer sentiment and intentions within the electronics sector. It seeks to identify which attributes of UGC influence consumer sentiment and behavioral intentions and to examine the mediating role of user emotions in the UGC-purchase intention relationship. The objectives of this research are to elucidate the positive effects of UGC on user emotions and purchase intentions in Vietnam's electronics industry and to assess the mediating role of user emotions in this relationship.

2. Literature review

2.1. Purchase intention

Intention is identified as a behavioral factor that promotes action. Purchase intention encompasses both the potential for future planning and the willingness to acquire goods or services (Wu et al., 2011). The decision-making process leading to a purchase involves need recognition, information search, comparison of alternatives, and decision commitment (Mustikasari & Widaningsih, 2019). According to the behavioral intention theory proposed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1969), personal attitudes, including knowledge, attitudes, biases (both positive and negative), and emotions, significantly influence behavioral intentions. Recent research has substantiated the impact of user emotions on behavioral intentions (Foroughi et al., 2023; Cheng et al., 2023). Additionally, subjective norms, which reflect the perceived opinions of others, play a crucial role in shaping attitudes, emotions, and behavioral intentions (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969). Interaction with UGC influences users' subjective norms and emotions, thereby affecting their behavioral intentions.

For content creators to effectively enhance purchase intentions, it is essential to engage frequently with the community, provide detailed and authentic information, and build trust among customers. Hutter et al. (2013) found that such interactions improve attitudes towards brands, strengthen brand commitment, and increase purchase intention. Maksimova (2018) also noted that brand-related viewpoints, comments, and information within UGC positively influence brand interaction and impressions, leading

consumers to use relevant product information in their purchase decisions (Cheong & Mohammed-Baksh, 2021; Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023; Lijie Zhou & Xue, 2022; Mayrhofer et al., 2020; Ray et al., 2020). From an economic standpoint, product reliability and UGC are critical factors influencing consumer purchase intentions (Ert et al., 2016). Contemporary research has validated the effects of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), flow experience, and UGC on behavioral intentions (Chou & Lu, 2022; Park et al., 2023; Weber et al., 2021; Wei et al., 2023; Yamagishi et al., 2023). This study aims to examine the impact of UGC on user emotions and purchase intentions for electronic products on digital platforms in Vietnam, grounded in the behavioral intention theory of Ajzen and Fishbein (1969) and associated literature.

2.2. User emotion

Phillips and McQuarrie (2011) assert a connection between user-generated content (UGC) and positive emotions such as happiness, satisfaction, and amusement. Recent studies have reinforced this view, demonstrating the positive impact of UGC on users' emotions and attitudes (Ranga et al., 2023; Sharief & Elsharnoubi, 2024; Symons et al., 2024; Wei et al., 2023). For instance, Ranga et al. (2023) validated the impact of UGC on tourists' attitudes and sentiments, while Symons et al. (2024) explored the influence of UGC on conflicting emotions related to the importance of sports. These findings suggest a predominantly positive relationship between UGC and emotional factors. To further support this perspective, Kim and Johnson (2016) indicated that positive emotions such as happiness and pleasure positively affect future purchasing behavior. Emotional factors also serve as catalysts affecting purchase intention. Additionally, these attitudes mediate the relationship between brand engagement, perceived credibility, perceived advantage, quality of information, and consumers' purchase intentions. For example, Duan (2021) identified a mediating effect of benign envy on the relationship between UGC and purchase intention, while Mathur et al. (2022) confirmed that consumer attitudes toward UGC mediate the relationship between brand engagement, perceived benefit, information quality, and online purchase intention. Furthermore, Wei Xiong et al. (2022) demonstrated the mediating role of user emotion in the relationship between UGC and consumer intention in travel services. Mathur et al. (2022) also found that consumers' attitudes toward UGC play a moderating role in the relationship between perceptions of UGC information quality and consumption intention. The mediating role of positive attitude is confirmed in the relationship between product coolness and purchase intention (Lv et al., 2024). Therefore, this study includes user emotion as a critical factor influenced by UGC, anticipating that it will positively affect purchase intention and mediate the relationship between UGC components and purchase intention.

2.3. User-generated content

User-generated content (UGC) is defined as any endorsement or criticism of a company's products or services made by potential, actual, or former customers and widely shared online through social media platforms (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Similarly, the Interactive Advertising Bureau defines UGC as 'material created and uploaded to the internet by non-media professionals' (Christodoulides et al., 2012). Before choosing a specific product or service to purchase, customers always take into account the experiences of other customers, specifically UGC on online platforms, which is considered a type of marketing channel on social networking sites (Mayrhofer et al., 2020). UGC is a powerful tool because it helps spread information quickly, widely, and specifically. Consumers usually reference UGC before deciding to buy products because it provides reliable, high-value information and helps them avoid purchase risks. Due to the advent of the digital platforms, people now share their experiences and recommendations with other users on various platforms such as social networking sites, significantly altering many facets of society (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). The need to interact with others, consult other customers' opinions, and enhance their value are primary motivators for creating UGC. UGC is regarded as trustworthy and influences how consumers perceive the brand (Christodoulides, et al., 2012; Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023).

As consumer behavior has evolved due to technological advancements, consumers are now more likely to communicate and exchange information with one another through product reviews, blogs, and other forms of UGC rather than relying on information from sellers (You & Joshi, 2020). Adeloye et al

(2021) study demonstrated that UGC significantly impacts tourists' consumer intentions toward tourism services. More recent studies have continued to confirm the positive impact of UGC on purchase intention (Cheong & Mohammed-Baksh, 2021; Chou & Lu, 2022; Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023; Lijie Zhou & Xue, 2022; Mayrhofer et al., 2020; Park et al., 2023; Ray et al., 2020; Weber et al., 2021; Wei et al., 2023; Yamagishi et al., 2023; You & Joshi, 2020). Additionally, recent research has expanded the study of the impact of UGC on user emotion and its mediating role towards purchase intention (Duan, 2021; Mathur et al., 2022; Xiong et al., 2022). This study investigates the influence of UGC on user emotion and purchase intention, as well as the mediating role of user emotion in the relationship between UGC and purchase intention in the electronics industry in Vietnam. Specifically, the study examines the components and characteristics of UGC, including credibility, riskless, and usefulness.

