Assessing the mediating role of customer trust in the effect of customer relationship management and customer loyalty: Evidence from creative economy

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effect of customer relationship management (CRM) and customer trust on EO customer loyalty, both directly and indirectly through customer trust as a mediating variable. The population in this study consisted of customers who use EO services in Jakarta. Using proportional sampling techniques, 276 respondents were obtained from 92 EO companies. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. The results indicate that CRM and customer trust have a significant effect on customer loyalty, both directly and through the mediation of customer trust. Customer trust plays an important role in strengthening the influence of customer relationship management on customer loyalty. The practical implication of this study is that EO companies need to strengthen CRM with a more effective customer management system to build trust and increase customer loyalty. Additionally, the finding that customer trust enhances the impact of customer relationship management on customer loyalty may be a novel contribution, providing theoretical insights into the relationship between customer relationship management, customer trust, and customer loyalty in the EO industry.

Keywords: Customer loyalty, Customer relationship management, Customer trust, Event organizer.

1. Introduction

The industry provides innovative and creative solutions to overcome economic problems and opens up new job opportunities for the community. With its potential, the creative industry is a new driving force in economic recovery efforts [1]. Based on BPS data (2024), the creative economy sub-sector contributed 7.44% to the national GDP, 14.28% to the workforce, and 13.77% to exports [2]. The three sub-sectors that made the largest contributions were culinary, fashion,

and crafts. In 2022, the creative economy sector contributed 6.54% to the total national GDP. This figure decreased compared to 2021 and is the lowest level since 2010. However, the GDP value of the creative economy continues to increase from year to year. In 2023, the added value of the creative economy reached IDR 1,414.77 trillion, with an export value of US$23.96 billion. The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy targets the proportion of creative economy GDP to reach 8.4% in 2029. In essence, the creative economy sector makes a significant contribution to the Indonesian economy, although it experienced a decline in 2022.

Event organizers (EO) are part of the creative industry sector that play an important role in creating and managing various types of events, from weddings and concerts to conferences and exhibitions [3]. In relation to innovation and creativity, event organizers utilize fresh ideas and advanced technology to present unique and engaging experiences for attendees. EO not only helps to enhance social and cultural interactions but also contributes to economic growth by creating jobs and boosting the tourism sector. With the ability to adapt and innovate, event organizers continue to grow and become an important pillar in the creative industry [4].

The event organizer (EO) business is experiencing rapid development in the digital era [5]. This development is likely due to the need for creative young people to produce innovative ideas in organizing events. The creative EO industry offers various product ideas and shows broad business prospects, especially with the increasing number of big events in large cities like Jakarta. Many individuals from various circles enter the EO industry because it is considered a new, profitable business opportunity. With a focus on profit orientation, the EO industry is expected to survive and thrive even in times of crisis [6].

In 2020, the event organizer (EO) business experienced a significant impact from the COVID-19 pandemic, with losses reaching billions of rupiah. A survey report titled "The Impact of the COVID-19 Outbreak on the Event Industry in Indonesia" by the Indonesia Event Industry Council (IVENDO) revealed that a survey of 112 EOs in 17 provinces, with nearly half located in DKI Jakarta, showed that 96 percent of EOs experienced event postponements or cancellations. As a result, the companies lost potential income ranging from IDR 2.2 billion to IDR 5.6 billion. However, with increasing vaccinations and improvements in the pandemic situation, many EOs have resumed activities by holding online, hybrid, or offline events while adhering to strict health protocols. The marketing concept mentioned above relates to marketing communication strategy. Therefore, event organizers must carefully consider aspects of the marketing strategy to ensure that the events run effectively and efficiently, meeting client expectations. When event organizers succeed in providing client satisfaction, the company can more easily gain customer credibility [7].

Customers who intend to repurchase and recommend items and services to others are more likely to become loyal customers. By increasing the continuity of relationships with existing customers and continuing to acquire new customers through the concept of customer loyalty, the company will have a significant influence, as this strategy focuses on customer sustainability and satisfaction. The customer relationship strategy aims to extend the lifespan of customers as individuals who transact and maintain customer loyalty [8].

The phenomenon of declining consumer loyalty to EO companies can be observed empirically through the decreasing customer loyalty of EO in the DKI Jakarta area, as evidenced by the results of an initial survey of 10 EO companies conducted before, during, and after the Covid-19 pandemic (as a timeline).

