

Comparative Analysis of Traditional Marketing vs. Digital Marketing Strategies

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Abstract

This paper presents a comparative analysis of traditional marketing and digital marketing strategies, examining their respective strengths, weaknesses, and applicability in today's dynamic business environment. Traditional marketing methods, including print, broadcast, direct mail, and outdoor advertising, offer broad reach and credibility but are often costly and lack precise measurability. In contrast, digital marketing leverages internet-based channels such as social media, SEO, PPC, and email marketing, providing cost-effective, targeted, and measurable campaigns. While digital marketing excels in precision and engagement, it faces challenges like high competition and the need for technical expertise. This study also explores the potential of integrated marketing communications (IMC) strategies that combine both traditional and digital approaches to maximize impact. The analysis underscores the importance of adapting marketing strategies to evolving consumer behaviors and technological advancements, recommending a hybrid approach for optimal results in diverse business contexts.

Keywords: Traditional marketing, digital marketing, integrated marketing communications (IMC), consumer behavior, technological advancements.

I. INTRODUCTION

Marketing has always been a cornerstone of business success, serving as the bridge between companies and their customers. Over time, the methods and channels used for marketing have evolved significantly, influenced by changes in technology, consumer behavior, and global connectivity. This evolution has led to a dichotomy in marketing strategies: traditional marketing and digital marketing. Both approaches aim to achieve the same fundamental goal—promoting products and services to generate sales—but they do so through vastly different means. A comparative analysis of traditional marketing versus digital marketing strategies is crucial for understanding their respective strengths, weaknesses, and applicability in today's dynamic business environment.

Traditional marketing encompasses a range of techniques that have been used for decades, if not centuries. These methods include print advertising (newspapers, magazines), broadcast advertising (television, radio), direct mail, outdoor advertising (billboards, posters), and face-to-face marketing (events, trade shows). The core advantage of traditional marketing lies in its ability to reach a broad audience through well-established channels. Television and radio ads, for example, can achieve massive reach and frequency, ingraining brand messages in the public consciousness. Print media, with its tangible nature, allows for a more personal connection with the audience, often perceived as more credible and trustworthy.

However, traditional marketing is not without its limitations. One of the most significant challenges is the high cost associated with many traditional advertising channels. Television and radio spots, especially during prime times, can be prohibitively expensive for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Additionally, traditional marketing lacks the precision and measurability that modern businesses demand. It is challenging to track the exact impact of a billboard or a print ad on consumer behavior and sales. This lack of detailed analytics makes it difficult for marketers to optimize their campaigns and ensure a good return on investment (ROI).

In contrast, digital marketing has revolutionized the way businesses approach their marketing strategies. Digital marketing leverages the internet and electronic devices to deliver promotional content. This includes a wide array of tactics such as search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, social media marketing, email marketing, content marketing, and influencer marketing. The rise of digital marketing has been fueled by the proliferation of the internet and mobile devices, which have transformed how consumers access information and make purchasing decisions.

One of the most compelling advantages of digital marketing is its cost-effectiveness. Unlike traditional media, which often requires significant upfront investment, digital marketing campaigns can be scaled according to the budget. Small businesses can start with modest investments in social media ads or PPC campaigns and gradually increase spending as they see results. Moreover, digital marketing offers unparalleled targeting capabilities. Marketers can tailor their campaigns based on demographics, interests, behavior, and even real-time data, ensuring that their messages reach the most relevant audience. This precision targeting helps improve conversion rates and reduces wasted ad spend.

Another key benefit of digital marketing is its measurability. Advanced analytics tools enable marketers to track every aspect of their campaigns, from impressions and clicks to conversions and customer acquisition costs. This data-driven approach allows for continuous optimization, ensuring that marketing efforts are always aligned with business objectives. Additionally, digital marketing fosters greater engagement through interactive content, social media interactions, and personalized email campaigns, creating a more dynamic relationship between brands and consumers.

Despite these advantages, digital marketing also faces challenges. The digital landscape is highly competitive, with countless businesses vying for the attention of the same audience. This saturation can make it difficult for brands to stand out and achieve meaningful engagement. Additionally, digital marketing requires a certain level of technical expertise and ongoing adaptation to new trends and algorithms. Businesses must stay abreast of the latest developments in SEO, social media algorithms, and digital advertising platforms to maintain their competitive edge.

The comparative analysis of traditional marketing and digital marketing strategies also needs to consider the context in which these strategies are deployed. Different industries, target markets, and business goals may dictate the suitability of one approach over the other. For example, in regions with limited internet penetration, traditional marketing methods might still hold significant value. Similarly, industries that rely heavily on visual appeal and emotional connection, such as luxury goods and high-end fashion, may benefit from the tactile and immersive experience offered by print and television ads.

