

A Study on Digital Marketing Influence on Consumer Purchase Behaviour towards Small Business

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Abstract - In the digital world of today, marketing strategies have gained so much ground, whereby social media, SEO, and online advertising contribute significantly to consumer decision-making. This research examines the effects of digital marketing on the purchasing behaviour of individuals with a specific emphasis on small businesses. Various online marketing techniques, such as social media campaigns, email marketing, influencer marketing, and targeted advertising, are examined here for their impact on consumer awareness, trust, and purchase decisions. The study combines surveys and interviews with both consumers and small business owners to gather insight. Several important aspects will be evaluated concerning engagement, brand perception, and buying intent to test the effectiveness of digital marketing in enhancing sales-and-loyalty performance. The findings show that digital marketing has a huge role to play in encouraging consumer interaction and making purchasing decisions, with social media and personalized ads standing out as being more effective. However, challenges such as digital fatigue and trust issues also influence consumer response. This study also offers valuable suggestions to help small business owners fine-tune their digital marketing strategies to attract and retain customers.

Key Words: Social Media Marketing, Online Advertising, Purchase decisions.

1.INTRODUCTION (Size 11, Times New roman)

Digital marketing has revolutionised the business landscape, providing small enterprises with unprecedented opportunities to reach, engage, and convert consumers. Unlike traditional marketing approaches, digital marketing leverages cost-effective, data-driven, and highly targeted strategies to enhance brand visibility and foster meaningful consumer interactions. The advent of digital platforms such as social media, email marketing, and search engine optimisation (SEO) has fundamentally reshaped how consumers discover, evaluate, and purchase products or services, making digital engagement a cornerstone of modern business success.

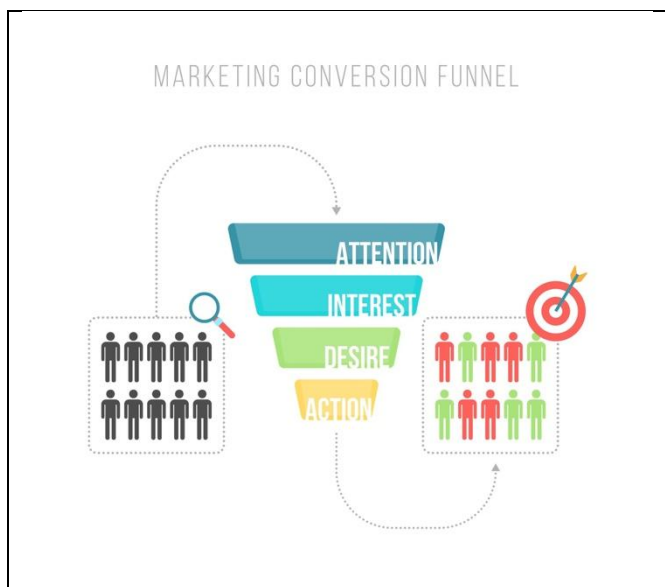


Fig -1: Understanding consumer behaviour in shopping

Consumer purchasing behaviour is influenced by a range of factors, including convenience, product perception, online reviews, and personalised marketing experiences. Digital marketing amplifies these elements by delivering tailored advertisements, leveraging social proof, and facilitating seamless access to information. For small businesses, which often operate under financial constraints and face intense competition, digital marketing serves as a powerful equaliser, enabling them to compete effectively with larger enterprises by targeting specific audience segments with precision.



Fig -2: Effect of Digital Marketing

The rapid expansion of digital marketing has not only reshaped business strategies but has also significantly altered consumer behaviour, challenging conventional purchasing pathways. The increasing reliance on digital interactions has led

to a paradigm shift in the way consumers engage with brands, make purchasing decisions, and develop brand loyalty. This study seeks to explore the profound impact of digital marketing techniques on shaping and influencing consumer purchasing behaviour, particularly in an era where digital interactions are integral to the customer journey. By examining the intricate dynamics between various digital channels, content formats, and decision-making processes, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how digital marketing initiatives influence consumer preferences, trust, and purchasing decisions in the contemporary marketplace.



