

# Analytical Study on the Impact of Digital Marketing Strategies and Performance of Small and Medium-sized Companies

Hanadi A. Salhab<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

*The efficacy and strategies of digital marketing employed by small and medium-sized businesses were analyzed in this study. This study examined the influence of electronic mail marketing, social media marketing, and internet advertising on the operational outcomes of small and medium-sized Companies (SMCs) during the present era marked by evolving standards. The research investigation employed a cross-sectional survey design. Primary data for this study were obtained from 295 administrators of SMCs in Jordan through a systematic questionnaire. The statistical testing of the study's assumptions was conducted utilising multiple linear regression, with the assistance of the SPSS 23. During the new average period, social media websites marketing, using internet for advertising, and electronic mail for marketing had positive effects on performance, according to the study's findings. Therefore, the research proposed that SMCs enhance their sales and marketing performance by utilizing online advertising devices (including search engine, display, and website advertising), social media platforms (including Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp), and electronic mail marketing tools (including welcome electronic mail s, electronic mail newsletters, and dedicated electronic mail promotions). Moreover, the study provides recommendations for additional research that might serve as a beneficial point of reference for prospective scholars.*

**Keywords:** *Methods Of Digital Marketing, Performance, Marketing, Small and Medium-Sized Companies, Digital Marketing*

## INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship, particularly SMCs, plays a critical role in spurring countries' economic development and growth, especially in developing economies grappling with the myriad of economic development challenges (Papadopoulos et al., 2020). The World Bank (2021) reported that, most projects are SMCs. These businesses are critical as they create a significant bulk, potentially 90 per cent, of all commercial enterprises and provide over 50 per cent of job opportunities globally. They are responsible for up to 40 per cent develop in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in developing economies through their formal small and SMCs, according to a report from the World Bank (2021). The global demand for jobs is expected to reach 60 million by 2030 (World Bank, 2021); therefore, developing SMCs is critical to countries across the globe. In Jordan, SMCs account for 84 per cent of employment (96 per cent of commercial operations) and 48 per cent of Jordan's GDP (PricewaterhouseCoopers Limited [PwC] Jordan, 2021). Small and Medium Enterprises (SMCs) account for almost 90 per cent of manufacturing jobs and more than 50 % of industrial jobs in Jordan (Jordan Bureau of Statistics, 2020; Kerdpitak, 2022).

The Digital marketing, alternatively called online marketing, encompasses utilizing the internet to advertise and promote goods and services (Saleh,2020): marketing strategy and plan implementation utilizing digital and online platforms. Electronic marketing comprises a wide range of marketing activities that surpass the scope of online marketing. It encompasses electronic mail (e-mail) and wireless local area networks (WLANs). Numerous technologies enable and support the interaction between organizations and their customers (Saleh,2020). Several SMCs have increased their use of digital technology – particularly social media and the internet – in order to proffer ideas on how to cushion the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and keep their businesses alive (Aladejebi, 2020; Pono et al., 2019). As a result, many SMCs across various sectors use various online advertising and marketing methods to publicize their products. These methods include electronic mail marketing (comprising retention electronic mail s, promotional electronic mail s, electronic mail newsletters, and banner advertising), search engine optimization, mobile marketing, and online advertising comprising pop-

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<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor of marketing, Faculty of Business, Department of marketing, Middle East University, Jordan. E-mail: [Hsalhab@meu.edu.Jo](mailto:Hsalhab@meu.edu.Jo)  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4985-319X>

up advertisements, banner advertising and direct-response advertisement. The social media networks are getting a boost from small and medium-sized businesses in Jordan that are now posting adverts en-masse as they look to rub off the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the nearly ten-month-long suspension, SMCs in Jordan transitioned marketing endeavors to platforms, employing sponsored and complimentary posts, images or a combination of these approaches to advertise their offerings and services. SMCs, specifically those operating in the fashion accessory, ICT sectors and implemented online advertising strategies such as electronic mail marketing (Kannan et al.,2017).

