CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The emergence of digital technologies and the rapid expansion of internet accessibility have fundamentally reshaped the landscape of marketing communication. In today's interconnected world, companies are no longer solely dependent on traditional advertising channels such as television, radio, or print media. Instead, digital platforms have become the primary medium for engaging customers, building brand image, and delivering persuasive marketing messages.

Kotler and Keller (2016) define "marketing communication" as "the means by which firms attempt to inform, persuade, and remind consumers directly or indirectly about the products and brands they sell." This perspective highlights that communication is not only about delivering information but also about shaping brand perception and fostering relationships. In the digital era, a corporate website plays a critical role in fulfilling these functions by serving as a controlled, brand-owned platform that integrates multiple communication tools.

A well-designed corporate website serves multiple purposes: it functions as an official source of information, a storytelling medium, an interactive engagement space, and a direct sales channel. Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) note that a website is "the cornerstone of a digital marketing strategy, acting as the hub where all other online activities are directed." Through a combination of compelling visual design, high-quality multimedia, persuasive copywriting, and interactive features, companies can shape consumer perceptions, foster trust, and influence purchasing decisions.

Tesla Inc., an American electric vehicle and clean energy company founded by Elon Musk and his team, is widely recognized as a disruptive force in the global automotive industry. Beyond its technological breakthroughs in electric

powertrains, autonomous driving, and sustainable energy solutions, Tesla is equally notable for its unconventional marketing approach. Unlike most automotive companies that allocate substantial budgets to traditional advertising campaigns, Tesla invests little to nothing in paid advertisements. As Gallo (2020) points out, Tesla's marketing success lies in "letting the product tell the story" and using its owned media channels especially its website as the central platform for brand experience.

Tesla's website reflects the company's philosophy of innovation, minimalism, and direct-to-consumer (DTC) engagement. The platform is not only a catalog of products but also a curated brand experience. The homepage features clean visual layouts, immersive imagery of Tesla vehicles, and interactive tools such as the Design Studio, which allows potential customers to customize their cars in real time. Product pages are designed with concise yet persuasive descriptions, emphasizing performance specifications, cutting-edge technology, and environmental benefits. This aligns with Fill's (2013) assertion that marketing communication should be "coherent, consistent, and targeted to generate maximum impact on the intended audience."

The marketing communication strategy on Tesla's website also embeds subtle yet effective elements of "storytelling" and "emotional branding". As Keller (2003) explains, strong brands are built through "consistent messages and experiences that create associations in the minds of consumers." In Tesla's case, sustainability is positioned not just as a feature but as part of a lifestyle choice, while technological innovations are framed as transformative solutions to global challenges. By presenting its products in a way that aligns with broader environmental and societal values, Tesla strengthens its emotional connection with its audience, appealing to both rational and aspirational motives for purchase.

Existing literature and studies on Tesla's marketing have primarily focused on the company's social media presence such as Elon Musk's use of Twitter (now X) or Tesla's Instagram campaigns to build hype and foster community engagement. However, academic investigations into Tesla's official website as a marketing communication tool remain relatively limited. This is an important gap

because, unlike social media platforms that operate within their own algorithms and limitations, Tesla's website is a controlled environment where the company fully determines the content, design, and customer journey.

Given the growing reliance on digital platforms for consumer decision-making, examining Tesla's website offers valuable insights into how a brand can effectively communicate its values, showcase innovation, and drive conversions without relying on traditional advertising. Understanding this approach can inform not only the automotive industry but also other sectors seeking to optimize their digital marketing communication strategies.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze Tesla's marketing communication strategy as implemented on its official website, using a qualitative descriptive method. The research will explore how Tesla crafts its marketing messages, maintains brand consistency, utilizes visual and interactive elements, and integrates these components into a cohesive digital strategy. The findings are expected to contribute to the academic understanding of digital marketing communication and offer practical recommendations for businesses aiming to enhance their online presence.

1.2 Formulation of the problem

Research formulated two question that need to be answered in this research, namely:

1. What Marketing Communication strategy use by Tesla's Website?
2. How does Tesla convey its brand identity through the design and content of its official website?

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

This study was limited to the analysis of the official Tesla website, focusing on two main pages: the Homepage and the Features & Technology page. The analysis of the Homepage was aimed at identifying the main messages, promotional visuals, and call-to-action elements, while the analysis of the Features & Technology page aimed to understand how Tesla presented its innovations, product

advantages, and brand values. The scope of the research was limited to the visual design, text, and interactive elements found on these two pages during the specified observation period. Other communication channels, such as social media, digital advertising, and third-party reviews, were excluded from the analysis.

1.4 Research Objective

The objectives of this research were to comprehensively examine and identify the marketing communication strategies implemented on Tesla's official website, focusing on how the company presented its products and messages to attract and engage potential customers. This included exploring the specific visual, textual, and interactive elements used to deliver persuasive and appealing marketing messages. Furthermore, this study aimed to analyze how Tesla conveyed its brand identity through the design and content of its official website.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1. This research was important because serves as a reference for students and academics in preparing research related to marketing communication strategies and brand identity analysis, particularly within digital platforms like corporate websites. Provides an example of structuring research objectives, scope, and methodology for studies focusing on website content analysis.

2. The results of this research served as offers a foundation for further studies that may expand the scope to other Tesla communication channels such as social media, online advertisements, or customer reviews. Encourages comparative studies between Tesla's website and other automotive brand websites to explore differences in communication strategy and brand identity representation. Suggests applying mixed-method approaches to measure not only qualitative insights but also quantitative metrics of user engagement and effectiveness.