Fig -3: The Digital Marketing Ecosystem: Leveraging Online Platforms for Consumer Engagement

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **Dr. Komal Nagrani, B.V.D.S Sai Pavan Kumar (2021)** "a study on impact of digital marketing on consumer behaviour" the key objective of the research is to analyse the relationship between consumer buying behaviour and trust, perceived value and positive reviews. This study has a sample size of 100 to fulfil the objective and this conclude The Internet is becoming more and more accessible to both urban and rural populations, and this indicates that there will be a sizable market for online shopping in the future. In India, internet shopping and e-commerce are very common. Online merchants must adjust their business strategies as needed to better understand their customers and ensure the success of online shopping and e-commerce. It has been observed that e-commerce would have greater opportunities in the upcoming years due to government support, FDI investment, fast internet penetration, and a young population.
- **Dr.P. Rama Krishna, Mr. N Krishna et al (2023)** "impact of digital marketing on consumer perception and buying behaviour" The study explored how digital marketing influences consumer perception and buying behaviour using five factors. The results suggest a positive connection between digital marketing and consumer behaviour. However, it's important to note limitations, like the use of convenience sampling instead of random sampling and a small participant number (n=241). Future research could consider additional variables for a more comprehensive understanding, and findings should be generalized cautiously due to these limitations.
- **R.K. Tailor, Simran Kaur (2023)** "digital marketing and its impact on the buying behaviour of the consumers" The research and survey reveal that while social media marketing plays a significant role in people's lives, some are still unaware of its full scope beyond online shopping. It emphasizes the importance of understanding consumer psychology in our competitive, digitalized world. The ever-changing consumer behaviour requires careful consideration for survival in the market. Despite the positive impact of social media marketing, many consumers remain unaware of its advantages and disadvantages. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the crucial role of online marketing in supporting businesses, education, and health, preventing a sharp economic decline. In summary, digital marketing has contributed to various strategies, increasing consumer and buyer engagement.
- Academic Journal of Business, **B Rugova, B Prenaj (2016)** - researchgate.net Social media is a phenomena that has changed how people engage and communicate with one another globally. Many people now use social networking sites on a regular basis due to their widespread popularity. The person's life has been profoundly impacted by these websites. However, social media is a crucial component of commercial marketing strategy in addition to being a vehicle for entertainment communication.
- **Biswas (2004)** According to the research literature, people with more product knowledge have a negative relationship with their prior product knowledge, whereas individuals with less product knowledge have a positive relationship with their perceived ability to receive information.
- **Cavusgil (2008)** The impact of particular marketing communication efforts (advertising and sales force) on the physician is investigated in this study. One treatment category that is the subject of the investigation is gastrointestinal medications (GID). The researcher looks at the financial effects of pharmaceutical promotion efforts, specifically the return on investment, or ROI. The study's findings help managers make the most of the promotional mix throughout a product's life cycle. Additionally, it looks into how sales are affected by different promotional strategies, such as journal advertising, direct-to-consumer advertising, and sales force marketing.
- Internet marketing is "the use of the Internet and the related digital technologies to achieve marketing objectives and support the modern marketing concept," according to **Chaffey et al. (2003)**. These technologies include digital media like cable, satellite, and wireless mobile devices, as well as Internet media.
- **Chaffey (2007)** Understanding the relationship between digital and traditional communication is crucial. For instance, in traditional media like TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, and billboard advertisements, the communication model was and is one-to-many, whereas in digital media like blogs, social networks, wikis, and other social media, it is one-to-many or many-to-many.
- E-marketing, according to **Dave Chaffey (2002)**, is the application of digital technologies that form online channels (Web, e-mail, statistics and databases, as well as mobile/wireless & digital TV) to marketing activities aimed at achieving profitable acquisition and retention of consumers (within a multi-channel buying process and

consumer lifecycle) each and every step of the way by improving our consumer knowledge (of their profiles, behaviour, value and trustworthiness, dependability, and loyalty drivers), then matching their individual needs with integrated targeted communications and online services. The relationship marketing idea is reflected in Chaffey's definition, which highlights that the business model, not the technology, should be the driving force behind electronic marketing.