Table 1.
Number of EO Company Customers in DKI Jakarta.

Event organizer name	Region:	Number of customers before COVID-19	Number of customers during COVID-19	Number of customers after COVID-19
PT Masaru Fortuna Communications	South Jakarta	43	34	28
PT Osana Multi Talenta	East Jakarta	38	30	30
PT One Function Duatera	Central Jakarta	72	66	53
Lollipop	North Jakarta	68	54	56
PT Bintang Kreasi Semesta	South Jakarta	48	50	50
PT Happy Together Pratama	West Jakarta	78	62	62
Olam Party	West Jakarta	201	160	143
First Indonesian EO	North Jakarta	48	38	38
KTS Event	Central Jakarta	32	32	26
Red Organizer	East Jakarta	36	28	32

Overall, this data shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the event organizer industry in Jakarta, with some EOs starting to recover after the pandemic, while others are still struggling to return to previous levels of customers. The variation in recovery also suggests that factors such as the location and strategy of each EO may play a role in determining the speed of a company's recovery.

The Event Organizer (EO) consumer loyalty data shows that most EOs experienced a decline in consumer loyalty during the COVID-19 pandemic. This decline in loyalty was very sharp, especially for EOs such as PT Osana Multi Talenta, Lolipop, PT Bahagia Bersama Pratama, and EO Indonesia Pertama. This was most likely caused by social restrictions, decreased event frequency, and changes in consumer preferences during the pandemic, which affected consumer engagement with the EO. The data presented previously confirmed the phenomenon that there was a decline in

consumer loyalty, the number of consumers, the number of events held, and the amount of profit generated by the EO company.

There are various factors that influence consumer loyalty levels both theoretically and empirically, namely Customer Trust, Brand Trust, Emotional Attachment, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Competitive Prices, Added Value (Value Proposition), Effective Communication, Product or Service Innovation, and Word of Mouth [9]; [10]. In theory, building long-term customer relationships is not just about creating transactions [11]. The new paradigm for achieving marketing success is to establish and maintain ongoing relationships with customers. This paradigm is called customer relationship management [12]. The rationale behind this marketing practice is that customer relationships are considered to be more cost-effective than finding new customers or reacquiring old customers who have lost contact. Indeed, the establishment of a long-term relationship between a company and a customer begins with the creation of a transaction, then similar transactions are repeated so that they eventually develop into a long-term relationship [8].

Research on Customer Experience (CE), Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Service Quality (SQ), Customer Trust (CT), and Customer Loyalty (CL) has been widely conducted, both in Indonesia and abroad. Almost all research results show the importance of these factors in increasing customer loyalty. However, studies involving these factors in one model are still lacking. Likewise, the units of analysis studied are also diverse, but only a few have studied these conditions in event organizers from the perspective of consumer perception. Furthermore, research is still limited in exploring how cultural and regional factors, especially in Jakarta, influence the relationship between CRM, CT, and CL. There has been no in-depth research on how different types of events (corporate, social, entertainment) influence consumer perceptions and experiences differently.

The research gap can be identified from the still limited studies on the influence of digital tools and platforms used by event organizers in Jakarta on CRM. Research on the impact of virtual and hybrid events on CT and CL remains scarce. There is a lack of research examining how various customer demographics (age, gender, income, and education) influence perceptions of quality and loyalty. Additionally, research exploring effective segmentation strategies for diverse customer groups in Jakarta is limited. Further investigation is necessary to understand how CRM interacts to influence CT and CL, including its direct effects and indirect effects mediated by customer trust in EO businesses. Consequently, there is a need to validate and develop existing measurement tools for CRM, CT, and CL within the context of Jakarta's event industry.

From the background description provided above, the researcher recognizes the need to conduct a study on the factors that significantly influence customer loyalty among event organizers through trust, so that the results can offer valuable insights or information for event organizers developing their businesses.
The research questions in this study are:
1) Does customer relationship management affect customer trust?
2) Does customer trust affect customer loyalty?
3) Does customer relationship management affect customer loyalty?
4) Does customer trust mediate the effect of customer relationship management on customer loyalty?