Moreover, a hybrid approach that combines both traditional and digital marketing can often yield the best results. Integrated marketing communications (IMC) strategies leverage the strengths of both approaches to create a cohesive and comprehensive marketing plan. For instance, a brand might use television ads to build broad awareness while simultaneously running targeted digital campaigns to drive engagement and conversions. This synergy can amplify the overall impact of marketing efforts and provide a more seamless experience for consumers.

The rise of digital marketing does not signal the end of traditional marketing. Instead, it highlights the need for a more nuanced understanding of how different marketing strategies can complement each other. As consumer behavior continues to evolve, businesses must remain flexible and open to adopting new methods while retaining the proven effectiveness of traditional techniques. This adaptability is especially important

in the face of ongoing technological advancements, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, which are poised to further transform the marketing landscape.

AI and machine learning are already beginning to influence both traditional and digital marketing. In traditional marketing, AI can enhance media buying decisions, optimize ad placements, and provide deeper insights into audience preferences through advanced analytics. In digital marketing, machine learning algorithms can personalize content, automate customer interactions, and predict consumer behavior with high accuracy. The integration of these technologies into marketing strategies can lead to more efficient and effective campaigns, driving better results for businesses.

However, the adoption of AI and machine learning also brings challenges, including data privacy concerns and the need for significant investment in technology and skills development. Businesses must navigate these challenges carefully, ensuring that their use of technology aligns with ethical standards and regulatory requirements. Additionally, the human element in marketing—creativity, empathy, and relationship-building—remains irreplaceable, underscoring the importance of a balanced approach that combines technological innovation with human insight.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A market is a place where buyers and sellers gather to exchange goods and services, either physically or online through platforms like websites and apps. Marketing enhances the speed of these transactions, aiming to provide goods and services that meet customer needs and wants. With advancements in information technology and widespread internet access, marketing is transitioning from traditional methods to digital approaches. Organizations adopting new marketing technologies can better communicate with customers and deliver products and services more effectively[1].

Digitalization, particularly through Industry 4.0, has significantly impacted the production and service sectors, leading to new business models. This shift affects marketing processes, necessitating the integration of the 7P's of marketing with Industry 4.0 elements. This study uses the best-worst method (BWM) to prioritize criteria for integrating these elements, revealing that product, process, and physical evidence are the most affected. The findings provide valuable managerial insights for future marketing strategies within the context of Industry 4.0 [2].

This article examines the impact of strategic orientations on digital marketing tactics and international business performance of small electronic retailers (e-retailers) in cross-border e-commerce. Analyzing data from 446 e-retailers in 20 European countries, it finds that digital marketing positively affects international business performance. Foreign market orientation is closely linked to digital marketing use, while growth orientation benefits e-retailers in developed markets and customer orientation negatively affects those in emerging markets. These findings highlight the need to consider market-specific strategies in e-commerce [3].

Marketing has always been customer-centric, with strategies evolving from traditional to digital methods. Digital marketing, or e-marketing, aims to increase sales, generate leads, improve customer retention, and enhance brand awareness while reducing costs. It includes tools like social media marketing and targeted online promotions. Traditional marketing methods, such as newspaper ads and TV commercials, require significant time and budget. The rise of digital marketing is driven by internet and social media penetration, enabling direct interaction with audiences and efficient brand message delivery [4].

This paper discusses current and future marketing trends, based on recent literature and secondary data. It highlights India's shift towards digitalization, with consumers increasingly using the internet to find the best deals. Digital marketing methods such as SEO, SEM, content marketing, and social media marketing offer substantial benefits to businesses. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding consumer motives and the effectiveness of different internet marketing techniques across various businesses. It suggests that

knowing the target market's preferred social media sites is crucial for successful online marketing and proposes further research to compare internet marketing techniques for specific businesses [5].

This internship report focuses on both traditional and digital marketing strategies, policies, and practices at Navana LPG Ltd., a subsidiary of Navana Group. The report examines how digital marketing, which uses various forms of electronic media to advance brands, is quickly overtaking traditional marketing methods due to its faster, more flexible, and practical nature. It emphasizes that companies not adapting to digital marketing risk obsolescence, and increased investment in digital media is needed for better brand visibility. The main aim is to balance traditional marketing activities with digital marketing approaches at Navana LPG [6].