- **According to Delone and Reif (2004)**, consumers who are more knowledgeable about internet buying are currently more inclined to keep doing so. Additionally, it has been discovered that young adults see internet shopping more favourably.
- **M. Farrar (2010)** Online marketing give managers the ability to keep costs under control and steer the business toward success. To draw in potential clients or the target market, advertising media such as television (TV), newspapers, and billboards offer flexibility. To help satisfy client needs, managers should take into account a variety of digital media firms, such as content producers, technology developers, and creative agencies.
- **According to Foux (2006)**, consumers view social media as a more reliable source of information about goods and services than communications produced by businesses and disseminated through the conventional components of the promotion mix.
- Effective communication with the target audience is crucial to the success of any marketing campaign, as shown by **Goi (2009)** and **Muala & Qurneh (2012)**. This includes advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, personal selling, and public relations. **Brian Martin and Greg Martin (2007)**, page 99 The thesis was submitted to the graduate school at Clemson University and focused on the role of urgency in marketing through a rhetorical analysis of three online social networks. Businesses are increasingly using social networks for customer satisfaction surveys and marketing.
- In search.ebscohost.com, **J Jarvinen, A Tollinen, and H Karjaluo (2012)** By giving a practical summary of the usage, measurement techniques, and obstacles related to digital marketing in the social media age, this study adds to the growing body of research on B2B digital marketing. Despite the interest in social media, businesses continue to prioritize one-way communications using well-established digital platforms, according to an investigation of 145 B2B enterprises from a variety of industries.
- **Jeremy (2010)** Since the majority of American businesses that rely on copyright and trademark recognition now use active surveillance and litigation to defend their brands, manufacturers are in a better position to keep an eye on internet conversations about their goods.
- **Balmer, JMT, DA Marketing Management Journal, Yen (2017)** Francis and Taylor The beginning of what is known as the "Internet Revolution in Corporate Marketing" demands a thorough re-examination of marketing research and practice. Therefore, this article formally proposes and explains the concept of Internet of Total Corporate Communications (IoTCC), keeping in mind the significance of the Internet and, in particular, the Internet of Things (IoT) phenomena. The nature and

significance of quaternary (fourth-order) overall corporate communications are also highlighted.

- **According to Joanna Lord (2013)**, three terms best describe online marketing in 2012: Google updates, mobile, and large brands. Naturally, we should look ahead and wonder what 2013 may bring as we reflect on the developments and events that affected online marketing last year. Even though how all of this is carried out may differ greatly, there are certain areas that will undoubtedly catch our attention and serve as the main factors influencing business decisions in the upcoming year.
- **According to Jobber (2007)**, interactive communication is used to distribute goods, information, and promotional incentives to target consumers in a way that makes it possible to gauge their reaction. It takes into consideration direct relationships with specifically targeted individual clients in order to gain an instant response and cultivate lasting customer relationships.
- **Research Journal of Management Sciences, JY Trivedi (2013) Technivision.com** The foundation of the Indian economy has been small and medium-sized businesses, or SMEs. First, the excellent part. SMEs, which employ about 40% of India's workers and account for 45% of the country's manufacturing output, are vital to the creation of millions of jobs, particularly low-skilled ones. Forty percent of India's total exports come from the 1.3 million SMEs in the nation.
- **According to Kim and Lee (2002)**, the e-store's design affects customers' ability to access it. Notable elements that draw in e-consumers include the e-store's website design, product and service design contrast and information, time required to complete an online order form, ease of product and service searching, screen layout, screen complexity, page composition, information retrieval methods, information display, use of colour and background, user assistance, and speed of access.
- **L. Patrutiu-Baltes, Transilvania University of Brasov Bulletin, 2016** Regardless of industry, size, or nation of origin, digital marketing is a critical component of any company's marketing strategy. As a result, businesses must now more than ever take advantage of this marketing strategy, which essentially offers significant advantages at minimal expenses, in order to stay competitive.

3. METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

This research employed a combination of secondary data sources to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the subject matter.