The absence of satisfactory empirical data prevents us from determining whether significant improvements in the performance of SMCs have resulted from the implementation of E-marketing strategies since the Covid-19 pandemic. Although a subset of SMCs, particularly those operating in the ICT and fashion accessories industries, have implemented digital marketing strategies, most SMCs encounter barriers that impede the widespread implementation of these tactics. The challenges encompass issues such as inadequate digital skills, digital illiteracy, the danger of online deception, consumer privacy concerns and subpar internet connections (Soyinka, 2021). Small and medium-sized business (SMB) operators in Jordan might resist adopting digital marketing strategies due to apprehension, incapability, or disinterest. Following the absence of perceived usefulness for digital marketing, concerns about malpractices and the extensive costs of these approaches, it becomes pertinent, for instance, to carry out a painstaking empirical verification in order to provide the evidence which is needed to confirm and ascertain how the implementation of Digital Marketing strategies has the potential to enhance the operational performance of SMCs in Jordan. This then constitutes the crux of this enquiry: What is the impact of digital marketing strategies, made up of electronic mail marketing, social media marketing and online advertising, on the operational effectiveness of SMCs in Jordan transitioning into the 'new normal'? The primary goal of this research is to investigate the influence of the combined use of digital marketing strategies on the operating performance of SMCs in the present 'new normal'.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical framework that underpins this study is Kurt Lewin's theory, which outlines the phases that organizations traverse as they confront and deal with structural and environmental change. Lewin's (1890) theoretical framework was initially designed to help organizations manage the dynamic changes in their immediate and operational environments. Kurt Lewin's theory purports would change is characteristic of companies, individuals and institution; therefore, careful planning and management of any change is indispensable for its success. It is postulated that the change process comprises the subsequent stages of establishing the awareness that modification is imperative, advancing towards the intended standard of conduct, and ultimately, maintaining the modified behavior as the customary method of operation. The concept is generally acknowledged as the foundational underpinning of most change models. This facilitates effective change management in organizations, groups, and individuals (Ivens et al.,2007). Lewin (1890) delineates the change management process as comprising three discrete phases: unfreezing, modifying, and refreezing.

The initial phase of the change management process is referred to as the unfreeze stage, as Lewin (1890) delineates. This process entails the organization recognizing the necessity for transformation, which may encompass substantial organizational issues such as structure, operations, strategies, activities, orientation, or policies. The organization identifies the operation, activity, strategy, or policy that necessitates modification with precision at this juncture. It actively advocates for rejecting antiquated approaches, behaviors, perspectives, and strategies to embrace the desired transformation Jam (2016). In contrast, adequate backing from an organization's management team is critical for successful change preparation, given that they are responsible for implementing substantial organizational transformations. The change agent, who may be a manager, marketer, accountant, or another staff member, must demonstrate attentive listening skills and adeptly address the concerns and resistance of management towards change. This is essential for laying the groundwork for the anticipated transformation. Implementing changes delineates the succeeding stage in Kurt Lewin's change theory (1890). During this phase, the organisation formulates strategies to implement the desired changes after obtaining broad consensus on the necessity of change. The manager formulates a strategic plan to execute the requisite modifications throughout the relevant departments, units, and activities. It is critical to ensure employee collaboration during change implementation by effectively communicating the potential advantages

of the change and the rationale behind its necessity to the organization. According to Lewin (1890), the ultimate stage, known as "refreeze," entails the organization acclimating to a renewed state of stability after effectively executing the required modifications. The new change has been effectively integrated into the organization's standard operating procedure. Consequently, the change has been incorporated into the organization's culture, policy, strategy, and trajectory in a consistent manner. At this time, sustainability must be the highest priority for managers. They must develop strategies that guarantee the long-term integration of the new change into the established norm, provided that it contributes to the organization's overall success and improves operational efficiency (Sarayreh et al., 2013).