2.3.1. Credibility

Source credibility and information quality are pivotal factors contributing to the popularity of user-generated content (UGC) on social media (Zhuang, et al., 2024). The credibility of a message is largely determined by its source. Metzger et al. (2003) assessed message credibility using message structure and language intensity, including the use of opinion, evidence involvement, and message attractiveness. Keshavarz and Esmaeili (2020) identified eight factors for assessing the information credibility of scientific websites: website appearance, writing style, website identity, professional information, accuracy, usability, interaction, and ethics. Credibility is a crucial attribute of communicators, affecting both the recipient's acceptance of information and the communicator's commitment to delivering accurate information. On social media platforms, users can also be content creators by commenting on content generated by others. Within UGC, both users and contributors are generally perceived as highly credible due to their expertise and reliability, fostering trustworthiness (Racherla & Friske, 2012). Consumers are inclined to accept recommendations from credible communicators who share similar opinions and values, with empathetic connections playing a significant role in this process (Perloff, 2014). Despite ongoing debates about the credibility of sources with unknown identities, research by Hansen et al. has shown that consumers prefer UGC because it provides honest opinions. In today's digital age, UGC on social networking platforms exerts a profound influence on consumer purchase intentions, particularly among the youth in the technology industry. The credibility of UGC has been found to motivate tourists' consumption intentions (Adeloye, et al., 2021). Muda and Hamzah (2021) examined the impact of the credibility of YouTube clip distribution sources on electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and consumption intentions. Recent studies have also demonstrated that the credibility of UGC positively impacts user emotions and consumption intentions (Ranga et al., 2022; 2023; Weber et al., 2021). Consequently, the reliability of UGC is anticipated to positively influence user emotions and purchase intentions. To test the impact of UGC credibility on user emotion and purchase intention, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: The credibility of user-generated content (UGC) has a direct positive effect on user emotion.

H2: The credibility of UGC has a direct positive effect on purchase intention.

H3: The credibility of UGC has an indirect positive effect on purchase intention through user emotion.

2.3.2. Riskless

The concept of 'riskless' pertains to the certainty in consumption that may arise from prior knowledge and experience, helping consumers avoid risks when making purchases (Dai, 2007). 'Riskless' refers to the degree to which consumers feel confident about the outcomes of their purchasing transactions (Featherman & Pavlou, 2003). Perceptions of riskless vary among individuals, as each person has their own knowledge, perspectives, and experiences regarding various issues. The risk associated with consumption can be mitigated when online shoppers are able to find and comprehend in-depth information about the products they intend to purchase before making a decision (Gefen & Straub, 2004). Interactions among users on social media platforms have led to an increase in perceived risk, which, in turn, influences users' behavioral intentions regarding consumption (Ebrahimi, et al., 2022). User-generated content (UGC) provides users with valuable and useful information (Ranga et al., 2022, 2023; Weber et al., 2021), significantly

reducing the risk of consumption for customers. UGC offers relevant consumption information such as product quality, pricing, warranty policies, and user experiences. Additionally, UGC is further enriched through comments, reviews, and supplementary information from other users, making it more diverse and comprehensive. Consequently, this helps consumers access valuable information and significantly reduces shopping risk. The riskless aspect of UGC is considered a valuable attribute, contributing to its growing popularity and acceptance within the online community. Research by Cox and Paoli (2023) has demonstrated that the value of perceived riskless through UGC significantly affects users' perceptions and behavioral intentions. Therefore, it is anticipated that the perceived risklessness in consumption from UGC will positively influence users' emotions and purchasing intentions. The proposed hypotheses are as follows:

H4: The risklessness of user-generated content (UGC) has a direct positive effect on user emotion.

H5: The risklessness of UGC has a direct positive effect on purchase intention.

H6: The risklessness of UGC has an indirect positive effect on purchase intention through user emotion.

2.3.3. Usefulness

The usefulness of information or content is defined as the extent to which an individual believes that using such information or content will enhance their performance (Muslim et al., 2014). Interactions among users on social media platforms are beneficial for the collection and dissemination of information, assisting users in obtaining opportunities and benefits related to consumption (Felix et al., 2016). Usefulness is associated with speed, efficiency, and ease of use (Racherla & Friske, 2012). Customers' opinions of information computing are influenced by the messages' relevance, timeliness, and thoroughness (Zhang et al., 2014). Comprehensive e-commerce information enables product comparison and enhances shopping experiences, leading to better purchasing decisions and a higher perception of usefulness for users. According to Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al. (2009), highly helpful votes in product reviews are valued more highly than moderately helpful votes, particularly when they are exceptionally positive or negative. Content characteristics such as argument style and the presentation of photographic claims also influence the persuasiveness of messages, although these aspects have received limited attention in the literature. The perceived usefulness of user-generated content (UGC) on online platforms positively impacts tourists' choice of heritage destinations (Choo, 2023). Review usefulness is closely related to review certainty and the level of expertise of the reviewers (Li et al., 2021). Research by She et al. (2024) confirmed that domain relevance and domain specificity influence the perceived usefulness of UGC. Based on these considerations, we predict that open reviewers in reviews, including professional statements, review merits, and arguments, contribute to perceived usefulness. Recent studies have also confirmed that the usefulness attribute of UGC positively impacts sentiment, perception, and consumption intention (Ranga et al., 2022, 2023; Weber et al., 2021). Therefore, this study posits that usefulness is a critical characteristic of UGC, with positive effects on user emotion and purchase intention. The following research hypotheses are proposed:

H7: The usefulness of user-generated content (UGC) has a direct positive effect on user emotion.