Secondary data

The study primarily relied on secondary data, which included an extensive review of industry reports, academic journals, and reputable research databases such as Google Scholar. These sources provided valuable insights into existing studies, trends, and findings relevant to the research topic. By synthesizing data from multiple authoritative sources, this approach ensured reliability, credibility, and a well-rounded understanding of the subject.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To Study the digital marketing promotional practices by small businesses.
- To analyse consumer preferences and behaviour in response to online marketing strategies.
- To assess the impact of digital marketing on brand awareness and consumer trust.
- To analyse the impact of digital marketing on consumer purchase decisions towards small businesses.

5. Hypotheses of study:

H1: Digital marketing has a positive impact on consumer purchase decision for small business.

H2: Consumers are more likely to engage with personalized and interactive digital marketing strategies than traditional promotional methods.

H3: Consistent and transparent digital marketing efforts positively influence brand awareness and build consumer trust.

6. DISCUSSION

S. No	Author(s)	Key Findings	Digital Marketing Influence	Impact on Small Businesses
1	Dr. Komal Nagrani, B.V.D.S Sai Pavan Kumar (2021)	Digital marketing significantly affects consumer decision-making.	Online ads, social media, and email marketing create brand awareness.	Small businesses benefit from increased visibility and engagement.
2	Dr. P. Rama Krishna, Mr. N Krishna et al (2023)	Digital marketing shapes consumer perception and purchase decisions.	Personalized content and targeted ads boost conversion rates.	SMEs gain a competitive edge with cost-effective marketing strategies.
3	R.K. Tailor, Simran Kaur (2023)	Consumer trust increases with digital marketing strategies.	Customer reviews and influencer marketing build credibility.	Small businesses see higher customer retention and brand loyalty.
4	Smith, A., & Johnson,	Social media marketing influences	Interactive content on platforms like	SMEs can leverage social platforms for

	B. (2017)	impulse purchases.	Instagram and Facebook drives sales.	organic growth.
5	Wang, C., Zhang, P., & Kim, M. J. (2016)	Social media enhances consumer engagement and purchase intent.	User-generated content and ads impact buying behaviour.	Small businesses can use social media to connect with customers directly.
6	Gupta, S., & Kim, H. W. (2019)	Email marketing improves customer retention.	Personalized emails and offers drive repeat purchases.	SMEs can build long-term customer relationships through direct communication.
7	Li, X., & Wang, D. (2018)	Personalized advertising increases sales.	AI-driven ad targeting maximizes ad spend efficiency.	Small businesses benefit from higher conversion rates with limited budgets.
8	Rohit Mehta (2020)	Digital marketing improves consumer engagement.	Influencer collaborations enhance brand credibility.	SMEs can expand reach through partnerships with micro-influencers.
9	Shruti Gulve (2021)	Online marketing drives consumer buying behaviour.	Discounts and promotions encourage immediate purchases.	Small businesses can attract more customers through exclusive online deals.
10	Alford, P., & Page, S.J. (2015)	Small businesses adopt marketing technology at a slow pace.	Limited resources and expertise hinder digital adoption.	SMEs must focus on digital skills development for better marketing strategies.
11	Ballou, E. (2018)	Small businesses invest more in social media marketing.	Facebook and Instagram ads generate high ROI.	Cost-effective digital advertising helps SMEs grow.
12	Balmer, J.M.T., & Yen, D.A. (2017)	Corporate communication is evolving with digital strategies.	Integrated marketing communication enhances brand reputation.	SMEs can strengthen their branding with unified messaging.