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The core objective of this study was to examine the impact of digital marketing strategies on the operational performance of SMCs under the new standards and circumstances. Muniesa et al. (2020) constructed digital marketing using specific indicators (i.e. social media marketing, Online advertising, and electronic mail marketing). The dependent variable construct of marketing performance uses the specific dependent items (Market coverage, customer patronage, customer retention, and sales performance) (Nam et al.2020). Social media marketing is the strategic use and operation of social media networks and platforms (e.g. Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook) by small and medium-sized Companies (SMEs) to popularize their products and to inculcate brand loyalty and patronage among their customers. Online advertising of **SMCs** involves the strategic use of internet platforms, including display ads, websites and banner ads to promote their product or services to increase their brand visibility and transform prospects to their customers. Electronic mail marketing is the strategic operation of SMCs to communicate with their existing and potential customers by electronic mail. The aim is to inform the customers about their new and existing products to motivate them to make beneficial decisions regarding patronage. Market coverage pertains to the extent to which promotional blend and distribution strategies enable SMCs to penetrate their target markets, augmenting their market share. Customer patronage is the monetary support clients extend to small and medium-sized Companies SMCs through product purchases or service payments. Customer retention pertains to the ability of SMCs to convert new or initial clients into devoted, lifelong customers who provide consistent support to the company. Sales performance pertains to the effectiveness and efficiency that SMCs exhibit in their sales endeavours. It comprises the revenue generated and the quantity of goods and services SMCs provide. Based on an existing empirical review of pertinent studies, this study hypothesised a causal relationship between Digital Marketing strategies (social media marketing, online advertising, and electronic mail marketing) and the performance of SMCs in the new-normal era (including market coverage, market penetration, customer patronage, and sales performance). Following the study's hypothesis, a conceptual model was developed depicting the causal relationship between the independent variable (digital marketing strategies) and the dependent variable (performance). Following the development of the conceptual model for the study.

## **DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES**

Digital marketing, alternatively called online marketing, encompasses using the Internet to advertise and promote goods and services (Saleh,2020). It entails executing marketing strategies and initiatives through internet-based channels. Electronic and digital marketing encompasses many marketing operations that surpass internet-based marketing endeavours. Many technologies enable and support the interaction between organisations and their customers (Saleh,2020). According to Rashid, Nurunnabi, Rahman, and Masud (2020), the scope of digital marketing is more extensive than traditional marketing due to the availability of additional online platforms and marketing mechanisms. Electronic marketing facilitates worldwide reach for businesses through the instantaneous distribution of their products, assistance, and encouragement millions of individuals across the globe. This communication channel operates in both directions, enabling organisations to exchange information with customers and obtain feedback in return. Likewise, Qashou and Saleh (2018) observed that electronic marketing demonstrates flexibility and can be modified to correspond with prevailing digital marketing circumstances in the present instant. Digital marketing techniques encompass a range of online, wireless, or internet-based channels or tools businesses can employ to create and distribute promotional content to clients while establishing more effective connections (Papadopoulos et al., 2020). These strategies are

plentiful, adaptable, and perpetually evolving in response to the internet and digital technology advancements. This category generally comprises a range of techniques, including but not limited to affiliate marketing, website marketing, electronic mail marketing and search engine marketing

### **PERFORMANCE OF SMCS**

The determination of the performance of SMEs is established in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in administration, finance, sales, and marketing operations, as well as the strategy of little and medium-sized enterprises. The "degree of success" of SMCs and the regional, medium and short-term business goals that SMCs' personnel and operators have set indicates the degree of performance on every criterion and their capability to achieve such goals (Kotane et al.,2019). The text pertinently analyses the efficiency and effectiveness of which strategies Small and Medium-sized Companies (SMCs) use for the accomplishment of their objectives and goals of production. For the most part, the operational effectiveness of SMCs ascertains the economic expansion of most developing African countries. These countries' economies are determined mainly by SMCs (Papadopoulos et al., 2020). Expanding and producing SMCs extensively aids in improving the national economy.

