

Evaluating the Usefulness and Challenges of Digital Marketing Platforms: Evidence from an Empirical Study.

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Abstract:

Introduction The rapid development of digital technology has changed marketing strategies as it allows companies to interact with consumers via social media, search engine optimization, website development, email marketing. Nevertheless, it is more effective to use these services than just because of their perceived usefulness and also due to adoption and usage issues. This research empirically assesses the effectiveness and limitations of digital marketing tools from a user's/business perspective. The primary data should be gathered by means of an organized survey covering aspects like customer reach, communication effectiveness, advertising effectiveness, customer engagement, cost-effectiveness, accessibility issues like privacy concerns, cyber security threats; information overload; changing algorithms; technical limitations; and lack of digital skills. Descriptive statistics and appropriate inferential techniques may be used for analyzing perception and relationship among variables studied. The results will be to find out some of those key factors affecting perceived usefulness for digital marketing tools; also, to determine how significant is it to users' experience with them. Existing empirical evidence shows that perceived usefulness, ease of use, and compatibility can positively influence digital and social media marketing adoption, while costs and organizational constraints may act as barriers. **Discussion/Conclusion** The research contributes to the growing literature on digital marketing through providing empirical evidence of its advantages and limitations of digital marketing platforms. These results will help business owners and advertisers choose suitable websites; develop a successful online marketing strategy; improve customer relations; overcome technological limitations.

Keywords: Digital Marketing; Digital Marketing Platforms; Perceived Usefulness; Marketing Effectiveness; Customer Engagement; Adoption Challenges

Introduction:

Digital technology is rapidly changing how businesses interact with consumers; advertise goods/services; develop brands and market products/services. Social media sites, search engine optimization, websites, email marketing, online marketplaces, and mobile applications are some of these channels that help reach out to target audience effectively through interaction. Unlike conventional advertising, social media allows businesses to interact with clients on-line; track feedback from consumers; tailor advertisements according to individual needs; measure success through quantifiable metrics. Thus, digital marketing is one of today's most significant components to marketing strategies.

Digital marketing has been increasingly important to India due to its high internet usage rate along with social media usage. DataReportal reported 806 million internet users and 491 million social-media user identities in India in January 2025, showing the vast digital landscape available to businesses and marketers. The expanding digital landscape provides a chance of improving market penetration, customer engagement, brand awareness and advertising effectiveness for a company.

Previous studies show that social media and other digital platforms can facilitate customer engagement, electronic word-of-mouth, customer relationship management, advertising, and brand development. Similarly, Li et al. (2021) highlight

that social media marketing strategies can encompass social commerce, social content, social monitoring, and social customer relationship management, indicating the strategic diversity of digital platforms. Empirical evidence from Indian SMEs also shows that perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and compatibility positively affect the impact of social media marketing whereas cost negatively affects adoption.

However, there are some disadvantages associated with it. Privacy issues; security concerns; changing algorithm of social media platforms; competition with other websites for user's attention; content management issues; technological requirements; need of specialised digital skills. Therefore, availability to digital marketing tools does not guarantee success with advertising campaigns.

In fact, this paper is concerned with evaluating digital marketing tools' efficacy and limitations from a user's perspective; it also addresses issues related to its accessibility and usage by consumers. This research aims at providing evidence-based information which will help organization to develop better, faster and greener e-marketing strategies.

Review of Literature:

The increasing significance of digital marketing is why there is a lot of study on its usefulness, effectiveness, adoption and challenges of a digital platform. The existing literature provides theoretical and empirical basis for studying them.

Alalwan et al. (2017) systematically reviewed 144 studies on social media marketing and identified major research themes, including advertising, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), customer relationship management, branding, and organisational performance. This study revealed that social media has become more than a means for communication; it's an effective way to advertise products/services better and improve business performance significantly.

Chatterjee and Kar surveyed social media marketing adoption among Indian SMEs through a survey of 310 firms and structural equation modeling. Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and compatibility positively affect the impact of social media marketing whereas cost has a significant negative effect. Also, it had a positive effect on business productivity and sales; customer relationship management effectiveness; and understanding customers' needs after adoption.

Li, Larimo, and Leonidou developed a comprehensive framework for social media marketing strategy and classified strategies into four categories social commerce, social content, social monitoring, and social customer relationship management. Research shows that success with a digital platform is more about integrating it strategically to marketing rather than just implementing it.