2. Literature Review
2.1. Customer Loyalty

In general, loyalty means faithfulness, and loyalty may also be defined as allegiance. Loyalty emerges without coercion, but rather from one's own consciousness in the past. Efforts to increase consumer pleasure tend to influence consumer sentiments. While the concept of customer loyalty primarily focuses on purchasing behavior [13]. According to [14], the definition of customer loyalty is a customer's deep commitment to re-subscribe or make repeat purchases of selected products/services consistently in the future [13]. Consumer behavior toward a product or service is reflected in customer loyalty, and this behavior is likely to lead to future service contract renewals or reuse [15]. Customer loyalty plays a significant role in a business's long-term success. Friends of Explorer Event Organizer may decrease customer turnover.

In order to compete and continue to exist, companies in the service industry sector are required to continue innovating and developing the service offerings that will be sold. Concerning customers, a company must pay attention to consumers who have become regular customers [16]. Important elements, including a marketing complex, customer satisfaction, trust, and awareness, all play a part in how a business builds competitive advantages based on client loyalty [17]. In paper [18], loyalty is primarily about the pattern of decision-making behavior that leads to continuous purchases of goods or services from a chosen company. Loyal customers are typically influenced by one aspect of the company, but they usually become loyal due to the overall "package" offered, which includes the product, service, and price. The indicators used in this study to measure customer loyalty are as follows [9]; [10];
1. Repeat Purchase. It is a purchasing intention or an activity done by consumers with the objective of making a purchase more than once.
2. Referral. It is the act of consumers offering or recommending their products or services to other possible customers.
3. Retention. It is a positive experience that results from the use of a product or service, causing consumers to be loyal to it and hesitant to switch.
4. Impression. Consumers form a favorable impression of a product or service provided, which creates its own enjoyment for the consumer by discussing positive aspects of the product or service.

Thus, it can be concluded that customer loyalty is a deeply held commitment to repurchase or support a preferred product or service in the future, even though the influence of the situation and marketing efforts has the potential to cause customers to switch and voluntarily recommend it to others. This is because, with a loyal attitude toward the firm,

consumers will prefer to utilize the company's products or services regularly and will not be affected by rival companies' marketing techniques.

2.2. Customer Relationship Management

Customer relationship management is a typical tool used by customer service companies to increase consumer satisfaction and loyalty [19]. CRM attracts customers, cultivates enduring bonds with suppliers and customers, and maintains satisfied customers [20]. One strategy considered capable of bridging the gap between customers and companies is the implementation of a concept called Customer Relationship Management, usually abbreviated as CRM. CRM integrates people, processes, and technology to facilitate effective communication with customers, especially to foster customer loyalty to the company. In a market that is already highly informed, particularly regarding the use of CRM technology, its adoption is now increasing through the integration of a technology called e-CRM [21]. Improving e-CRM practices may be a competitive strategy to foster good relationships with customers [22].

Organizations leverage new technologies such as the Internet, wireless communications, speech recognition, and video to consolidate all customer interactions on a single platform, providing customers with more choices regarding the services they desire [23].In general,[24] Customer Relationship Management (CRM) or customer relationship management can be interpreted as a process of identifying, attracting, and retaining customers (members) in order to create customer value. CRM can be described as an activity carried out to manage the relationship between the institution and members, aiming to increase the company's value in the eyes of members. Relationships with customers (members) are very important for an institution. According to [14], Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is also one of the marketing strategy options implemented by service managers in recognizing and establishing good relationships with service users.

2.3. Customer Trust

Consumers must completely understand how innovation leadership sustains an organization's competitive advantages. Loyalty and trust are unmistakable indicators that competitive advantages are recognized and valued [25]. Customer trust is one of the factors that makes customers loyal to the company [26]. As numerous marketing experts and international scientific articles have pointed out, consumer trust is a critical component of client

and retention [17]. Building trust with customers is one of the most important aspects of a company [25]. The tendency of the customer to feel secure when purchasing the brand's goods and in the information that the business provides to him to meet his expectations is linked to trust [25]. Customer trust, loyalty, and contentment are critical factors for businesses to thrive in the age of social media. As a result, when customers have a positive perception of a firm, they may focus on their positive relationship with the company and begin spreading the word about its good deals, products, and services [27]. Customer trust is a factor that can shape customer loyalty [16].