H8: The usefulness of UGC has a direct positive effect on purchase intention.

H9: The usefulness of UGC has an indirect positive effect on purchase intention through user emotion.

Summarizing the theoretical basis reviewed, the research model is proposed in Figure 1.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Measurement scale

The credibility scale is based on works of Keshavarz and Esmaili (2020), Racherla and Friske (2012), and Perloff (2014). This scale includes the following variables: the professional information of UGC related to product X of brand Y (Cre1); the trustworthiness of UGC (Cre2); the authenticity of UGC (Cre3); and the

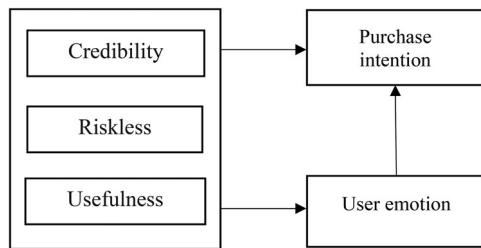


Figure 1. Research model.

reliability of UGC (Cre4). The riskless scale is based on Dai (2007) and Gefen and Straub (2004), includes the following observed variables: reduction of uncertainty when buying technology products (Ris1); reduction of anxiety (Ris2); thorough understanding of the product (Ris3); reduction of financial risk (Ris4); and reduction of product quality risks (Ris5). The usefulness measurement scale for UGC, based on Danescu-Niculescu-Mizil et al. (2009), Racherla and Friske (2012), and Zhang et al. (2014), includes the following items: UGC receiving consensus from many people to facilitate purchase decisions (Use1); UGC providing sufficient information to meet my needs (Use2); UGC highlighting product performance (Use3); UGC completeness (Use4); UGC ease of understanding (Use5); and UGC timeliness (Use6). The scale of user emotion, based on Kim and Johnson (2016) and Phillips and McQuarrie (2011), includes the following factors: happiness (UE1); excitement (UE2); good feeling (UE3); and pleasure (UE4). Finally, the research scale for purchase intention, based on Hutter et al. (2013) and Wu et al. (2011), includes the following items: intention to buy product X of brand Y (PI1); preference for brand Y when considering multiple brands (PI2); planning to buy product X of brand Y (PI3); and commitment to the decision to buy product X of brand Y (PI4). The scales for the components in the proposed model utilize a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to measure the evaluation of the research sample for all items in the model.

3.2. Research sample and data collection method

In this study, we identify a cohort of young consumers aged 18 to 30 who often possess extensive technological knowledge and prefer using mobile devices, applications, and social media to seek information and engage in online shopping. According to 2023 statistics in Vietnam, 18.2% of Facebook users are aged 24–28, and 23.6% are aged 25–34. On Instagram, 30.2% of users are aged 18–24, and 31.7% are aged 25–34. Twitter statistics show that 17.1% of users are aged 18–24, and 38.5% are aged 25–34. On LinkedIn, 18% of users are aged 18–24, and 31% are aged 25–34. Globally, users aged 18–24 account for approximately 45% of TikTok's reach (Adsplus, 2024). This demographic is inclined to express opinions and provide feedback on products and services through online reviews, social media comments, and content creation related to brands. Their shopping behavior is closely linked to social interactions, and recommendations from friends or social media influencers can significantly influence their purchasing decisions. Furthermore, individuals aged 18–30 represent a youthful consumer segment with high demand for technological products in the Vietnamese market.

The sample selection followed a non-probability approach. The research team reached out to potential participants through social networking platforms, sharing a Google Form questionnaire link with Vietnamese individuals who had shown an interest in or interacted with user-generated content related to electronic products and expressed purchase intention. These respondents were then asked to provide data through structured questionnaires. All respondents participating in the questionnaire were informed about the study's purpose and objectives. The research team communicated to participants that: 'The information collected in this survey is for research purposes and will be synthesized and analyzed into scientific articles, which may be widely published in scientific journals'. They read and agreed to provide information throughout oral form, then they participated in providing information from the questionnaire. This is a popular survey form in Vietnam, used by many studies. Research participants discuss with the research team about the purpose and significance of the research. If they agree and are willing to provide information, they will participate in providing information to the

research team. Subsequently, the collected response samples underwent rigorous checks for completeness and reliability before being included in the analysis. Screening results recorded that 467 samples aged 18-30 met quality requirements and were used for research.

This independent study was conducted at a time when there was no ethics committee at the facility where we were working. The study is considered low-risk. The authors adhered to ethical research principles, ensuring that the research design followed scientific principles. The questionnaire was developed based on a brief review and adaptation of previously published research. It included questions about respondents' personal information and the main content of this study, which relates to the assessment of attributes related to user-generated content, user emotion, and purchase intention.

The respondents reviewed the questionnaire and consented to participate by providing information orally. This voluntary consent is indicated by their agreement to provide personal information for the project, including details such as full name, age, and occupation. These questions were included in the questionnaire distributed to respondents via the Google Forms platform for data collection. The data collected from the Google Forms submissions demonstrates that the research participants willingly agreed to provide information for the study. To maintain anonymity, respondents' personal information was encrypted. The research findings were compiled into comprehensive datasets. The management of research information provided by the respondents adhered to ethical guidelines, ensuring anonymity, confidentiality, and the exclusive use of the data for research purposes.

3.3. Analytical methods

All scales were tested for internal consistency reliability using indicators such as Cronbach's Alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). Frequency analysis was employed to describe the sample information. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was developed to examine the multidimensional relationships between various model variables including the credibility, riskless, and usefulness of UGC, user emotion, and purchase intention. Additionally, the indirect effect analysis was employed to analyze the mediating impact of user emotion on the relationship between UGC components and purchase intention.

