

A
Research Paper On
Factors Influencing on Usage of Digital Marketing:
A Study of Small Businesses

Submitted By

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Abstract

In an increasingly digital environment, small businesses are recognizing the transformative power of digital marketing to improve consumer reach and operational efficiency. Digital marketing is becoming increasingly vital for firms looking to reach out to new customers and provide excellent service. Digital marketing provides numerous advantages, including time and cost savings, client connection, improved reach, and customer data gathering. Small firms can effectively employ digital marketing to improve customer service. Therefore, this study investigates factors influencing on usage digital marketing for enhanced business performance of small businesses in Kolhapur. The study takes a descriptive approach to analyzing, the factors that influence their utilization, and the problems that these organizations confront. This study intends to help small businesses in Kolhapur to develop more effective digital strategies and improve customer interaction by offering insights about the extent of digital marketing adoption for enhanced business performances.

Key Words- Influencing Factors, Business Performance, Small businesses

Meaning and Introduction-

The term "Digital Marketing" initially arose in the 1990s, but the reality was dramatically different; Web 1.0 consisted mostly of static content with no interaction and no true communities. The first banner advertisement appeared in 1993, and the first web crawler (known as WebCrawler) was introduced in 1994, bringing in search engine optimization (SEO) as we know it. The quick expansion of Google and the introduction of Blogger in 1999 marked the beginning of the current internet age. Blackberry, a brand no longer associated with innovation, introduced mobile email, while MySpace debuted. MySpace was the true birthplace of social media as we know it today, but it was not as successful as it could have been in terms of user experience, which ultimately led to its downfall. Google's introduction of Adwords was their actual growth platform, and it continues to be a crucial source of income for them today. Their innovative approach, user-friendly interface, and precise algorithms remain unchanged. The first search machine was built in 1991, using a network protocol known as Gopher for inquiring and digging. The first clickable banner went live in 1993, and HotWired received a number of banner announcements for advertising purposes. This was done throughout the digital age of marketing. As a result of this incremental approach, new technologies joined the digital marketplace in 1994. Google was introduced in 1998, and at the same time, Yahoo was launched. Microsoft created the MSN search engine, and Yahoo debuted

Yahoo web search. In 2000, the internet bubble burst, and all of the smaller search engines were either left behind or wiped out, leaving only the heavyweights. Then, in 2006, the digital marketing sector experienced its first major rise. At the time, search engine traffic had surged by almost 6.4 billion in a single month. Google rapidly grew, and social networking sites followed suit. Facebook came after Myspace, which was the original social networking website. Companies noticed that all of these new sites presented them with new ways to market their products and brand. Customers now have continuous access to digitally marketed products. Digital marketing is becoming increasingly vital for firms looking to reach out to new customers and provide excellent service. Digital marketing provides numerous advantages, including time and cost savings, client connection, improved reach, and customer data gathering. Digital marketing can help small firms better serve their customers. The current study's topic is "Factors Influencing Digital Marketing Usage: A Study of Small Businesses." It will examine the impact of digital marketing on small firms, as well as the factors that influence digital marketing utilization. The study will also focus on the challenges that small firms experience when implementing digital marketing.

Objectives:

1. To assess factors influencing on usage of digital marketing.
2. To evaluate the impact of digital marketing on business performance.
3. To study the problems faced by small businesses while using digital marketing.

Hypotheses –

1. H0-There is no impact of digital marketing on business performance.
2. H1-There is positive impact of digital marketing on business performance.

Review of literature: -

There may be books and articles written on the subject of Digital Marketing. However, research work in the context of digital marketing, its adoption by small business is comparatively less. In the context of the proposed work, the studies focusing on various aspects of digital marketing and other issues are taken into concern.

Omar et al. (2020) had mentioned in their research article on Digital Marketing: An Influence towards Business Performance among Entrepreneurs of Small and Medium Enterprises with an objective to evaluate impact of usage of digital marketing on business performance. From the study researchers interpreted that digital marketing power viz. purpose of use, benefit and reputation are significant for business performance. Ritz et al. (2019) had conducted a study on Digital marketing adoption and success for small businesses. From the study researcher observed that perceived ease of use and usefulness are significantly correlated to intention to