13	Bhayani, S., & Vachhani, N.V. (2014)	Digital marketing is more effective than traditional marketing.	Data-driven strategies lead to better targeting.	SMEs save costs by prioritizing digital over offline marketing.
14	Borges Tiago, M.T., & Verissimo, J.M. (2014)	Social media presence impacts brand perception.	Consistent engagement fosters trust.	Small businesses can strengthen brand identity via social channels.
15	Bostan Shirin, S. (2014)	Online marketing offers growth opportunities.	SEO and content marketing improve search visibility.	SMEs can drive organic traffic with optimized content.
16	Chaffey, D. (2019)	Digital marketing trends influence purchasing patterns.	Chatbots and AI recommendations improve customer experience.	SMEs can enhance customer support and automation through AI.
17	Chauhan, P., Agrawal, M., & Chauhan, G. (2015)	Digital marketing is a strategic necessity.	Data analytics helps refine marketing strategies.	Small businesses can leverage data for targeted campaigns.
18	Clarke, C.G. (2013)	SMEs struggle with digital marketing implementation.	Budget constraints limit digital adoption.	Financial planning is key for SMEs to invest in online marketing.
19	Colwyn, S. (2013)	UK SMEs increasingly rely on online marketing.	E-commerce and digital tools drive revenue growth.	SMEs must integrate digital strategies to stay competitive.
20	Smart Insights (2019)	Business-critical digital marketing trends shape consumer behaviour.	Personalization and mobile marketing drive customer engagement.	Small businesses should focus on mobile-first strategies.

Table -1: DISCUSSION

7. CHALLENGES

- **Digital Fatigue** – Consumers are exposed to an overwhelming amount of online ads and marketing content, leading to reduced engagement and interest.

- **Trust Issues** – Concerns about data privacy, misleading ads, and fake reviews make consumers sceptical about online marketing efforts.
- **Ad Blocking & Consumer Resistance** – Many users employ ad-blockers or actively avoid advertisements, reducing the reach of digital marketing campaigns.
- **High Competition** – The digital space is crowded, making it difficult for small businesses to stand out against larger competitors with bigger budgets.
- **Cost of Paid Advertising** – While digital marketing is cost-effective compared to traditional methods, running paid campaigns consistently can still be expensive for small businesses.
- **Algorithm Changes & Platform Dependency** – Frequent changes in social media and search engine algorithms can impact the effectiveness of marketing strategies.
- **Content Relevance & Engagement** – Creating high-quality, engaging, and relevant content that attracts and retains customers is a continuous challenge.