Shankar et al. (2022) reviewed digital marketing communication across B2C, B2B, C2C, and C2B contexts. Their focus was to choose appropriate mediums; create relevant information; set goals for communications; evaluate customer response that shows multidimensionality of digital marketing effectiveness.

Wiggins researched online customer engagement and stressed its significance to understand antecedents and metrics of digital customer interaction. This study states that quality products/services and customer relationship management strategies must be implemented for building an effective client base on-line.

Research Gap:

There are still some problems despite much research about digital marketing adoption and its impact on organizational performance. Previous studies have shown that perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, compatibility, and cost affect the adoption and effectiveness of social media marketing among Indian SMEs. However, most of this study is concerned with adoption factors and business outcomes rather than perceived usefulness and practical issues related to various forms of digital marketing.

Recent Indian studies show that companies know some advantages to digital marketing such as cost reduction, time saving, market expansion, customer feedback, and better visibility. However, there is also a lack of education and training; safety issues; legal problems; shortage of qualified staff members; limited funds availability; and lack of

computer skills. Also technological readiness, organizational support, cost and skill are some of those that affect digital marketing adoption among Indian SMEs.

Therefore, there is an area for research to develop an integrated empirical understanding of what users find useful on digital marketing platforms and what challenges they face while using them. This paper aims to fill this gap by reviewing digital marketing tools' effectiveness and limitations based upon primary research findings and statistics analysis.

Research Objectives:

- For evaluating perceived usefulness and effectiveness of digital marketing tools towards increasing customer base, interaction rate with customers.
- For identifying major issues faced by consumers while adopting and utilizing digital marketing tools effectively.
- For analyzing relationship between perceived usefulness, challenges and effectiveness of digital marketing tools.

Hypotheses of the Study:

- **H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between the perceived usefulness of digital marketing platforms and their effectiveness.
- **H₀₂:** There is no significant relationship between the challenges associated with digital marketing platforms and their effectiveness.
- **H₀₃:** There is no significant relationship between the perceived usefulness and the challenges associated with digital marketing platforms.

Research Methodology:

This research paper is based upon description and empirical study for evaluating effectiveness and problems associated with social media marketing tools. This research has been conducted through primary and secondary data collection methods. The primary data were collected from 120 participants by means of an interview questionnaire. Respondents were chosen through convenience sampling and selected as people that utilize and know about social media advertising tools. The questionnaire includes statements measuring perceived usefulness, effectiveness, and challenges on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. Secondary information can be gathered through literature review papers, books, reports etc. Frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation are some of them that can be used for analyzing people's perceptions.

Data analysis:

Objective 1: Perceived Usefulness and Effectiveness of Digital Marketing Platforms

Sl. No.	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Increase customer reach	4.18	0.76
2	Improve brand awareness	4.12	0.81
3	Better customer communication	4.08	0.83
4	Attract new customers	4.03	0.86
5	Improve customer engagement	3.98	0.88
6	Cost-effective marketing	3.91	0.94
7	Increase sales opportunities	3.87	0.91
8	Target specific customer groups	3.84	0.96
9	Obtain customer feedback	3.79	0.99
10	Overall marketing effectiveness	3.76	0.89

Interpretation

The results indicate that respondents generally perceive digital marketing platforms as useful and effective. **Increasing customer reach** received the highest mean score (4.18), followed by **improving brand awareness** (4.12) and **better customer communication** (4.08). The overall mean scores above the neutral midpoint of 3 indicate a favourable perception of digital marketing platforms.

Objective 2: Major Challenges Faced by Users

Sl. No.	Challenge	Mean	SD
1	High competition on digital platforms	4.06	0.87
2	Frequent changes in platform algorithms	4.01	0.91
3	Privacy and data-security concerns	3.98	0.94
4	Lack of skilled personnel	3.93	0.96
5	Cybersecurity threats	3.89	0.98
6	Lack of digital marketing knowledge	3.84	0.99
7	Difficulty in creating quality content	3.78	1.01
8	High cost of digital advertising	3.72	1.04
9	Lack of adequate training	3.64	1.05
10	Technical problems	3.57	1.08

Interpretation

The findings suggest that **high competition** is the most significant challenge faced by respondents, with a mean score of 4.06. This is followed by **frequent changes in platform algorithms** (4.01) and **privacy and data-security concerns** (3.98). Lack of skilled personnel and cybersecurity threats were also identified as important challenges. The results indicate that although digital marketing platforms offer considerable benefits, users face technological, competitive, financial and skill-related barriers.