Trust is a crucial factor for the long-term profitability and success of enterprises [28]. The customer-firm relationship can be based on various factors, including the product or service, employee performance, brand reputation, or the firm itself. Besides these components, customer trust remains an important factor in establishing customer loyalty to the organization [29]. Fulfilling promises made by the company is linked to trust, and kindness is a sign of the company's readiness to consider the interests of its customers when making decisions and organizing customer relationship activities [30].

In this study, the indicators used to measure the trust variable are as follows [10], [31], [32].
1. Benevolence, namely, how much someone trusts the event organizer to behave well towards customers or clients.
2. Competence is a current assessment of what a person can do. In this case, the event organizer is able to convince customers or clients and provide a guarantee of satisfaction and security when transacting.
3. Integrity, namely, how much confidence a person has in the honesty of the event organizer to maintain and fulfill the agreements that have been made to customers or clients.

Customer trust is the customer's belief that a company or brand will consistently fulfill its promises and obligations. This includes the perception that the product or service provided is reliable, safe, and of high quality. Customer trust is built through repeated positive experiences, transparent communication, and company integrity. This trust is important because it creates the foundation for long-term relationships between companies and customers, which contribute to increased customer loyalty and satisfaction. In the event organizer industry, customer trust ensures that clients feel confident that the event being held will be well managed by the EO and meet customer expectations.

2.4. Hypothesis Development
2.4.1. The Influence of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Trust

In the paper [33] obtained research results on the magnitude of the direct influence between Customer Relationship Management and Customer Trust. The finding by [34] found that trust was significantly influenced by customer relationship management. The ability of an organization to create and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with the public determines whether it succeeds or fails [35].

2.4.2. The Influence of Customer Trust on Customer Loyalty

The findings by [36] also revealed that customer interaction significantly improves customer loyalty and mediates the relationship between trust characteristics and customer loyalty. The findings emphasize the necessity of establishing strong consumer trust in order to increase customer engagement and loyalty. Research conducted by [37] shows that trust is one of the factors that can increase customer loyalty. Consumer trust is the main capital in maintaining users to continue using the

Fintech platform. The existence of trust in the ease of transactions and ease in carrying out daily activities increases the sense of benefit for users, thereby increasing user loyalty. In paper [37]. Research conducted by [38] indicates that consumer trust in customer loyalty within payment systems has a positive and significant influence. It can be interpreted that an increase in consumer trust correlates with an increase in customer loyalty. Conversely, a decrease in consumer trust results in a decline in customer loyalty. The results of this study are also supported by [39], the results of the study shows that the higher the customer trust, the higher the customer loyalty. Customer trust can increase customer loyalty [40]. Other opinions demonstrated how trust is a key factor in fostering loyalty [17].

2.4.3. Customer Relationship Management and Customer Loyalty

Several previous studies have shown that there is an influence between relationship benefits and customer loyalty [41]. Also strengthened by the results of research conducted by [15] shows that customer relationships are one of the factors that influence customer loyalty. Strengthened by opinions [42], customer loyalty is important for every company. To create loyal customers, one way is to improve customer relationship management programs and maintain customer satisfaction so that customers will make repeat purchases and recommend a company's products or services to others. CRM is essential for growing market share, productivity, and customer satisfaction because it helps businesses better understand who their customers are, what they need, and how to meet those needs and wants. It also helps businesses increase customer loyalty [35].

2.4.4. The Influence of Customer Relationship Management on Event Organizer Customer Loyalty Through Customer Trust.

The Customer Relationship Management for the people aspect has a significant effect on Customer Trust. When people influence Customer Trust, there is also an influence of Customer Relationship Management on the process aspect of Customer Trust. The process has a significant effect on Customer Trust [43]. The result also revealed that customer trust mediates the effect of customer relationship management on customer loyalty [43].