Marketing, although one of the oldest professions, continues to evolve, capturing the attention of businesses worldwide. Traditional marketing methods like newspaper ads and TV commercials are being overtaken by e-marketing due to the latter's efficiency and reach. E-marketing, which includes tools like social media and online promotions, helps businesses to increase sales, generate leads, improve customer retention, and enhance brand awareness while reducing costs. This paper compares traditional marketing with e-marketing, highlighting the shift towards digital methods [7].

Business innovation is evident across all sectors, including marketing, where conventional methods are evolving into non-conventional techniques with the incorporation of Artificial Intelligence (AI). This research studies the evolution of AI in marketing and customer perspectives towards AI adoption. A survey reveals that while there is significant interest in AI marketing, its full implementation will take time. The study concludes that both consumers and companies need more time to adapt to AI in marketing fully [8].

Selecting effective advertising campaigns is essential for organizations, especially with the shift from traditional to digital marketing methods. This chapter investigates the impact of e-marketing and outdoor media advertising on consumer buying behavior in Pakistan's electronic products market. The findings reveal that while both methods influence buying behavior, e-marketing has a stronger positive impact. The chapter offers managerial implications and suggests further studies for academics and practitioners to explore e-marketing's growing trend [9].

In emerging markets, firms face challenges with the burgeoning use of the internet and digital sales platforms. This study develops a model to analyze the influence of various digital communication methods on B2B sales in Brazil. Findings indicate that owned media and digital inbound marketing significantly impact customer acquisition, complemented by earned social media. The study highlights the need for tailored digital strategies in emerging markets, encouraging managers to rethink their approach to digital marketing for B2B customer acquisition [10].

The increasing use of social media and smartphones has revolutionized marketing, with businesses focusing more on branding and promotion through social networks. This paper compares various social media platforms, analyzing their user bases, ratings, and reviews. It explores how social media has changed communication between consumers and marketers, emphasizing the need for businesses to adapt to technological changes quickly to stay competitive in a globalized world [11].

The internet age has led to the replacement of old marketing methods with new digital marketing techniques. This paper compares traditional marketing with digital marketing, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of each. It highlights how "desk research" has evolved into "online research" and how digital marketing methods are becoming more prominent in product promotion and marketing [12].

Understanding consumer behavior in media advertising helps companies target their marketing effectively. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, research shows that telecommunication users pay more attention to marketing messages through online media, especially social networks, followed by TV, billboards, and other channels.

This paper provides insights into consumer behavior in the dynamic telecom sector of BiH, highlighting the preferred marketing communication mediums [13].

This paper explores digital marketing opportunities in tourism, with a focus on Africa. It uses an integrative literature review and content analysis to examine digital marketing trends and their application in promoting African tourism. The findings reveal that digital media, content, and mobile advertising present significant opportunities for Africa to market its attractions in the digital era [14].

The paper investigates the impact of digital marketing capabilities on the market performance of SME agro-processors in Harare, Zimbabwe. Using a survey of 298 managers and owners, it finds that digital strategy development and execution, market innovation, e-market sensing, and leadership capabilities positively influence intermediate outcomes like customer awareness and brand associations. However, only digital strategy development and execution significantly impact final outcomes such as sales growth and profitability, emphasizing the need for SMEs to develop comprehensive digital marketing capabilities for sustainable business success [15].

This chapter examines the attitudes of Chinese B2B customers toward traditional and internet marketing approaches, with a focus on Western companies entering the Chinese market. An empirical survey of B2B businesses in Jiangsu province assesses receptivity to various marketing channels. The study finds that internet use is widespread among Chinese management groups, but effectiveness varies based on prior experience with foreign firms. This research provides implications for both academic studies and practical marketing strategies for Western companies in China [16].

This study compares the effectiveness of online media and traditional advertising for promoting tourism in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Despite KZN's success in hosting major events, visitor numbers have declined, highlighting the need for effective promotion. Traditionally reliant on media like TV and billboards, tourism marketing is shifting towards online advertising due to advances in network technologies. The rise of online media has revolutionized business promotion, raising concerns about the competitiveness of traditional media. This study aims to guide tourism marketers in choosing effective media channels [17].

As data complexity grows, content marketers need to understand machine learning (ML) applications. This study compares three ML techniques—Random Forest, K-Nearest Neighbor, and Neural Network—for classifying online news articles. The Neural Network model, with an F1 Score of 70%, performs best and effectively labels unstructured data from websites and YouTube. This research contributes to marketing literature by evaluating ML models for content classification and demonstrating cross-channel applicability, suggesting ML can optimize content tagging across platforms [18].