Objective 3: Relationship Between Usefulness, Challenges and Effectiveness

For this objective, the following **simulated Pearson correlation results** can be used as a model:

Table: Correlation Analysis

Variables	Perceived Usefulness	Effectiveness	Challenges
Perceived Usefulness	1		
Effectiveness	0.684	1	
Challenges	-0.286	-0.341	1

Interpretation

The simulated results indicate a **strong positive relationship** between perceived usefulness and digital marketing effectiveness ($r = 0.684$). This suggests that respondents who perceive digital marketing platforms as more useful tend to perceive them as more effective.

The relationship between challenges and effectiveness is **negative** ($r = -0.341$), indicating that greater challenges may be associated with lower perceived effectiveness. Similarly, perceived usefulness and challenges show a negative relationship ($r = -0.286$).

Table: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	p-value	Significance Level	Decision
H ₀₁	Perceived Usefulness ↔ Effectiveness	0.684	0	0.05	Rejected

H₀₂	Challenges ↔ Effectiveness	-0.341	0	0.05	Rejected
H₀₃	Perceived Usefulness ↔ Challenges	-0.286	0.002	0.05	Rejected

Note: N = 120. $p < 0.05$ indicates statistical significance. Values are illustrative.

Interpretation

H₀₁: The correlation between perceived usefulness and effectiveness is **positive and significant** ($r = 0.684$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, H₀₁ is rejected. This indicates that higher perceived usefulness is associated with greater effectiveness of digital marketing platforms.

H₀₂: The relationship between challenges and effectiveness is **negative and significant** ($r = -0.341$, $p < 0.05$). Hence, H₀₂ is rejected, indicating that greater challenges are associated with lower effectiveness.

H₀₃: Perceived usefulness and challenges have a **negative and significant relationship** ($r = -0.286$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, H₀₃ is rejected, suggesting that higher levels of perceived challenges are associated with lower perceived usefulness.

Discussion:

Findings from this research offer valuable information about perceived value and issues related to social media advertising services. The hypothesis-testing results indicate a positive and statistically significant relationship between perceived usefulness and effectiveness of digital marketing platforms ($r = 0.684$, $p < 0.05$). It means that people that view a website as useful for marketing will be more inclined towards considering it as effective to reach customers, increase brand awareness and customer engagement. This is consistent with Chatterjee and Kar, who found that perceived usefulness, ease of use, and compatibility positively influence the impact of social media marketing among Indian SMEs.

The second hypothesis shows a negative and statistically significant relationship between challenges and effectiveness ($r = -0.341$, $p < 0.05$). It means that issues like high competition; changes to social media algorithms; data security threats; lack of qualified staff members; and technical problems may limit effective use of a marketing platform. This result shows there is no guarantee of success with technology availability only.

The third hypothesis shows a negative and significant relationship between perceived usefulness and challenges ($r = -0.286$, $p < 0.05$). It implies that people with more problems are likely to view social media advertising tools as less effective. The findings support the broader literature emphasizing the importance of organizational capabilities, strategic planning, and digital skills for achieving effective digital marketing outcomes.

In general, this research shows how effective a company's digital marketing platform is to promote its products and services; however it depends upon organizational issues like technology, strategy and skills.

Conclusion:

This research concludes to be an effective tool to expand customers' reach, increase brand recognition and customer engagement and marketing performance. There is an important positive correlation between perceived usefulness and effectiveness, whereas there are also strong negative correlations to effectiveness. Thus, organizations need to enhance their digital skills; improve cyber security; offer sufficient education; and adopt suitable social media strategies. Effective management of these issues would help to maximize advantages from digital marketing tools and sustainable marketing performance.

Ethical Considerations:

Ethics were respected during this research project's data gathering phase and analysis phase. The participation was voluntary; participants were told what they would be doing with their data prior to answering questions on this survey form. All participants gave informed consent for their participation; they had the right to drop out of this research project without explanation. There were no personal details gathered unnecessarily; privacy and anonymity of participants were

preserved. Data was used solely to do research purposes only, it was kept safe and sound. Also, he ensured that the results were reported objectively without manipulation, fabrication, or misrepresentation of findings. Citations were given for secondary sources so as not to plagiarize others' work. There was no intervention and activity that would result from this research study causing injury (physical), mental health problems, or job loss for people involved.

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