In summary, the research hypothesis can be stated as follows:
1. *Customer relationship management* has a positive influence on customer trust in event organizers.
2. Customer trust has a positive effect on event organizer customer loyalty.
3. *Customer relationship management* has a positive influence on the customer loyalty of event organizers.
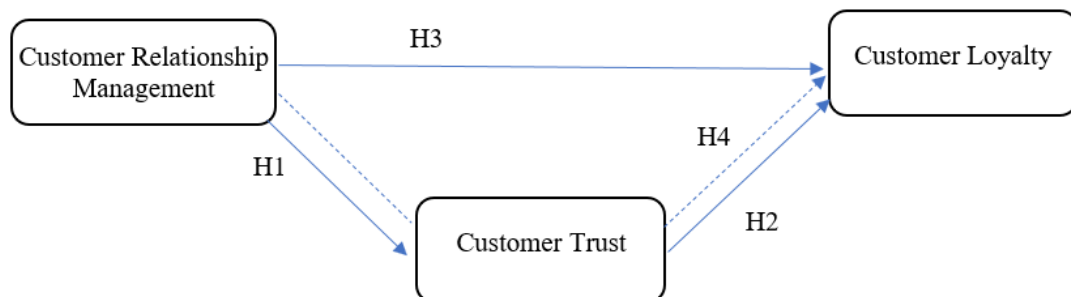4. *Customer relationship management* on customer loyalty of event organizers through customer trust mediation.

Figure 1.
The Conceptual Framework.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The research method used is a quantitative approach. In this study, data are collected and analyzed to provide a clear picture of the variables or conditions that exist. The quantitative approach uses numerical and statistical data to analyze phenomena. Data can be collected through surveys, questionnaires, or other methods that produce measurable data. The results of quantitative analysis are often presented in the form of tables, graphs, and descriptive statistics (such as scores, achievements, ideal scores, averages, medians, standard deviations, and categories), as well as inferential statistics using specific analyses. Interpretation of the results of the analysis can be used to answer the formulation of the problem (hypothesis testing).

3.2. Participants

The population framework in this study consists of customers of companies that utilize the services of 120 EO (78 EO Legal Entities and 42 Individual EO) in the DKI Jakarta area. To draw customer samples from these 120 EOs using proportional sampling, the participating EO companies were first selected based on the formula from [44], based on the calculation results, the analysis unit needed in this study is 92 EO. For the minimum sample, this can be determined using the rule of thumb for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique, which states that the minimum sample size can be determined by the number of latent variables and manifest variables (dimensions) [45]. This study uses the Partial Least Squares Path Modeling (PLS-PM) analysis technique or also known as Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

In this research model, there are 5 latent variables and 21 manifest variables, so there are 26 variables in total. Referring to the rule of thumbs, the minimum number of samples required is $26 \times 10 = 260$. If from the 92 EOs, the respondents are three customers from each of the 92 EOs (92 x 3) with a balanced distribution, then a sample of 276 respondents is obtained that can be analyzed. The selection of respondents aims to facilitate data collection from customers in each EO. *Purposive sampling* is a sampling technique characterized by specific criteria or considerations. The advantage of this sampling method is that the data collected is relevant to the research, and its implementation is more cost-effective and manageable.

3.3. Measurements

Referring to the research framework and paradigm, the research variables of event organizer customer loyalty are influenced by customer experience, customer relationship management, and customer service quality directly and through customer trust, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2.
Measurements of Variables.

Variables	Dimensions	Indicator
Customer Relationship Management (X2)	1. Customer Data Management	- Accuracy of Customer Data - Data Collection Methods - Data Utilization
	2. Customer Personalization and Engagement	- Personalization of Services - Customer Interaction - Engagement Strategies
	3. Communication Strategies	- Consistency of Communication - Timeliness of Information - Communication Channels
	4. Employee Training	- Training Effectiveness - Staff Knowledge - Customer Handling Skills
Consumer Confidence (Y1)	1. Benevolence	- Care for Customer Interests - Willingness to Help - Customer-Oriented Policies
	2. Competence	- Professional Knowledge - Event Management Skills - Problem-Solving Ability
	3. Integrity	- Honesty in Communication - Ethical Behavior - Consistency in Actions
Consumer Loyalty (Y2)	1. Repeat Purchase	- Frequency of Repeat Attendance - Willingness to Attend Future Events - Consistency in Choosing the Same Organizer
	2. Referral	- Likelihood to Recommend - Positive Word of Mouth - Influence on Others' Decisions
	3. Retention	- Long Term Relationship - Customer Loyalty Programs - Satisfaction with Past Events
	4. Impression	- Overall Satisfaction - Positive Perception of the Brand - Emotional Connection

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Results

4.1.1. Measurement Model

The measurement model in PLS generally includes several assessments such as (1) Convergent Validity, which is evaluated through the loading factor and Average Variance Extracted (AVE); (2) Construct Reliability, assessed via Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha; and (3) Discriminant Validity, determined using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion or HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio).