4. Results and discussion

The study involved 467 valid samples from an initial survey of 539 individuals. We excluded 72 responses due to various reasons, including participants prematurely ending the survey, providing incomplete questionnaire answers, offering responses unrelated to the study's topic or literature review, and failing to meet the specified survey conditions. Among the participants, 86.72% were aged 18–22 years, and 13.28% were aged 22–30 years. The sample composition also included gender distribution, with 46.90% identifying as male and 53.10% as female (Table 1).

4.1. Identify the components of UGC

The results of the CFA analysis were synthesized in Table 2 records that the standardized regression weights of the items corresponding to the three components of credibility, riskless, and usefulness of UGC were all greater than 0.5; The average variance extracted (AVE: 0.57–0.61) and composite reliability (CR: 0.86–0.89) values are both greater than 0.50. The set of scales for three components of UGC, including credibility, riskless, and usefulness reached convergent value.

Table 1. Respondent information.

Respondent's gender	From 18–22 years old		From 22–30 years old		Sum	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Male	192	41.11	27	5.78	219	46.90
Female	213	45.61	35	7.49	248	53.10
Sum	405	86.72	62	13.28	467	100.00

Table 2. Test results of convergent validity of component belong to UGC.

Factors	Items	Standardized Regression Weights (λ)		AVE	CR
		Cre1	Cre2		
Credibility (Cre)	Cre3	0.80			
	Cre4	0.78			
	Ris1	0.75		0.59	0.88
	Ris2	0.77			
Riskless (Ris)	Ris3	0.77			
	Ris4	0.75			
	Ris5	0.79			
	Use1	0.75		0.57	0.89
	Use2	0.81			
Usefulness (Use)	Use3	0.75			
	Use4	0.76			
	Use5	0.74			
	Use6	0.72			

Table 3. Test results of convergent ad discriminant validity of components belong to UGC.

	Correlations	Estimate (R)	SE	CR	p
Credibility	<-->	Riskless	0.78	0.05	3.68 0.00
Credibility	<-->	Usefulness	0.82	0.05	4.08 0.00
Usefulness	<-->	Riskless	0.85	0.05	3.31 0.00

Table 4. Constructs loading, Cronbach's Alpha, CR, and AVE values.

Factors	Items	Cronbach Alpha		
		Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's alpha	CR
Credibility (Cre)	Cre1	0.62	0.86	0.86
	Cre2	0.78		
	Cre3	0.71		
	Cre4	0.70		
Riskless (Ris)	Ris1	0.69	0.87	0.87
	Ris2	0.70		
	Ris3	0.69		
	Ris4	0.69		
	Ris5	0.73		
Usefulness (Use)	Use1	0.69	0.88	0.89
	Use2	0.73		
	Use3	0.68		
	Use4	0.70		
	Use5	0.69		
	Use6	0.68		
User emotion (UE)	UE1	0.71	0.87	0.87
	UE2	0.73		
	UE3	0.73		
	UE4	0.72		
Purchase intention (PI)	PI1	0.73	0.87	0.87
	PI2	0.72		
	PI3	0.75		
	PI4	0.67		

The analysis results in **Table 3** show that the correlation coefficients between credibility and riskless ($R=0.78 < 0.9$, $p=0.00 < 0.001$), credibility and usefulness ($R=0.82 < 0.9$, $p=0.00 < 0.001$), riskless and usefulness ($R=0.85 < 0.9$, $p=0.00 < 0.001$), so three components credibility, riskless, and usefulness of UGC achieved discriminant validity.

The results of the CFA analysis confirmed three components of UGC according to customers' perceptions of the electronic product industry, including credibility (04 items: Cre1-Cre4), riskless (Ris1-Ris5), and usefulness (Use1-Use6). These three components meet the requirements for convergent and discriminant validity.

4.2. Test for measurement model evaluation

The results presented in **Table 4** demonstrate that the scales used in the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis, including credibility, risklessness, usefulness, user emotion, and purchase intention, ensure reliability. Specifically, the corrected item-total correlation values for all items exceed 0.50, with Cronbach's

Table 5. Discriminant validity test results.

	Correlation		Estimate	SE	CR	p
Cre	<-->	Use	0.82	0.05	3.70	0.00
Cre	<-->	Ris	0.78	0.05	4.14	0.00
Cre	<-->	PI	0.74	0.06	4.48	0.00
Ris	<-->	Use	0.85	0.04	3.30	0.00
Ris	<-->	PI	0.75	0.06	4.41	0.00
UE	<-->	Cre	0.81	0.05	3.73	0.00
UE	<-->	Ris	0.79	0.05	3.97	0.00
UE	<-->	Use	0.84	0.05	3.42	0.00
UE	<-->	PI	0.78	0.05	4.12	0.00
Use	<-->	PI	0.78	0.05	4.11	0.00

Table 6. Results of direct correlation analysis of components in the model.

	Direct path		Estimate	p	Hypotheses	Result
Credibility	→	User emotion	0.34	***	H1	Supported
Credibility	→	Purchase intention	0.16	0.06	H2	Not supported
Riskless	→	User emotion	0.17	0.034	H4	Supported
Riskless	→	Purchase intention	0.17	0.036	H5	Supported
Usefulness	→	User emotion	0.42	***	H7	Supported
Usefulness	→	Purchase intention	0.30	0.001	H8	Supported

*** $p < 0.001$.

alpha coefficients ranging from 0.86 to 0.89, all surpassing the threshold of 0.80. Additionally, the average variance extracted (AVE) values range from 0.58 to 0.62, and the composite reliability (CR) values range from 0.86 to 0.89, both exceeding the threshold of 0.50. Thus, the scales for all components in the research model are confirmed to be reliable.