This results in employment generation, fulfilment of domestic requirements, improved living standards, decreased cost of living, and stimulation of international trade expansion via exports. For this reason, governments in specific developing Arab countries (e.g., Iraq, Jordan, Syria, and Egypt) are dedicating funds to support programmes and initiatives designed to expand SMCs. Understanding the interrelationships between SMCs and the national economy is the focus of these endeavours (Khan,2017). To optimise the performance of SMCs, it is imperative to comprehensively comprehend the precise dimensions or indicators that govern their operation. The efficacy of SMCs is divided by Koeswandi, Fauziyah, and Nurfitriya (2020) into two primary categories: financial and non-financial indicators. Financial indicators are quantifiable measures that directly assess the financial health of SMCs. The aforementioned metrics include financial assets, capital base, revenue, return on investment, equity, profitability, liquidity, and earnings before and after tax (Nasiri et al., 2020). The non-financial indicators comprise marketing and managerial metrics such as customer demand, market share, sales volume and customer age; among the non-financial indicators include new customer acquisition, customer retention, customer demand, and market share.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AND PERFORMANCE OF SMCS**

As defined by Andaç, Akbiyuk, and Karkar (2016), social media comprises a collection of digital networks and platforms that enable registered users to engage in interactive and reciprocal content sharing and virtual communication. Media marketing encompasses the deliberate and purposeful utilisation of social networks, including but not limited to YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, to promote services or products, interact with particular clientele, deliver customer assistance, stimulate sales, and foster favourable associations with the intended demographic. Social media integration pertains to the strategic integration of social networks and websites into the marketing blend of an organisation, employing them as conduits through which marketing initiatives and strategies are executed. As social media platforms expand in reach and visibility among consumers, the effectiveness of social media marketing in enhancing the performance of commercial organisations escalates significantly. As a result, customers depend on social media to acquire information regarding possible purchases. These platforms are used by organisations to increase their brands, engage with possible clients, and advance the effectiveness of their sales and marketing endeavours (Saleh,2020). The research conducted by Onyango (2016) established a noteworthy correlation between social media marketing and the financial performance of flower companies in Kenya, as measured by revenue, market share, and profitability. Furthermore, the claim mentioned above supports the study Saleh (2020) conducted, which provided evidence that social media significantly influences the marketing efficacy of SMCs.

### **ONLINE ADVERTISE AND PERFORMANCE OF SMCS**

Online advertise pertains to the paid and impersonal exhibit, products and concepts via the Internet. The initiative is executed by a discernible sponsor (Saleh,2020). Digital marketing uses internet-based tools, including display advertising, internet search engine optimisation (such as google and yahoo), and to inform

specific online users (customers) about a business, its products, and services. The primary aim is to elucidate, enlighten, educate, and convince consumers to adopt a favourable stance towards the organization and its products or services (Karkar , 2016). The practice of utilizing consumer data to target specific customer segments via the Internet is called online advertising. The objective is to give them pertinent details regarding products and services they will probably require and convince them to convert into customers. Online advertising allows SMCs, to market and target a broad audience with their products or services. It is significant to mention that digital advertising has become one of the most adaptable, inventive, and cost-effective strategies with a substantial influence on the market. In this regard, a well-executed and creative digital advertising campaign has the potential to quickly generate market awareness and an impressive sales volume for an organization's product (Muniesa et al., 2020). Online advertising can substantially improve the firm's marketing outcomes.