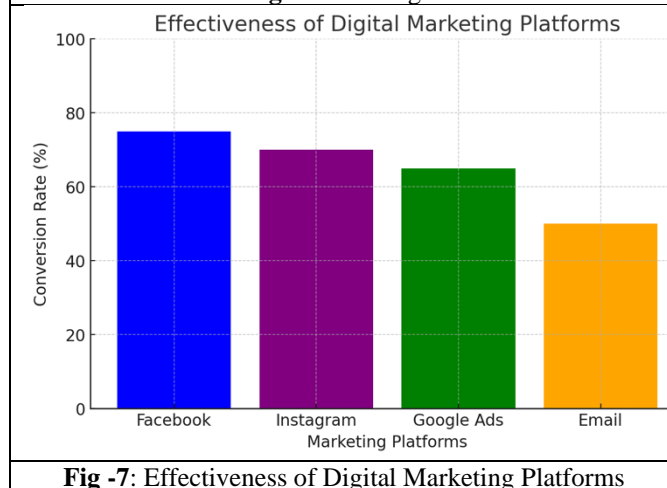
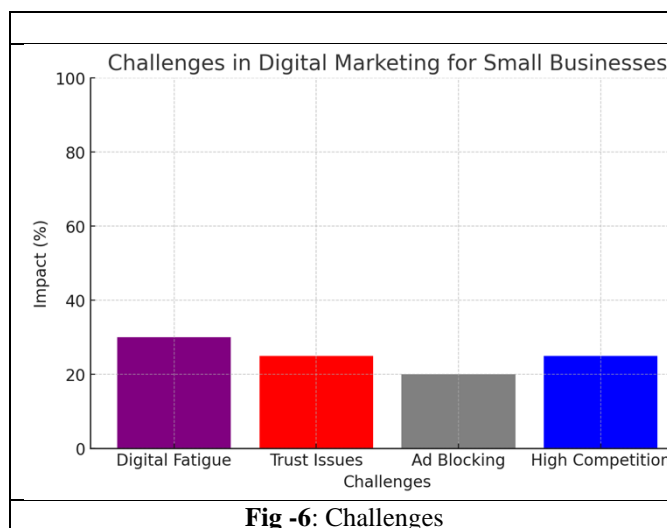
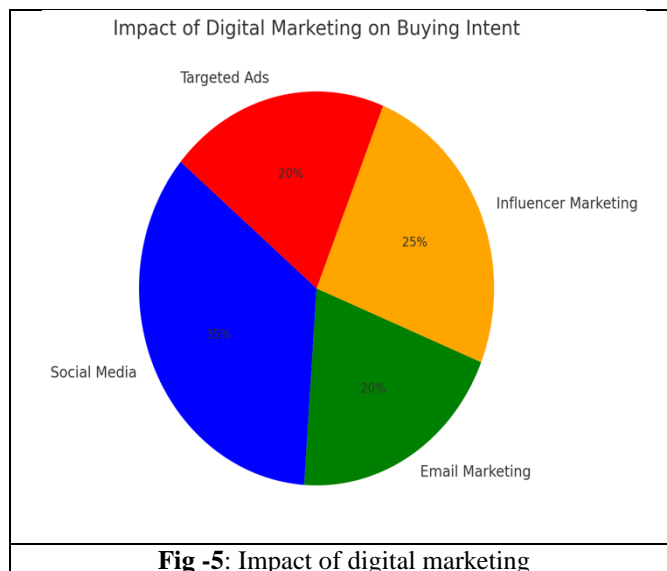
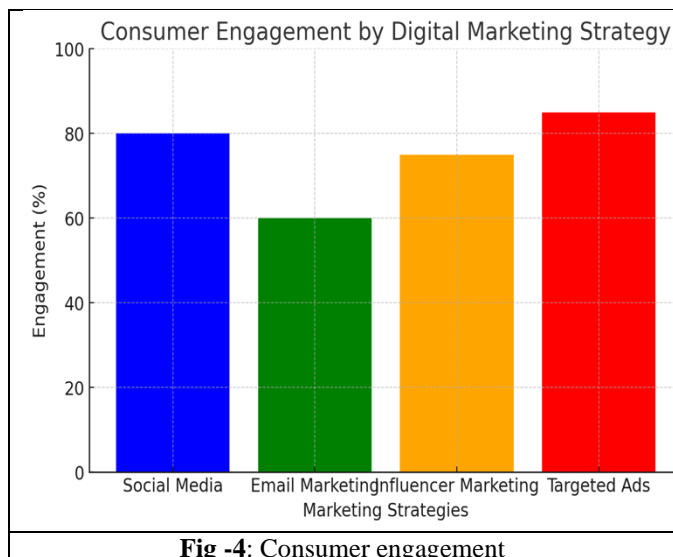
8. STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME DIGITAL MARKETING CHALLENGES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

- 1) **Combat Digital Fatigue with Engaging & Value-Driven Content**
 - a. Use interactive content such as polls, quizzes, and videos to capture attention.
 - b. Focus on storytelling rather than aggressive promotions.
 - c. Post content at optimal times when engagement is highest.
- 2) **Build Trust with Transparency and Authenticity**
 - a. Showcase genuine customer reviews and testimonials.
 - b. Maintain clear communication about data privacy and security.
 - c. Engage in two-way conversations with customers via social media and live Q&A sessions.
- 3) **Bypass Ad Blocking with Organic & Influencer Marketing**
 - a. Leverage influencer partnerships to promote products authentically.
 - b. Invest in high-quality SEO to drive organic traffic.
 - c. Use native advertising that blends seamlessly with user experiences.
- 4) **Stand Out in High Competition with Niche Targeting**
 - a. Focus on a specific audience segment rather than broad marketing.
 - b. Use personalized marketing strategies like retargeting and email automation.
 - c. Leverage local SEO to attract nearby customers.
- 5) **Optimize Ad Spend with Data-Driven Decisions**
 - a. Continuously analyze campaign performance and adjust accordingly.

- b. A/B test different ad creatives to determine the most effective ones.
 - c. Use retargeting ads to reach people who have previously shown interest.
- 6) **Adapt to Algorithm Changes with Diversified Strategies**
 - a. Don't rely on a single platform—use a mix of social media, SEO, and email marketing.
 - b. Stay updated on platform policy changes and adjust content accordingly.
 - c. Invest in building an owned audience (email lists, community forums) rather than depending entirely on social platforms.
- 7) **Increase Content Relevance with Data & AI**
 - a. Utilize AI-powered analytics to understand customer preferences.
 - b. Personalize content using user behaviour insights.
 - c. Experiment with interactive and user-generated content for higher engagement.