The results of testing the discriminant validity of the constructs in the research model, which include credibility (Cre), riskless (Ris), usefulness (Use), user emotion (UE), and purchase intention (PI), are summarized in **Table 5**. The correlations among these constructs are all below 0.90, with corresponding p -values being less than 0.05. These results indicate that the constructs in the model achieve discriminant validity.

4.3. The impact of UGC on user emotion

To examine the relationships between the model's elements, we used SEM. **Table 6** is the summary of our findings demonstrates that the components in the model have a statistically significant positive correlation with a 95% confidence level or more.

The analysis of user-generated content (UGC) in **Table 6** reveals that its three components, credibility, risklessness, and usefulness are significantly correlated with user emotions. Detailed results show a statistically significant correlation between credibility and user emotions at a 99% confidence level ($\lambda=0.34, p<0.01$), thus validating hypothesis H1. This finding indicates that credibility has a direct, positive effect on user emotions, such that a one-unit increase in the credibility of social media content corresponds to a 0.34-unit increase in user emotions. Consequently, higher credibility in content significantly enhances and stimulates positive user emotions. The analysis also reveals a moderately significant relationship between the riskless of UGC and user emotions ($\lambda=0.17, p=0.034$), thereby supporting hypothesis H4. An increase of one unit in the riskless of content is associated with a 0.17-unit increase in user emotions. Thus, a reduction in perceived risk moderately positively influences user emotions. Furthermore, there is a moderately significant relationship between the usefulness of UGC and user emotions, with a 99% confidence level ($\lambda=0.42, p<0.01$), supporting hypothesis H7. An increase of one unit in the usefulness of the content is positively associated with a 0.42-unit increase in user emotions. These findings underscore the significant impact of UGC on electronic platforms, fostering conditions that enhance positive user emotions. The results are consistent with prior research, including studies by Phillips and McQuarrie (2011), Ranga et al. (2023), Wei et al. (2023), Sharief and Elsharnouby (2024), and Symons et al. (2024). When UGC exhibits credibility, riskless, and usefulness, it not only benefits the community and its users but also positively influences brand perception. Collectively, these three components of UGC account for 76% of the variation in user emotions (**Figure 2**).

In the electronics industry, user interactions with user-generated content (UGC) on social platforms encompass various genres, including product reviews that reflect user experiences with electronic

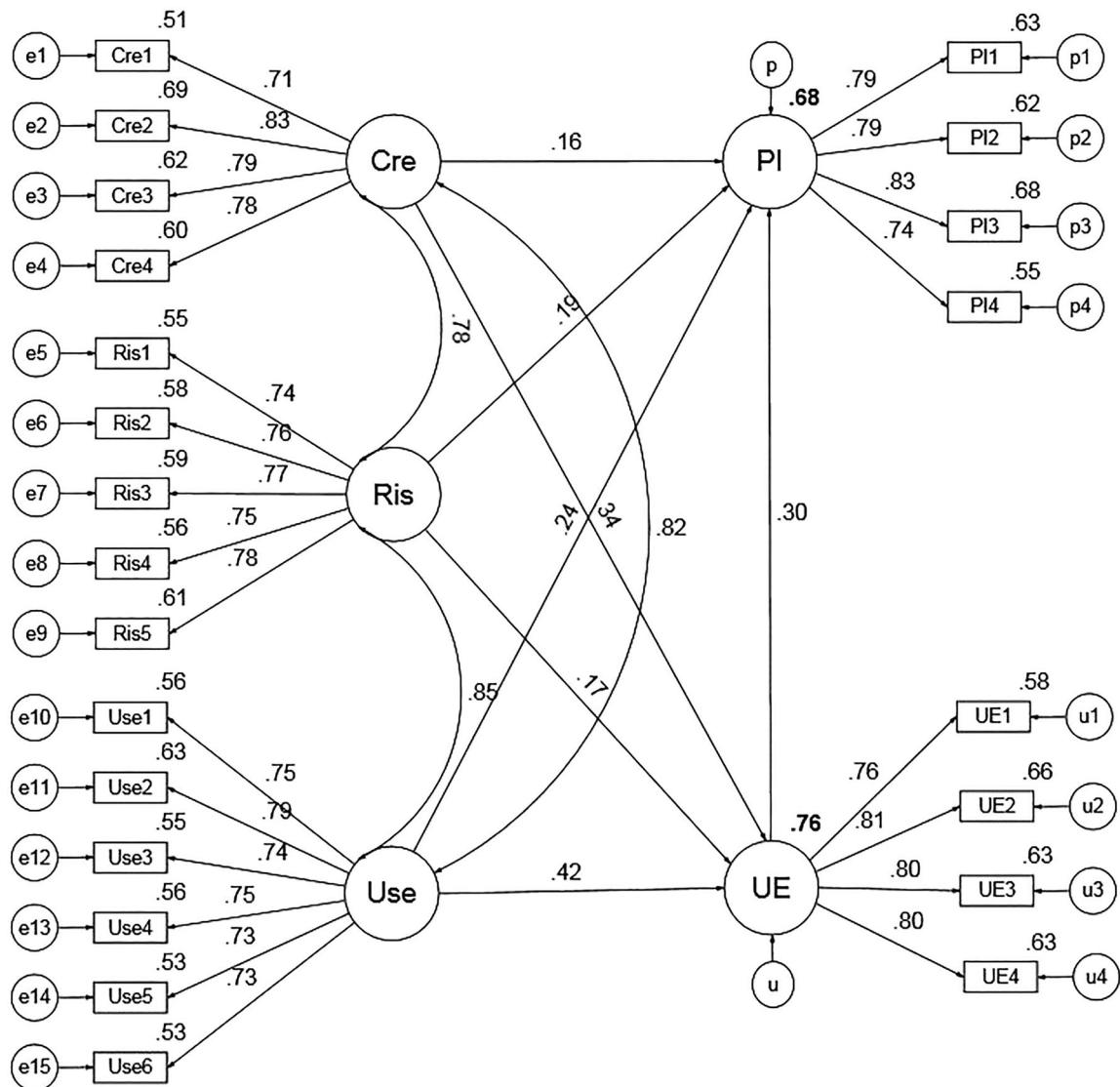


Figure 2. Correlation between UGC - user emotion - purchase intention.