Table 3.
Convergent Validity and Construct Reliability.

Construction	Loading	CA	CR	AVE
X11	0.713	0.739	0.834	0.557
X12	0.784			
X13	0.711			
X14	0.774			
X21	0.745	0.706	0.818	0.603
X22	0.814			
X23	0.763			
Y1	0.717	0.703	0.818	0.529
Y2	0.740			
Y3	0.733			
Y4	0.718			

Note: CA = Cronbach's Alpha; CR = Composite Reliability; AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

Based on Table 3, the results of the Convergent Validity and Construct Reliability tests can be summarized as follows. Regarding the loading factor value, all indicators have a loading factor value > 0.7. The loading factor value > 0.7 indicates that the indicators strongly measure the intended construct. Related to construct reliability, it was found that the CA value for all constructs > 0.7, indicating good internal reliability. This value ensures that the indicators within each construct are consistent in measuring the same construct. Next, the CR value for all constructs is also > 0.7, even approaching or above 0.8, indicating a very good level of reliability.

In general, all constructs in this study meet the criteria for Convergent Validity and Construct Reliability. The loading factor, AVE, CA, and CR values that meet the standards indicate that the research instrument is valid and reliable. Table 3 shows that the measurement model in this study meets the requirements of validity and reliability. This provides confidence that the measured constructs can be used for further analysis in the SEM-PLS structural model.

4.1.2. Structural Model

In the SEM-PLS structural model, the primary focus is on the causal relationships between constructs or latent variables. This model includes several important aspects, such as the estimation of path coefficients, the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and Goodness of Fit (GoF). Each of these aspects plays a role in assessing the quality and accuracy of the model being tested.

Path coefficients indicate the strength and direction of the relationships between constructs in the model. Their values range from -1 to +1, where positive values indicate a positive relationship, and negative values indicate a negative relationship. The significance of the path coefficient is tested using the p-value, typically through bootstrapping techniques. If the p-value is less than 0.05 or 0.01, the relationship is considered statistically significant. The results of this path coefficient test also determine the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4.
Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing.

Path	Coeff.	SD	t-stat	p	Sig/NS	Hypo
X1 (CRM) → X2 (CT)	0.186	0.058	3,186	0.002	Sig.	Accepted
X1 (CRM) → Y (L)	0.175	0.058	3,018	0.003	Sig.	Accepted
X2(CT) → Y(Y)	0.265	0.059	4,482	0,000	Sig.	Accepted
X1 → X2 → Y	0.049	0.019	2,597	0.010	Sig.	Mediated

Based on the information from Table 4, several points can be put forward regarding hypothesis testing.
1. X1(CRM) → X2 (CT) has a path coefficient value of 0.186 with t-stat = 3.186 (p < 0.05), indicating that X1 (CRM) has a positive and significant effect on X2 (CT). This supports the proposed hypothesis, namely "Customer relationship management has a positive effect on customer trust in event organizers."
2. X1 (CRM) → Y (CL), which has a path coefficient value of 0.175 with t-stat = 3.018 (p < 0.05), indicates that X1 (CRM) has a positive and significant effect on Y (CL). This calculation supports the hypothesis that "Customer relationship management has a positive effect on customer loyalty of event organizers," which can be accepted.
3. In the relationship between X2 (CT) and Y (CL), the path coefficient value of 0.265 with t-stat = 4.482 (p < 0.05) indicates that X2 (CT) has a positive and significant influence on Y (CL), which means that X2 (CT) plays an important role in influencing Y (CL). This also supports the acceptance of the research hypothesis that "Customer trust has a positive effect on customer loyalty of event organizers."
4. A similar situation occurs in the relationship X1 → X2 → Y, where the mediation coefficient of 0.049 with a t-statistic of 2.597 (p < 0.05) indicates that X2 mediates the relationship between X1 and Y. Therefore, the hypothesis "Customer relationship management influences customer loyalty of event organizers through the mediation of customer trust" can be accepted.

4.2. Discussion
4.2.1. Customer Relationship Management on Customer Trust

Based on the research results, it can be stated that the influence of Customer Relationship Management on Customer Trust is proven to be positive and significant (coefficient = 0.186, t-stat = 3.186, and $p < 0.05$). These results indicate that CRM is a key factor in building customer trust. By managing customer relationships effectively, EO companies can increase customer trust, which can ultimately drive customer loyalty.