use digital marketing. It was also interpreted that economic factor and lack of availability of digital marketing services are significantly related to digital marketing behaviour. Jordan (2018) had conducted a study on Social Media Marketing Strategies Used by Small Retail Businesses with an aim to analyse social media strategies used by small business retailers to engage customers. The study revealed that social media like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat and Yelp are most preferred social media platforms by retailers. Respondents agreed that social media marketing plays an important role in customer relationship management. Omondi (2017) in the research found that digital marketing had led to increase the sales of the small and medium enterprises in Nairobi. SEO is a very effective digital marketing tool. Mechman et al. (2022) in their research found that digital marketing and e-commerce have the positive impact on the business performance. Smith (2021) mentioned in their research study that the small businesses in Caribbean has benefited from digital marketing. It had led to increased awareness and brand reputation. Lockett (2018) have conducted an exploratory study. The researcher had concluded that digital marketing has enabled them to increase brand awareness and effective customer service. Taiminen (2015) The study showed that changing customer behaviour, cost saving and speedy communications are the three major reasons for adoption of digital marketing. It was also interpreted from the research that managers have limited IT competency. Pradhan (2021) conducted her study on Usage of Digital Marketing by SMEs: A Study on Issues and Challenges with objectives to study the influence of different factors on the digital marketing adoption and to assess the challenges faced by SMEs. From the study researcher had concluded that majority of the SMEs use digital marketing tools such as websites, SEO, E-mail marketing, social media, affiliate marketing. Singh (2020) conducted a research on A Study on Digital Marketing Adoption among MSMEs in Western Uttar Pradesh with an objective to analyse digital marketing tools adopted and used by MSMEs. It was found that major factors affecting on digital marketing adoption are external, operational, individual, organisational, functional area and preference benefit factor. Niranjana (2018) had conducted a research study on Digital marketing in the MSME sector of Kerala. The major objectives of the research were to study factors influencing digital marketing adoption of MSMEs and to study the impact of digital marketing company's performance. Researcher had concluded that non adopter in MSMEs have shown negative attitude whereas adopters have shown positive attitude towards digital marketing adoption. From the study it was found that relative advantage of digital marketing is perceived differently by adopters and non-adopters. Further, the researcher had found that non-adopters of digital marketing are reluctant to use it because of perceived complexity involved in use of digital marketing. Pachore (2016) piloted a research on Impact of Online / Digital Marketing on Small Business or Start Up. The objectives of the research study were to assess the use of digital marketing for small businesses and to study the social media marketing used by these small retailers. Researchers had also concluded that digital marketing has improved the business performance.

Research Gap:

The review finds certain trends and gaps in earlier studies. From the review it is found that majority research studies have focused on the digital marketing of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) mainly operating in business to business market. Few studies have considered only social media marketing. Very little study has been conducted on the small businesses operating in business to customer market. The earlier studies on digital marketing related to business to customers are exploratory in nature where the researcher had considered few case studies of small business firms. Further only one study had focused on users and non-users of digital marketing technologies. Majority of earlier studies, are conducted in other countries, very few studies are done in Indian context. The present study will focus on small businesses which are providing products or services directly to consumers. These include small retailers, shopkeepers, producers of consumer products on small scale, service professionals like saloons, health practitioners, etc. Further no study has been conducted in Kolhapur. In the above context the present study will be different.

Research Methodology:

The current study is descriptive in nature, and it attempts to understand “Factors Influencing on Usage of Digital Marketing: A Study of Small Businesses. The study is conducted in the Kolhapur district of Maharashtra State. The study included both primary and secondary data. To achieve the study's objectives, the researcher collected data from 140 Kolhapur-based small businesses. The data for the study was gathered using a standardized questionnaire. The researcher gathered information from small business owners in a variety of industries, including bakery, clothing, shoe stores, vehicle showrooms, art galleries, beauty and health care services, fitness centers, food services, jewellery shops, furniture stores, hotel and hospital services, tour and travel services, academic and financial consultancies. The data analysis was done with the help of Descriptive Analysis, Factor analysis, Regression analysis and Z test was used to find the results. For testing the result SPSS tool was used.

Result and Discussion:

Factor Analysis-

A component analysis technique was used by the researcher to condense the number of variables into a manageable amount. The adoption and use of digital marketing were subjected to a factor analysis of the contributing factors. The following are examples of how the factor analysis is conducted:

Table no-1 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test

The KMO assess the sampling adequacy (whether the responses provided with the sample are appropriate or not), and it should be close to 0.5 for factor analysis to proceed successfully.

Kaiser (1974) recommends a KMO value of 0.5 as a minimum (quite acceptable), 0.7-0.8 as acceptable, and 0.9 as excellent. Another indicator of the strength of the association between variables is Bartlett's test. The result of KMO and Bartlett's Test is shown in the table.