products and content related to forecasting technological advancements in the electronics sector. To foster positive emotions and enhance purchase intentions among potential customers, electronic product companies must implement effective promotional strategies that emphasize content trustworthiness. For UGC to be effective, it must demonstrate expertise, credibility, authenticity, and reliability. Given the technological and suitability aspects inherent in electronic products, UGC plays a crucial role in mitigating risks associated with purchasing and consumption. It provides potential customers with valuable information that can alleviate uncertainties, reduce anxiety, and enable a comprehensive understanding of the product. This, in turn, diminishes financial and product quality risks. Consequently, high-quality UGC that addresses these concerns can significantly enhance customer satisfaction and stimulate purchase intentions. The usefulness of UGC is particularly important, with potential customers valuing content diversity, comprehensiveness, clarity, and timely relevance. The study's findings indicate that in the Vietnamese electronics market, UGC has positively influenced community perceptions, with the usefulness of the content being the most significant factor affecting user emotions.

4.4. The impact of UGC on purchase intention

The results presented in Table 6 reveal a statistically significant correlation between the credibility of user-generated content (UGC) and purchase intention (PI) at a 99% confidence level ($\lambda=0.16$,

$p=0.06 < 0.05$). Thus, hypothesis H2 is not supported, indicating that credibility does not have a significant direct and positive influence on purchase intention. This finding diverges from the results of earlier studies by Adeloye et al. (2021), Weber et al. (2021), Ranga et al. (2022), Muda and Hamzah (2021), and Ranga et al. (2023). In contrast, the correlation analysis presented in Table 5 shows a statistically significant relationship between riskless (Ris) and purchase intention (PI) at a 95% confidence level ($\lambda=0.17$, $p=0.036 < 0.05$). Therefore, hypothesis H5 is supported, indicating that riskless has a direct and positive impact on purchase intention. Specifically, a one-unit increase in the riskless of UGC corresponds to a 0.17-unit increase in purchase intention. These findings are consistent with prior research conducted by Gefen and Straub (2004), Ebrahimi et al. (2022), Ranga et al., 2022; Weber et al., 2021; Ranga et al., 2023), and Cox and Paoli (2023). Additionally, the third characteristic of UGC, usefulness (Use), also demonstrates a direct positive effect on purchase intention ($\lambda=0.30$, $p=0.001 < 0.01$), thereby supporting hypothesis H8. This result implies that the usefulness of UGC positively and directly influences purchase intention, with a one-unit increase in usefulness corresponding to a 0.30-unit increase in purchase intention. These findings align with the research of Li et al. (2021), Weber et al. (2021), Ranga et al. (2022), Choo (2023), Ranga et al. (2023), and She et al. (2024). This suggests that the higher usefulness of UGC enhances positive user emotions, thereby highlighting its effectiveness in fostering positive sentiments.

The research findings underscore the significant influence of user-generated content (UGC) on consumer purchase intentions for electronic products. Specifically, UGC enhances purchase intention by providing credibility, reducing perceived risk (riskless), and demonstrating usefulness, with usefulness exerting the most substantial impact. These results offer valuable insights for companies operating within the electronics industry in Vietnamese market, guiding them in formulating strategies to manage UGC on digital platforms effectively. To optimize the benefits of UGC, companies should develop programs that ensure the reliability, risklessness, and usefulness of the UGC from digital platforms. Such strategies are likely to significantly enhance consumer purchase intentions for electronic products, thereby stimulating demand and fostering consumption within the Vietnamese market. This is particularly pertinent for targeting young consumers, who exhibit high engagement and interaction with digital platforms, including social networks. Young people in Vietnam are not only active users and content creators but also represent a crucial segment of potential customers for electronic products.

4.5. The mediating effect of user emotion on the relationship between UGC and PI

Table 7 presents the findings of our analysis on the mediating role of user emotions in the relationship between user-generated content (UGC) and purchase intention. Specifically, the analysis of the credibility-user emotion-purchase intention (Cre-UE-PI) pathway ($\lambda=0.13$, $p=0.006 < 0.01$) indicates a statistically significant effect at a 95% confidence level, thereby supporting hypothesis H3. This suggests that higher perceived credibility of UGC positively influences both user emotions and purchase intention in the electronics industry. Similarly, the riskless-user emotion-purchase intention (Ris-UE-PI) pathway ($\lambda=0.05$, $p=0.04 < 0.05$) demonstrates a significant effect at a 95% confidence level, thus supporting hypothesis H6. This finding implies that an increased perception of riskless from UGC positively affects user emotions and enhances purchase intention in the electronics sector. For the usefulness-user emotion-purchase intention (Use-UE-PI) pathway ($\lambda=0.10$, $p=0.006 < 0.01$), the results show a significant effect at a 99% confidence level, supporting hypothesis H9. This indicates that a higher perception of usefulness in UGC positively impacts user emotions and purchase intention in the electronics industry.

The analysis of the indirect effects of user-generated content (UGC) on repurchase intention, mediated by user emotions, is summarized in Table 7. The results indicate a partial mediating effect of user emotions on the relationship between the credibility, risklessness, and usefulness of UGC and purchase intention. These

Table 7. Results of analysis of the mediating impact of user emotion on UGC and PI relationship.