Digital marketing's share of total marketing spend is increasing, but many companies lack clear methods to evaluate its effectiveness. This paper reviews existing evaluation methods, assesses their strengths and weaknesses through expert interviews, and explores their practical applications. The conversion evaluation method is most commonly used due to its direct link to business goals like sales. The study highlights the need for specific evaluation methods tailored to different marketing objectives and offers recommendations for their practical use [19].

In the digital age, enterprises use digital marketing to enhance customer loyalty and competitive advantage. This study investigates digital marketing strategies of national and international airline companies, focusing on email marketing, web marketing, social media marketing, and mobile applications. Findings show that airlines are adapting to changing customer expectations by using digital tools effectively. The study emphasizes the importance of using the right digital marketing strategies to differentiate and compete in the airline industry [20].

This paper explores opportunities and challenges for firms in developing effective international marketing strategies using digital technologies. It considers factors such as internal company requirements, external environmental conditions, foreign market selection, and strategy implementation. The study highlights the role of online resources in influencing market entry decisions and marketing strategy choices. It explains how digital technologies can facilitate foreign market selection and improve the implementation and control of international marketing strategies [21].

Table 1. Review of Literature

Serial	Author(s)	Title	Advantage	Disadvantage	Application
1	Bharti, P. K., & Kumar, A. (2020)	Traditional vs. Digital marketing: a comparative study	Comprehensive comparison of traditional and digital marketing methods.	May lack in-depth analysis of specific industries or contexts.	Useful for understanding the fundamental differences and applications of each marketing strategy.
2	Caliskan, A., Özkan Özen, Y. D., & Ozturkoglu, Y.	Digital transformation of traditional marketing business model in new industry era	Highlights the shift towards digital marketing in the new industrial era.	Focuses mainly on theoretical aspects, may lack practical examples.	Provides insights into how traditional businesses can transition to digital marketing models.
3	Goldman, S. P., van Herk, H., Verhagen, T., & Weltevreden, J. W.	Strategic orientations and digital marketing tactics in cross-border e-commerce: Comparing developed and emerging markets	Offers a comparative analysis of digital marketing tactics in developed and emerging markets.	Limited to the e-commerce sector, may not be generalizable to all industries.	Valuable for businesses looking to expand internationally, especially in e-commerce.
4	Sinha, R. (2018)	A comparative analysis of traditional marketing vs digital marketing	Detailed comparison with historical context.	May not cover the latest trends and innovations in digital marketing.	Useful for academic purposes and historical analysis of marketing strategies.
5	Bala, M., & Verma, D. (2018)	A critical review of digital marketing	In-depth review of digital marketing practices and trends.	Focuses primarily on digital marketing, with less emphasis on traditional methods.	Useful for digital marketers looking to understand current trends and best practices.
6	Sakib, N.	Roles of Digital	Provides a real-	Case study may	Practical insights

	(2019)	marketing vs traditional marketing communication a perspective on Navana LPG Ltd.	world case study on the effectiveness of digital marketing.	not be applicable to all industries or markets.	for businesses considering a shift to digital marketing.
7	Geetha, S. (2018)	A Comparative Study on Traditional Marketing and E-Marketing	Highlights the key differences and similarities between traditional and digital marketing.	May not delve deeply into the strategic implications of these differences.	Useful for beginners and students in marketing.
8	Khokhar, P. (2019)	Evolution of artificial intelligence in marketing, comparison with traditional marketing	Explores the role of AI in transforming marketing strategies.	Focuses heavily on AI, may not provide a balanced view of traditional marketing.	Insights into the future of marketing with AI integration.
9	Waheed, A., Yang, J., Khan, I. U., Khan, S. U., & Farrukh, M. (2018)	The Comparison Between Traditional vs. Advanced Means of Marketing Communications	Compares traditional marketing with advanced digital marketing methods.	May not provide detailed case studies or industry-specific examples.	Useful for understanding the evolution of marketing communications.
10	Vieira, V. A., de Almeida, M. I. S., Agnihotri, R., da Silva, N. S. D. A. C., & Arunachalam, S. (2019)	In pursuit of an effective B2B digital marketing strategy in an emerging market	Focuses on digital marketing strategies in B2B contexts within emerging markets.	Limited to B2B markets, may not be relevant to B2C strategies.	Practical guidance for B2B marketers in emerging markets.
11	Bhosale, J., & Phadtare, R. G. (2019)	Is social network marketing a disruption to traditional marketing?	Discusses the disruptive impact of social media on traditional marketing.	Focuses mainly on social media, may overlook other aspects of digital marketing.	Relevant for businesses leveraging social media for marketing.
12	Lawrence, S., Deshmukh, S., & Navajivan, E. (2018)	A comparative study of digital marketing vs. traditional marketing	Provides a balanced comparison of both marketing methods.	May lack in-depth analysis of the latest digital marketing tools and platforms.	Useful for understanding the broad differences between traditional and digital marketing.
13	Tarik, Z., & Adnan, S.	Online vs traditional;	Specific to the telecom industry,	Findings may not be	Useful for telecom companies and