Table no-1

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.895
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1568.387
	df	105
	Sig.	.000

Source- Primary Data

The KMO measure of adequacy is 0.895, as shown in the above table, suggesting that the current data are adequate for factor analysis. Similarly, the sphericity test by Bartlett is significant ($p=0.000$), suggesting that there is significant correlation between the variables, allowing the analysis to proceed. When Bartlett's test statistic is significant at $p<0.05$, it is approximately distributed and can be accepted. The above table indicated that the sample size is adequate for factor analysis.

Table no-2 Communalities-

The next item with in output is a table of communalities, which displays how much of the variance (i.e. communality value which should be greater than 0.5 to be considered for further analysis) is carried by all of the variables. Otherwise, these variables would be excluded from the subsequent factor analysis procedures) in the variables have been accounted for by the extracted factors.

**Table no-2
Communalities**

	Initial	Extraction
Helps to increase brand awareness	1.000	.681
Help to generate leads and sales	1.000	.691
Helps to improve customer engagement	1.000	.689
Helps to compete with larger businesses	1.000	.558
Helps to keep up with the latest trends	1.000	.529
Time Saving	1.000	.774
Budget Required	1.000	.589
Technical Skill	1.000	.462
Availability of Customer information	1.000	.820
Identification and Selection of the right Platform	1.000	.861
Training of team/staff	1.000	.850
Customers' Changing Approach	1.000	.846
Employees Attitude	1.000	.815

Lack of finance	1.000	.754
Expertise Available	1.000	.858

Source- Primary Data

Above table show factor loading which are used to measure the correlation between variables and the factors. The table shows 15 variables with loading. The last column in the table shows communalities. The communalities represent the proportion of variance that a variable share with others variables. For instance, over 86% of the variance in “Identification and Selection of the right Platform” is accounted for, while 46.2% of the variance in the “Technical Skill” is accounted for.

Table no-3 Variance Analysis-

The number of extracted factors whose sum should equal the number of items subject to factor analysis is referred to as Eigen value. The following item list all of the factors that can be extracted from the analysis, as well as their Eigen values. The outcomes of variance analysis of factors are given table and the inferences drawn are explained under the table.

The table of Eigen values is divided into 3 parts-

Initial Eigen Values

Extracted Sum of Squared Loadings

Rotation of Sums of Squared Loadings

Table no-3
Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.467	43.115	43.115	6.467	43.115	43.115	5.874	39.160	39.160
2	3.224	21.494	64.609	3.224	21.494	64.609	3.624	24.160	63.320
3	1.087	7.246	71.855	1.087	7.246	71.855	1.280	8.534	71.855
4	.787	5.250	77.105						
5	.605	4.034	81.139						
6	.552	3.681	84.820						
7	.533	3.555	88.375						
8	.416	2.774	91.148						
9	.328	2.186	93.335						
10	.254	1.695	95.030						
11	.204	1.361	96.391						
12	.161	1.076	97.467						

13	.155	1.033	98.500						
14	.126	.842	99.342						
15	.099	.658	100.000						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis									

Source- Primary Data

As per the requirement for the number of component or factor stated by selected variables is the presence of Eigen values to more than 1. The table herein shows that the six components value is more than 1. From the above table it is found that 15 variables are reduced into three (3) predominant factors with cumulative variance 71.855% variances of 39.160, 24.160, and 8.534. The individual variable matrix loadings are given in the rotated component matrix.

Rotated Component Matrix

For extraction- principal component analysis method is used and for rotation- Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 5 iterations. The three extracted factor are given the rotated components matrix table with their values. The SPSS tool is used to find out the results.

Table No-4
Rotated Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
Helps to increase brand awareness		.792	
Help to generate leads and sales		.829	
Helps to improve customer engagement		.807	
Helps to compete with larger businesses		.739	
Helps to keep up with the latest trends		.650	
Time Saving			.878
Budget Required			.592
Technical Skill		.578	
Availability of Customer information	.882		
Identification and Selection of the right Platform	.912		
Training of team/staff	.918		
Customers' Changing Approach	.910		
Employees Attitude	.895		
Lack of finance	.866		
Expertise Available	.918		

Source- Primary Data

Three factors accounted for all variables, according to the total variance table. The use of factor loadings of 0.5 and above allowed for the identification of the number of variables in each factor. Under these circumstances, the first element has seven variables that fall under the category of Marketing Strategic Integration Factors. The second element is made up of six variables that fall under the categories of Marketing Performance Enhancer. The third component includes two criteria that fall under the category of Efficient Budgeting.