## **ELECTRONIC MAIL MARKETING AND PERFORMANCE OF SMCS**

Electronic mail marketing uses electronic mail to advertise and promote items and services to targeted consumer segments. Consumers are influenced mainly, prompted, and motivated to make purchases. Electronic mail marketing is systematically planning and implementing promotional campaigns through electronic mail. Organisations often acquire consumers' electronic mail addresses through various means, including requiring registration or facilitating transactions via Internet marketers. The Electronic mail addresses are employed in compiling a customised distribution list to suit each consumer's preferences and behaviours. Messages containing information regarding products and services that are periodically available are dispatched to clients who are subscribed to these mailing lists. Electronic mail marketing was defined by Zhang (2017) as the purposeful transmission of a promotional message via electronic mail, typically to a collective audience. Electronic mail marketing has experienced substantial growth and prominence as a widely used means of communication within the business domain. Electronic mail marketing endeavors to expeditiously engage consumers and augment client loyalty instantly. Electronic mail is an efficient and uncomplicated method of transmitting information to clientele when incorporated into a marketing strategy. Electronic mail marketing may subsequently be employed to collect and alter marketing information to comply with specific clientele's peculiar needs and predilections (Onyango, 2016).

## **AIM OF STUDY AND HYPOTHESES**

This study aims to the impact of digital marketing strategies and performance from the point view of administrators small and medium-sized companies in Jordan. Hence, the hypotheses are formulated as follows:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is a positive relationship between digital marketing strategies and performance of SMC  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

**H<sub>0.1</sub>:** There is a positive relationship between social media marketing and performance of SMC  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

**H<sub>0.2</sub>:** There is a positive relationship between online advertise and performance of SMC  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

**H<sub>0.3</sub>:** There is a positive relationship between electronic mail marketing and performance of SMC  $\alpha \leq 0.05$ .

## **METHODOLOGY**

The research adopted a cross-sectional questionnaire to collect reports from the operators of the SMCs in Amman at a single point in time in order to analyze and develop the findings. The total population consisted of 1,123 operators of SMCs in Jordan where namely in the capital city of Amman. The researcher gathered this information in 2023 from the Corporate Affairs Commission office in Amman.

We utilized a discerning selection approach to identify small and medium-sized firms (SMCs) in Amman, the capital of Jordan, for our questionnaire survey. The decision was made based on the region's high concentration of small and medium-sized companies (SMCs). This study's primary data were generated through a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire distributed to SMCs' operators. There are two sections in the instrument: demographic and psychographic sections. The demographic section collected information on the respondents' circumstances, and the psychographic part contained items on the research variables: Social Media marketing, online advertises, electronic mail marketing and SMCs performance. The first to third items assessed the effects

of social media marketing, the fourth to sixth items measured the effects of online advertising, the seventh to ninth items measured the impact of electronic mail marketing, and the tenth to thirteenth items assessed the outcomes of the social media advertisements. The metrics for electronic mail marketing and online advertising were obtained from Rashid (2020).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### TEST OF HYPOTHESES

Table 1. The model summaries the effects of digital marketing strategies on the performance of SMCs in the new age

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.699a	.381	.375	.34398

- Predictors: SM marketing, online advertises , electronic mail marketing
- Dependent variable: Performance of SMCs

Table 2. Coefficients of the effects of digital marketing strategies on the performance of SMCs in the new age

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardizes Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.943	.180		4.220	.000
media marketing	.272	.046	.230	4.688	.000
Online advertises	.201	.035	.155	4.414	.000
Electronic mail marketing	.283	.068	.126	3.112	.000