Relationship	Direct path		Indirect path		Hypotheses test	Mediation effect
	λ	p	λ	p		
Cre \rightarrow UE \rightarrow PI	0.16	0.048	0.13	0.006	H3: Supported	Full mediation
Ris \rightarrow UE \rightarrow PI	0.17	0.046	0.05	0.040	H6: Supported	Part mediation
Use \rightarrow UE \rightarrow PI	0.30	0.006	0.10	0.006	H9: Supported	Part mediation
Total	0.63		0.28			

findings are consistent with previous research, including studies by Duan (2021), Mathur et al. (2022), Xiong et al. (2022), Wei Xiong (2022), and Lv et al. (2024). The total effect of UGC attributes, credibility, risklessness, and usefulness on purchase intention, encompassing both direct and indirect pathways through user emotions, is quantified as 0.91 units. Collectively, these components account for 68% of the variance in purchase intention within the electronics industry (Figure 2). This study highlights the significant role of user emotions as a mediator; enhanced user emotions can contribute to acquiring new and loyal customers, thereby fostering long-term growth in purchase intention for electronic products.

4.6. Theoretical contribution

The findings of this research offer several theoretical contributions. Firstly, this study highlights the significant impact of user-generated content (UGC) on user emotions, a finding consistent with previous research by Phillips and McQuarrie (2011), Ranga et al. (2023), Wei et al. (2023), Sharief and Elsharnouby (2024), and Symons et al. (2024). These studies have demonstrated that UGC can enhance emotional attitudes towards brands, thereby strengthening brand commitment and increasing purchase intention. This study extends the existing literature by specifically examining how UGC influences user emotions. The results indicate that UGC significantly fosters positive consumer emotions rather than negative ones, particularly through its attributes of credibility, riskless, and usefulness within the context of the electronics industry in Vietnam. Among these attributes, usefulness is found to have the most substantial effect on user emotions regarding electronic product content. It suggested that useful information benefits businesses by attracting and retaining customers. However, previous studies did not address how usefulness specifically impacts user emotions, which are crucial in influencing purchase intentions.

Secondly, in more detail, this study systematically identifies and validates three key positive attributes of user-generated content (UGC) within the Vietnamese electronics market: credibility (Adeloye, et al. 2021; Muda & Hamzah, 2021, and Ranga et al. 2022, 2023; ; Weber et al., 2021), risklessness (Gefen & Straub, 2004; Ebrahimi, et al., 2022; Ranga et al., 2022; Weber et al., 2021; Ranga et al., 2023; and Cox & Paoli, 2023), and usefulness (Choo, 2023; Li et al., 2021; Ranga et al., 2022; 2023; Weber et al., 2021; She et al., 2024). These attributes are shown to significantly influence purchase intentions. This research contributes to the theoretical development of UGC by expanding on the characteristics, significance, and benefits associated with UGC theory (Jenkins, 2006; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2007; Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023; Duan, 2021; Mathur et al., 2022; Xiong et al., 2022). It highlights the need for further exploration of new content trends across emerging UGC platforms. Specifically, the study validates three novel content trends—credibility, riskless, and usefulness, that significantly affect user sentiment and enhance purchase intentions in the context of the electronics industry in Vietnam. Notably, the attribute of usefulness is found to have the most substantial impact on user emotions when engaging with UGC on digital platforms. Drawing from these theoretical insights, we posit that the greater the value provided by UGC, the higher the priority and commitment brands can garner from their consumers. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced in electronics industries characterized by high competition, such as technology devices, where UGC significantly contributes to brands' efforts to expedite the process of earning consumer trust in high-value products.

Thirdly, user emotion serves as a mediating factor in the relationship between user-generated content (UGC) and purchase intention. The mediating role of emotion enhances the positive impact of credibility, perceived risklessness, and usefulness on purchase intention. This study extends the current perspectives on the research topic and offers a pragmatic understanding. There have been relatively few studies on this topic to date (Duan, 2021; Lv et al., 2024; Mathur et al., 2022; Xiong et al., 2022), particularly within the context of Vietnam and the electronic products industry. Most recent research has primarily focused on examining the direct correlations between UGC and brand, UGC and purchase intention, or UGC and customer acquisition and retention. The findings of this research contribute to systematizing and expanding the understanding of the relationship between UGC and purchase intention, thereby providing a stronger theoretical foundation for businesses in the electronics industry to justify investments in managing UGC on digital platforms. User-generated content on digital platforms significantly influences user emotions towards a brand, which, in turn, impacts the promotion of brand consumption. Particularly in the context of rapid advancements in digital technology, the proliferation of social networks, and intense

competition in the electronics industry, effective management of UGC can positively affect user emotions, thereby fostering brand consumption.

Finally, this finding contributes to the advancement of the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1969), which posits that subjective norms and emotions influence behavioral intention. This study elucidates that user-generated content (UGC), as a factor shaping subjective norms, and user emotions positively impact the intention to purchase electronic products. Additionally, subjective norms (UGC) significantly affect user emotions. The research results systematize and reinforce the positive correlations among the components in the theoretical model of reasoned action, specifically the relationships between UGC, user emotion, and purchase intention in the electronics industry. The findings indicate that user attitudes and emotions are significantly influenced by user opinions, reviews, and content on digital platforms. The study also confirms both the direct and mediating roles of user emotions in the relationship between UGC and purchase intention. The importance of managing user attitudes and emotions is underscored, particularly in the context of digital technology and social networks, where influence and impact disseminate rapidly and broadly within the community. This has a substantial effect on community sentiment towards a brand and ultimately determines consumption intention towards the brand.