As a result, it is stated that the factor analysis was done to consolidate the many variables into a few. The accuracy of the sampling and the relevance of the variables were confirmed by the KMO and Bartlett's Test. Three factors were used to replace all variables Marketing Strategic Integration Factors, Marketing Performance Enhancer, Efficient Budgeting (Table no 1 to 4)

Regression Analysis-

For understanding the relationship between influencing factors and usage of digital marketing, the researcher conducted the regression analysis. The regression analysis is conducted to test the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Here usage of digital marketing is dependent variable and influencing factors are considered as independent variables. The regression analysis was carried on the three influencing factors on digital marketing. The procedural explanation is given below-

Table No- 5
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.246^a	.060	.040	.801
a. Predictors: (Constant), Marketing performance Enhancers, Efficient Budgeting, Marketing Strategic Factors				

Source- Primary Data

Regression analysis' model summary revealed a R square value of .040, which indicates that the three independent variables together account for 40% of the variance.

Table No- 6
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.608	3	1.869	2.910	.037 ^b
	Residual	87.363	136	.642		
	Total	92.971	139			
a. Dependent Variable: Adoption Of Digital Marketing						

b. Predictors: (Constant), Marketing performance Enhancers, Efficient Budgeting, Marketing Strategic Factors

Source- Primary Data

Regression analysis's ANOVA table displays a significant value of.000. This figure demonstrates that independent variables were significant to perform a regression analysis.

Table No- 7
Coefficients

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.824	.273		14.013	.000
	Marketing Strategic Factors	.025	.098	.023	.253	.800
	Efficient Budgeting	.108	.045	.210	2.415	.017
	Marketing performance Enhancers	-.066	.051	-.114	-1.290	.199
a. Dependent Variable: Usage of Digital Marketing						

Source- Primary Data

To interpret the regression results, we need to understand the relationship between the independent variables (Marketing Strategic Factors, Efficient Budgeting, and Marketing Performance Enhancers) and the dependent variable (Usage of Digital Marketing).

Constant: The intercept is 3.824, which indicates the expected value of usage of Digital Marketing when all other independent variables are zero. This constant is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), making it a solid estimate.

The coefficient for Marketing Strategic Factors is 0.025, which means that for every one-unit rise in Marketing Strategic Factors, usage of Digital Marketing is predicted to increase by 0.025 units, assuming all other variables remain constant. However, this variable is not statistically significant ($p = 0.800$), implying that Marketing Strategic Factors have no major impact on Digital Marketing usage in this model.

The coefficient for efficient budgeting is 0.108, which means that, while keeping other factors fixed, the usage of digital marketing is predicted to rise by 0.108 units for every unit increase in efficient budgeting. The statistical significance of this variable ($p = 0.017$) indicates that there is a positive and significant correlation between the usage of digital marketing and efficient budgeting. The coefficient for Marketing Performance Enhancers is -0.066, which means that for every one-unit rise in Marketing Performance Enhancers, Adoption of Digital Marketing is predicted to fall by 0.066 units, while other variables remain constant. However,

this variable is not statistically significant ($p = 0.199$), implying that Marketing Performance Enhancers have no visible effect on Digital Marketing usage in this model. (Table No-5 to 7) As a result, it is clear that regression analysis was done to determine the relationship between the influencing factors and usage of digital marketing. The analysis showed that all three independent variables, which were sufficiently significant to do regression analysis, accounted for almost 40% of the variance. **Three distinct independent variables are finally identified as relevant variables via regression analysis ($P < 0.05$). They Marketing Strategic Factors, Efficient Budgeting and Marketing Performance Enhancers. Among the variables studied, Efficient Budgeting is the only one that has a statistically significant impact on the usage Adoption of Digital Marketing, implying that better budgeting practices are associated with increased adoption of digital marketing strategies. Marketing Strategic Factors and Marketing Performance Enhancers do not have any vital effect in this model.**

Regression Equation Model

$$y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + \text{Error}$$

$$y = 3.824 + .025 (\text{Marketing Strategic Factors}) + .108 (\text{Efficient Budgeting}) + -.066 (\text{Marketing performance Enhancers})$$

The study reveals that a significant percentage of small businesses have adopted at least one form of digital marketing, with social media marketing being the most popular. There are major three factors that have significant impact on the adoption of digital marketing. (Marketing Strategic Factors, Efficient Budgeting, Marketing performance Enhancers). Therefore, study suggests that to increase digital marketing adoption, small firms should prioritize digital marketing literacy, Efficient Budgeting, and personalize marketing tactics to gain more reach and share in the market.