	(2018)	marketing challenge in the telecom market in Bosnia and Herzegovina	providing detailed insights.	generalizable to other industries.	those interested in industry-specific marketing challenges.
14	Mkwizu, K. H. (2020)	Digital marketing and tourism: opportunities for Africa	Explores the potential of digital marketing in promoting tourism in Africa.	Focused on a specific region, may not apply to global contexts.	Practical insights for tourism marketers in Africa.
15	Phiri, M. (2020)	Impact of digital marketing capabilities on market performance of small to medium enterprise agro-processors in Harare, Zimbabwe	Examines the impact of digital marketing on SMEs in a developing market context.	Limited to SMEs and a specific geographic region, may not be widely applicable.	Useful for SMEs in developing markets looking to enhance their digital marketing capabilities.
16	Cooley, J. (2018)	Introduction: Business-to-Business Marketing in China: Digital or Traditional?	Focuses on B2B marketing strategies in the Chinese market.	Limited to the Chinese market, findings may not be generalizable.	Valuable for businesses looking to enter or expand in the Chinese B2B market.
17	Madondo, E. (2018)	A comparative analysis of the performance of traditional advertising media and online media for the promotion of tourism in KwaZulu-Natal	Provides a detailed comparison in the tourism sector, offering practical insights.	Focused on a specific region and industry.	Useful for tourism marketers in KwaZulu-Natal and similar regions.
18	Salminen, J., Yoganathan, V., Corporan, J., Jansen, B. J., & Jung, S. G. (2019)	Machine learning approach to auto-tagging online content for content marketing efficiency: A comparative analysis between methods and content type	Compares ML techniques for improving content marketing efficiency.	Highly technical, may not be accessible to all marketing professionals.	Useful for content marketers looking to leverage machine learning.
19	Gaitniece, E. (2018)	Digital marketing performance evaluation methods	Reviews various methods for evaluating digital marketing	May lack detailed case studies or practical	Useful for marketers seeking to understand and implement

			performance.	examples.	performance evaluation techniques.
20	Karaağaoğlu, N., & Çiçek, M. (2019)	An evaluation of digital marketing applications in airline sector	Focuses on digital marketing strategies in the airline industry.	Limited to the airline sector, findings may not be applicable to other industries.	Practical insights for digital marketers in the airline industry.
21	Katsikeas, C., Leonidou, L., & Zeriti, A. (2020)	Revisiting international marketing strategy in a digital era: Opportunities, challenges, and research directions	Discusses the impact of digital technologies on international marketing strategies.	Broad focus, may not provide detailed industry-specific insights.	Useful for businesses developing or refining their international marketing strategies.

III. RESEARCH GAP

Despite the growing importance of digital marketing across various sectors, significant research gaps remain. There is a need for more comprehensive studies comparing the effectiveness of traditional and online media in different contexts, such as tourism and international marketing. While machine learning applications in content classification have shown promise, further exploration is needed to optimize these technologies for broader marketing uses. Additionally, there is a lack of clear, universally accepted methods for evaluating digital marketing effectiveness, especially in emerging markets and specific industries like agro-processing and airlines. Understanding how digital strategies can be tailored to enhance customer loyalty and market performance in diverse geographical and sectoral contexts remains underexplored. Addressing these gaps would provide valuable insights for businesses to effectively navigate the evolving digital marketing landscape and maximize their strategic outcomes.

IV. CONCLUSION

the comparative analysis of traditional marketing versus digital marketing strategies reveals a complex and evolving landscape. Both approaches have unique strengths and limitations, and their effectiveness can vary based on industry, target market, and specific business goals. While digital marketing offers unparalleled precision, cost-effectiveness, and measurability, traditional marketing continues to provide broad reach and credibility. A hybrid approach that integrates both strategies can often deliver the best results, leveraging the strengths of each to create a cohesive and impactful marketing plan. As technology continues to advance, businesses must remain agile, continuously adapting their marketing strategies to meet the changing needs and preferences of consumers. This ongoing evolution will ensure that they can effectively engage their audience, build brand loyalty, and drive sustainable growth in an increasingly competitive market.

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