4.7. Managerial contribution

In the research article, the results confirm that user-generated content (UGC) has a strong impact on user emotion (Phillips & McQuarrie, 2011; Ranga et al., 2023; Sharief & Elsharnouby, 2024; Symons et al., 2024; Wei et al., 2023). Specifically, three attributes of UGC, including credibility, risklessness, and usefulness, promote positive emotions in users. These positive emotions generated through UGC lead to favorable reviews for the products and brands mentioned, thus providing significant support for marketing, communication, branding, and promoting better consumption within the electronics industry. The increasing importance of UGC in attracting potential customers for electronic products is evident (Chou & Lu, 2022; Park et al., 2023; Weber et al., 2021; Wei et al., 2023; Yamagishi et al., 2023). Data analysis reveals that components such as credibility, risklessness, and usefulness within UGC directly and indirectly (through user emotion) influence the purchasing decisions of Vietnamese customers. Therefore, it is recommended that companies in the electronics industry increase their investment in digital platforms, such as websites, applications, and social networking platforms, to provide consumers with more choices and greater convenience in content production, distribution, and interaction.

Companies operating in the electronics industry in the Vietnamese market should increase investment in marketing campaigns that encourage and stimulate users to create and distribute content on digital platforms. Such efforts will generate significant spillover effects, contributing to positive emotions and perceptions towards the brand. Credibility, riskless, and usefulness are three critical characteristics of UGC that foster positive user emotions and promote purchase intention. Therefore, integrating these characteristics into the marketing and communication strategies of brands is essential. These findings provide valuable insights for brands and businesses in Vietnam to evaluate the quality of UGC on digital platforms over the past period and offer guidance for future investments. Specifically, the credibility of UGC should focus on attributes such as expertise, trustworthiness, authenticity, and reliability. The riskless UGC should emphasize content that reduces uncertainty when buying, alleviates anxiety, provides thorough product insights, offers clear financial information, and ensures product quality. The usefulness of UGC should involve high consensus from the community, sufficient information to meet user needs, highlights of product performance, comprehensive content, ease of understanding, and timely delivery of content. Based on these three attributes, it will help companies choose and use UGC appropriately for user-generated content marketing strategies.

In addition to managing and promoting UGC on digital platforms, businesses in the electronics industry must also develop strategies and policies to manage user attitudes and emotions. User sentiment towards a brand not only directly influences consumption intention but also serves as a mediating factor connecting UGC and consumption intention. Furthermore, on digital platforms, the rapid and widespread dissemination of user sentiment towards a brand significantly impacts the community's perception and consumption intentions. The three main attributes of UGC, redibility, riskless, and usefulness account for

76% of the variation in user emotion. Among these attributes, the usefulness of UGC has the greatest impact on user attitudes and emotions. Therefore, in their strategy for managing and promoting UGC, brands in the electronics industry need to effectively manage these three attributes. Additionally, in affiliate marketing strategies, businesses should ensure that communication content consistently and authentically emphasizes the three key attributes, credibility, risklessness, and usefulness. This approach will enable users to fully understand and obtain sufficient information to create and share content on digital platforms.

5. Conclusion

This study's findings underscore the role and significance of user-generated content (UGC) on digital platforms in enhancing customer interest in purchasing electronic devices and positively impacting their emotions. UGC comprises three main components, credibility, risklessness, and usefulness that directly influence users' emotions and purchase intentions. Additionally, these three UGC components also indirectly impact purchase intention through user emotions, often exerting a stronger influence than their direct effects on purchase intention. This study also acknowledges the mediating role of consumer emotions in the relationship between UGC and purchase intention. Therefore, brand communication and marketing efforts should emphasize consumer-company interactions to enhance users' purchase intentions on digital platforms. User emotion is a key brand asset, particularly in the technology sector. UGC on social media and digital platforms directly influences user emotions, thereby increasing consumer purchase intentions.

The research contributes theoretically by identifying three crucial attributes of UGC relevant to the electronics industry: credibility, risklessness, and usefulness. The study confirms the correlations between UGC and user emotion, UGC and purchase intention, and UGC, user emotion, and purchase intention. This affirmation reinforces the importance of UGC theory and the theory of reasoned action. From a managerial perspective, this study recommends that businesses in the electronics sector increase investment in marketing campaigns that encourage and stimulate UGC on digital platforms. Managing and promoting UGC with a focus on attributes such as credibility, risklessness, and usefulness will positively influence consumer emotions, thereby enhancing purchase intentions towards the brand in the electronics industry.

Limitations and future research

Despite the study's conclusions, several limitations must be acknowledged. Firstly, the sample size consists of only 467 Vietnamese participants, representing a small portion of the population. To ensure that the findings are more representative, future studies should expand the research region and increase the sample size. Secondly, the study's focus on electronic devices limits its generalizability. Future research should consider a broader range of products, such as fashion apparel, cosmetics, fast food, and household goods, to enhance the applicability of the findings. Thirdly, in addition to the UGC factors included in the analytical model, credibility, riskless, and usefulness, there may be other relevant factors related to user characteristics, such as the reputation, popularity, and influence of content producers, which can also affect user emotions and purchase intentions. These factors were not included in the current analysis. Moreover, this study did not examine the roles of brand trust, brand authenticity, or user engagement as mediating elements influencing purchase intention on digital platforms, beyond emotional components. Future research should consider incorporating these additional elements into the model to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting purchase intentions.

Authors' contributions

Conceptualization, methodology: Vo Minh Sang, Ngo Pham Thanh Thien, Nguyen Gia Hao, Nguyen Quoc Duy, Le Long Khanh, and Pham Thi Yen Vi. Formal analysis, investigation writing: Vo Minh Sang. Review and editing: Ngo Pham Thanh Thien, Nguyen Gia Hao, Nguyen Quoc Duy, Le Long Khanh, and Pham Thi Yen Vi. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Data availability statement

The data will be made available on request from the corresponding author.

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