Customer Relationship Management variables can be identified from the dimensions: Customer Data Management, Customer Personalization and Engagement, Communication Strategies, and Employee Training. The Customer Personalization and Engagement dimension is the aspect that is most valued by customers. This shows that customers highly appreciate the company's efforts to understand their needs personally and engage customers in meaningful interactions. Meanwhile, Employee Training has a relatively lower score, indicating that customers may be less aware of or less directly affected by employee training efforts, although this is still important for EO companies to improve service quality.

On the other hand, the Customer Trust variable refers to three dimensions: Benevolence, Competence, and Integrity. Benevolence (the company's goodwill in prioritizing customer interests) and Competence (the company's ability to meet customer expectations) are the aspects most valued by customers. Meanwhile, Integrity (the company's consistency in maintaining ethical values) has a relatively lower score. This finding suggests that customers pay more attention to the company's goodwill and ability to provide services, compared to the integrity aspect, which may be less directly visible.

Earlier research by [46] found that personalization and customer engagement significantly increase customer trust. The research conducted by [47] also shows that trust is very important in customer relationship management. It has been demonstrated that customer relationship management influences consumer trust in order to build enduring collaboration. Customer relationship management is a comprehensive strategy for attracting, keeping, and collaborating with clients [34].

It can be stated that these findings indicate that CRM has an important role in building customer trust, especially through the dimensions of personalization and customer engagement, as well as effective communication strategies. However, EO companies also need to pay attention to aspects of employee training and integrity to ensure that customer trust can be built comprehensively and sustainably.

4.2.2. The Influence of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) on Customer Loyalty

Based on the calculation results, the influence of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) on customer loyalty is directly proven to be positive and significant (with coefficient = 0.175; t-stat = 3.018; and $p < 0.05$). This estimate indicates that CRM is an important factor in building customer loyalty. By managing customer relationships effectively, EO companies can increase customers' desire to return to use the service, recommend it to others, and maintain long-term relationships with the EO.

These findings indicate the success of Event Organizers (EO) in implementing CRM strategies effectively, particularly in the areas of personalization and communication, which are highly valued by customers. However, aspects related to customer data management and employee training are not yet optimal, suggesting that EO should focus on improving these two areas.

Meanwhile, the Customer Loyalty variable can be assessed from four dimensions: Repeat Purchase, Referral, Retention, and Impression. As is known, the Impression and Repeat Purchase dimensions are the aspects most highly valued by customers. Impression reflects a positive impression embedded in the minds of customers after using EO services, while Repeat Purchase indicates the customer's desire to use the service again in the future. These two dimensions are very important because they demonstrate that customers are not only satisfied with the services provided but also have a desire to maintain a relationship with the company. Meanwhile, Retention and Referral have relatively lower scores. This condition suggests that customers have not fully committed in the long term to the EO company for certain reasons or to recommend the service to others.

Several earlier investigations have validated the results of this study. The results of the study conducted by [48] state that customer relationship management can not only increase customer satisfaction but can also enhance customer loyalty. Research by [49] found that personalization and effective communication significantly increase customer loyalty through the formation of positive impressions and the desire to make repeat purchases. The research conducted by [22] also, the connection with customers is a factor that can increase customer loyalty. E-CRM features significantly predict loyalty, while transactional e-CRM features have a favorable and significant link with loyalty. In addition, research [50] shows that good customer data management can increase customer retention.

It can be stated here that these findings indicate that CRM has an important role in building customer loyalty, especially through the dimensions of personalization and communication. However, companies also need to pay attention to aspects of customer data management and employee training to ensure that customer loyalty can be built in an integrated and sustainable manner. By improving CRM strategies on dimensions that are most highly valued by customers, such as personalization and communication, as well as improving aspects of data management and employee training, EO companies can strengthen customer loyalty and increase retention and recommendations from customers.

4.2.3. The Influence of Customer Trust on Customer Loyalty

Judging from the calculation results, the influence of customer trust on customer loyalty in this EO company is also proven to be positive and significant, with a coefficient value of 0.265 (t-stat = 4.482, $p < 0.05$). This value indicates that the contribution of customer trust to customer loyalty is substantial, meaning that the higher the level of customer trust in

the company, the higher their level of loyalty. Customer trust is an essential foundation in building long-term relationships with customers because trusting customers tend to be more loyal, make repeat purchases, and recommend services to others.