Table No-8

Impact of digital marketing on business performance

Statement	Mean	Std Dev	z-value	Hypothesis Accepted/Rejected
Adoption of digital Marketing has increased the sale of our business	3.65	1.449	5.31	Accepted
More orders were received after the adoption of digital marketing	3.65	1.112	6.91	Accepted
My sale revenue has not affected after the adoption of digital marketing	2.84	1.310	-1.44	Rejected

I have received more queries from buyers of my products in the market	3.38	1.172	3.84	Accepted
My customer base has been increased after opting digital marketing	3.71	1.135	7.40	Accepted
Customer retention	3.65	1.246	6.18	Accepted

The results show that adopting digital marketing has had a generally positive impact on the small businesses surveyed. Most respondents agree that digital marketing has helped increase their sales, with an average rating of around 3.65, which is significantly higher than a neutral response. They also reported receiving more orders and more customer queries, suggesting that digital marketing has helped attract more interest and business opportunities. Additionally, many businesses noticed that their customer base has grown after using digital marketing, indicating that they are reaching more people than before. Customer retention has also improved, showing that digital marketing is helping businesses keep their customers coming back. However, there is a statement about sales revenue not being affected, which received a lower average score and wasn't significantly different from neutral. This means that while most businesses are seeing positive results, some might not yet feel a clear impact on their overall revenue. Overall, the data suggests that digital marketing is playing an important role in enhancing business performance for small businesses, particularly in increasing sales, customer engagement, and loyalty.

Table No-9
Problems faced by respondents

Problems	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Availability of Customer information	140	1.82	1.470	2.162
Identification and Selection of the right Platform	140	1.94	1.502	2.256
Training of team/staff	140	1.89	1.558	2.427
Customers' Changing Approach	140	2.01	1.564	2.446
Employees Attitude	140	1.81	1.512	2.286
Analysis of the competition	140	2.11	1.648	2.715
Lack of finance	140	1.82	1.579	2.493
Expertise Available	140	2.19	1.721	2.963
Valid N (listwise)	140			

According to the study, the most significant barriers to digital marketing adoption are a lack of available experience and problems in analyzing the competition. These two concerns obtained the highest average scores, indicating that many firms struggle to have the necessary abilities and understand what their competitors are doing. On the other hand, issues like accessibility of customer information, budgetary constraints, and employee attitudes were scored lower, indicating that most respondents do not consider these substantial impediments. These places may create some challenges, but they are often doable. Other challenges, such as staff training, platform selection, and keeping up with changing customer behavior, were also mentioned as concerns—but to a moderate extent. These challenges are seen as significant, but not as pressing as a lack of competence or competitive analysis. Overall, the findings indicate that, while firms are making progress in some areas, they must continue to work on developing internal skills and increasing their understanding of the competitive landscape in order to successfully implement digital marketing strategies.

Conclusion-

Present study shows that digital marketing is very important for small businesses to grow and reach more customers. While it offers many benefits like saving time and money, better customer interaction, and wider reach, small businesses still face some challenges. The research found that Efficient Budgeting is the most important factor that helps small businesses adopt digital marketing successfully. Small businesses can improve their digital marketing efforts by concentrating on a few key principles. Prioritizing smart budgeting is critical, funds should be allocated efficiently to high-impact digital tools and platforms, including cost-effective tactics such as social media marketing, email marketing, and SEO, while periodically analyzing ROI. Investing in digital marketing training allows employees to gain confidence and skills through basic training and free or low-cost learning materials, promoting a culture of ongoing learning. Businesses should also increase their digital knowledge and awareness by keeping up with trends, subscribing to marketing blogs, and participating in relevant communities. Improving customer data collected through CRM tools or digital media allows for further personalization, while personalized marketing itself—tailoring messages based on consumer preferences and utilizing automation tools—can greatly increase engagement. Selecting the appropriate digital platforms is critical; firms should concentrate on where their target audience is most active and avoid spreading themselves too thin. It is also critical to monitor and adjust to changing customer behavior through the use of analytics tools and adaptable methods. Encourage favorable employee attitudes toward digital transformation by clearly conveying its benefits

and involve staff in the process, which boosts adoption and effectiveness. Benchmarking against competitors provides vital insights for improving one's approach, while using free and low-cost technologies such as Canva, Mailchimp, and Google Analytics enables small firms to handle campaigns efficiently on a budget. Finally, having explicit targets and tracking success ensures that efforts are aligned with company objectives and can be modified as needed.

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