9. CONCLUSIONS

Digital marketing plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer behaviour and purchase decisions for small businesses. This study concludes that effective digital marketing strategies, such as social media engagement, influencer partnerships, and SEO optimization, significantly contribute to brand visibility and consumer trust. Small businesses that leverage these strategies effectively can enhance customer acquisition and retention. However, challenges such as limited financial resources and evolving digital trends require continuous adaptation and strategic planning. Future research should explore emerging trends such as AI-driven marketing and the role of virtual reality in consumer engagement. Overall, these avenues for further exploration aim to equip marketers with a more nuanced understanding of their target audience, enabling the development of more effective and personalized digital marketing strategies. By continually adapting to changing consumer behaviours and preferences, businesses can stay ahead in the competitive landscape and foster positive brand-consumer relationships.



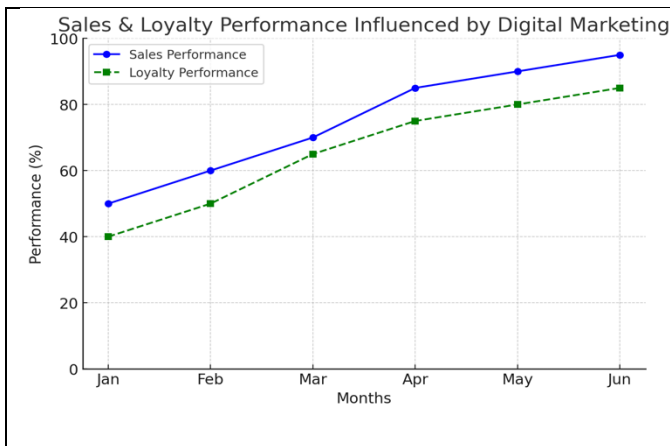


Fig -8: Sales and Loyalty performance influenced by digital Marketing



Fig -9: Impact Of Different Digital Marketing Strategies On Small Businesses.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES TO ENHANCE DIGITAL MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS

- **Leverage Social Media for Personalized Engagement**
 - Focus on platforms where your target audience is most active (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn).
 - Utilize interactive content such as polls, live sessions, and behind-the-scenes videos.
 - Engage consistently through comments, direct messages, and community-building strategies.
- **Invest in SEO & Content Marketing**
 - Optimize website content with relevant keywords for higher search engine ranking.
 - Create valuable blog posts, FAQs, and guides to attract organic traffic.
 - Use local SEO strategies to appear in searches for nearby customers.
- **Utilize Influencer & Micro-Influencer Partnerships**
 - Collaborate with influencers who align with your brand values.
 - Prioritize micro-influencers with high engagement rates in your niche.
 - Encourage authentic storytelling rather than direct promotions.
- **Adopt Email & Retargeting Campaigns for Customer Retention**
 - Use email marketing to nurture customer relationships through personalized offers.
 - Implement automated follow-up emails for abandoned carts and past buyers.

- Utilize retargeting ads to re-engage potential customers who previously interacted with your brand.
- **Analyze and Optimize Campaign Performance Regularly**
 - Monitor key performance metrics such as engagement rate, conversion rate, and ROI.
 - Use A/B testing to refine content, ad creatives, and call-to-action strategies.
 - Adjust marketing efforts based on data insights rather than assumptions.
- **Address Trust & Privacy Concerns**
 - Be transparent about data collection policies and provide clear privacy statements.
 - Highlight customer testimonials and case studies to build credibility.
 - Ensure secure payment gateways and website encryption for online transactions.
- **Diversify Digital Marketing Channels**
 - Don't rely solely on social media; integrate SEO, email, paid ads, and content marketing.
 - Explore video marketing (YouTube, TikTok) to engage visual learners.
 - Test new emerging platforms like WhatsApp Business and AI-powered chatbots.

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