Several previous studies support the findings of this study. Trust affects customer loyalty positively and significantly [51]. In order to build trust and retain brand loyalty, retailers pay close attention to the words and phrases they use when presenting their goods to consumers. By highlighting these connections, indirect pathways demonstrate that the relationship between ethical sales practices and client loyalty is partially mediated by satisfaction and trust, with trust being the closest antecedent of loyalty [51].In addition, research [52] shows that customer trust significantly increases customers' willingness to make repeat purchases and recommend services to others. Trust is one of the important factors that can influence consumer behavior, including repeat purchasing behavior [53].

Therefore, it can be concluded that customer trust plays a significant role in fostering customer loyalty, particularly through the dimensions of Benevolence and Competence. However, EO companies should also focus on integrity to further enhance customer loyalty. This approach can help companies strengthen customer relationships, increase retention, and encourage recommendations. This finding aligns with previous studies emphasizing trust as the fundamental basis for building long-term customer relationships and increasing loyalty.

4.2.4. The influence of Customer Relationship Management through Customer trust on Customer Loyalty

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is an important aspect of building and maintaining customer loyalty, both directly and through customer trust mediation. Effective CRM enables companies to understand customer needs, provide more personalized service, and improve ongoing interactions with customers [54]. When CRM is well managed, customers feel cared for and appreciated, which ultimately strengthens their trust in the company.[55].

In this study, CRM was shown to have a positive influence on customer trust. This aligns with previous findings indicating that integrated and responsive CRM can enhance trust by fostering a closer relationship between customers and the company [56]. This trust then plays a role in increasing customer loyalty, because customers who trust a company are more likely to continue using the same product or service in the long term [52].

The results of this study essentially confirm that CRM plays a significant role in enhancing customer loyalty, both directly and through the mediation of customer trust. To effectively increase customer loyalty, companies must ensure that their CRM strategies are designed to foster strong trust through effective communication, responsive service, and a positive, consistent customer experience.

5. Conclusion

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has a positive effect on event organizers customer trust. This means that effective CRM implementation, such as good communication, service personalization, and responsiveness to customer needs, can increase customer trust. Strong CRM helps build long-term relationships and increase customer confidence in the quality of event organizer services. Customer trust has a positive effect on event organizer customer loyalty. This shows that customers who have high trust in event organizers are more likely to become loyal customers. Trust creates a sense of security and satisfaction, which encourages customers to continue using the same event organizer service in the future. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has a positive effect on event organizer customer loyalty. The results of the study confirmed that good CRM strategies, such as service personalization, effective communication, and ongoing relationship management, can increase customer loyalty to event organizers. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) has a positive effect on event organizer customer loyalty through customer trust. These findings indicate that effective CRM increases customer trust, which ultimately has a positive impact on event organizer customer loyalty. CRM helps build sustainable long-term relationships with customers.

6. Implications

If EO implements an effective Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategy, then customer trust can be strengthened through better communication, personalization of services, and responsiveness to customer needs. If customer trust in EO continues to grow, then customer loyalty will increase because they feel safe and comfortable continuing to use the same EO service. If EO implements CRM that focuses on building long-term relationships, then customer loyalty can increase because customers feel cared for and receive more personalized service. If customer experience is managed well to increase customer trust, then customer loyalty will also increase because trust is a major factor in retaining customers in the long term.

7. Recommendations and Future Research

The Employee Training dimension in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is still low, so EO needs to hold regular training sessions to improve communication skills and customer service for employees, with customer satisfaction evaluation increasing by at least 15% after the training program has been running for three months. The Integrity dimension in Customer Trust still needs to be improved by increasing service transparency, providing quality assurance in the contract, and implementing a clear refund policy, with a target of increasing customer trust levels by 15% in the next six months. The Retention dimension in Customer Loyalty also still needs to be improved through subscription-based incentive programs, exclusive discounts for loyal customers, and ongoing personal communication strategies, with a target of increasing customer retention by at least 20% in one year. For further research, it is recommended to expand the scope of

the sample to better reflect the various segments of EO customers, as well as consider moderating variables such as customer demographics or previous experience levels, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that influence customer loyalty.

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