- Dependent variables: Performance of SMCs

### INTERPRETATIONS OF RESULTS

The tables 2 to 4 present the results of a multiple linear regression analysis investigating the influence of Digital Marketing strategies on the performance of Small and Medium-sized Companies (SMCs) in the new age. The correlation coefficient (R) in Table 2 indicates a strong positive association of 69.9 per cent between Digital Marketing strategies and Small and Medium Companies' (SMCs) success in the new age. There is a robust link between the factors. The table displays the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>), indicating that the independent variables (Digital Marketing strategies) may predict around 38.1% of the variability in the dependent variable (performance of SMCs). This implies that holding all other factors constant, a slight augmentation in the utilization of Digital Marketing tactics by small and medium companies (SMCs) will result in a substantial 38.1 per cent enhancement in their performance within the present timeframe. The F-statistic of 82.713 and the significance value of 0.000, which is below the threshold of 0.05, the regression models being examined is statistically significant. This suggests that digital marketing strategies significantly influence the performance of SMCs in the current era, which is characterized by changing norms. Table 3 shows that the p-values for the independent variables analyzed (SM marketing, online advertising, and electronic mail marketing) are all less than 0.05, which is the significance level. Additionally, all of these variables have positive t-values. The results indicate that SM marketing, internet advertising, and electronic mail marketing have a significant and advantageous effect on small and medium-sized firms' performance during the current transformation. Research has shown that social media marketing is the most effective digital marketing technique for small and medium-sized Companies (SMCs), with a substantial impact of 23.0 percent ( $\beta = 0.230$ ). Online advertising exerted the second most significant level of influence, contributing to 15.5 percent of the overall impact ( $\beta = 0.155$ ). Electronic mail marketing had a negligible impact, representing only 12.6 percent ( $\beta = 0.126$ ).

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

In brief, the findings from the present research are consistent with the research hypotheses. The outcome of the multiple linear regression analysis revealed that SM marketing, online advertises and electronic mail marketing significantly and positively influenced the performance of SMCs in their bid to achieve sustainability

in the period of the “new normal”. In light of the results of the research, the following conclusions can be drawn: social media marketing, online advertising, and electronic mail marketing have influenced the performance of SMCs during the “new normal”. The body of literature presented by Muniesa et al. (2020), Olusegun et al., (2020) and Saleh (2020) from which the research hypotheses formulated provided great support that SM marketing, online advertises, and electronic mail marketing significantly and positively influenced the performance of small and medium-sized Companies indicating that the potential for utilisation was available to small and medium-sized enterprises. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, small and medium-sized Companies (SMCs) can significantly improve their sales and marketing effectiveness by developing digital marketing strategies, including SM marketing, online advertises, and electronic mail marketing. Hence, the research has provided enough empirical evidence to objectively validate that digital marketing strategies significantly and positively affect the performance of SMCs during the “new normal”.

## **PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF FURTHER STUDIES**

The findings of this study give evidence to our conclusion that Small and Medium Companies (SMCs) improve significantly by integrating Digital Marketing strategies like SM marketing, online advertises, and electronic mail marketing interfusion. The findings of this study and that of Empirical evidence confirm that SMCs improve their performance significantly especially in the present era, when they incorporate and execute Digital Marketing strategies in their operations and campaigns. Therefore, we recommend that small and medium-sized companies (SMCs) make use of social media platforms, online advertising, and electronic mail marketing tools in order to enhance their sales and marketing effectiveness. The rationale is that Digital Marketing strategies have demonstrated a significant capacity to improve the performance of SMCs, especially in light of the COVID-19 epidemic. Because this study only focuses on three (3) Digital Marketing strategies, it is unable to provide a wide variety of successful Digital Marketing tools that SMCs can utilize for their marketing objectives. Therefore, we suggest that future research efforts should encompass a more comprehensive array of Digital Marketing strategies. This study examined the influence of Digital Marketing strategies on the performance of SMCs from the viewpoint of SMC operators. Thus, it failed to clarify the influence of Digital Marketing strategies on consumers' buying behaviour. Therefore, the researcher suggests that future studies thoroughly investigate the influence of Digital Marketing strategies on customers' decision-making processes, encompassing their awareness, interest, desire, patronage, and retention.

### **Author Contributions**

Conceptualization: Hanadi A. Salhab.

Data curation: Hanadi A. Salhab.

Formal analysis: Hanadi A. Salhab.

Investigation: Hanadi A. Salhab.

Methodology: Hanadi A. Salhab.

Project administration: Hanadi A. Salhab.

Supervision: Hanadi A. Salhab.

Validation: Hanadi A. Salhab.

Visualization: Hanadi A. Salhab.

Writing – original draft: Hanadi A. Salhab.

Writing – review & editing: Hanadi A. Salhab.

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