



THE INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES ON CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT IN SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING: EVIDENCE FROM UK CONSUMERS

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ABSTRACT: *This study explores how digital marketing strategies influence customer engagement within social media advertising, with particular attention to consumers in the United Kingdom. As digital platforms increasingly shape the way organisations communicate with their audiences, understanding the mechanisms that drive engagement has become more important. Drawing on customer engagement theory and contemporary digital marketing literature, the study examines how strategic content and communication approaches affect the way consumers interact with brand-related messages online. A quantitative research design was employed, with data collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to social media users. In total, 46 valid responses were analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression techniques. The results indicate a statistically significant relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement. In particular, the findings suggest that well-designed digital strategies can meaningfully influence behaviours such as liking, sharing, commenting, and other forms of interaction with online advertisements. These findings underscore the value of creating content that is not only informative but also interactive and tailored to user preferences. Rather than viewing engagement as a passive outcome, the study highlights its dependence on how effectively organisations design and deliver their digital communications. The research contributes to ongoing academic discussions by offering empirical insight into the role of digital marketing strategies in shaping engagement within social media environments. From a practical standpoint, the study suggests that organisations should place greater emphasis on content quality, interactive communication, and data-driven personalisation. However, the findings should be interpreted with caution due to the relatively small sample size and the use of convenience sampling. Future research could build on this work by incorporating additional variables, such as trust and brand loyalty, as well as examining differences across platforms and cultural contexts.*

KEYWORDS: Digital Marketing Strategies; Customer Engagement; Social Media Advertising; Consumer Behaviour; United Kingdom.



INTRODUCTION

The expansion of digital technologies has reshaped the way organisations communicate with consumers, altering not only the tools of marketing but also the nature of consumer–brand relationships. Over the past two decades, the rise of digital platforms and social media has gradually shifted marketing practice away from one-directional communication toward more interactive and participatory forms of engagement (Kotler, Kartajaya and Setiawan, 2017). Rather than simply receiving messages, consumers are now actively involved in interpreting, sharing, and responding to brand content.

Within this evolving landscape, digital marketing strategies have become central to how organisations attempt to build visibility and sustain relationships with their audiences. Social media platforms provide a space where communication occurs in real time and where content can be tailored to individual users (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). However, while these platforms offer significant opportunities, they also require organisations to rethink how value is created through interaction rather than exposure alone.

Digital marketing is not a single approach but a combination of practices, including social media marketing, search engine marketing, content development, influencer partnerships, and targeted advertising (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). What distinguishes these approaches from traditional marketing is not only their reach but also their responsiveness. Consumers actively react to content, thereby influencing how marketing messages are circulated and interpreted. In this sense, digital environments are not controlled spaces, but dynamic systems shaped by both organisations and users.

This shift has brought the concept of customer engagement to the forefront of marketing research. Customer engagement is commonly understood as the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural involvement that consumers exhibit in their interactions with brands (Brodie et al., 2011). Importantly, engagement extends beyond purchase behaviour; it includes the ways in which consumers contribute to brand visibility and meaning through their online activities. In social media contexts, such engagement may take relatively simple forms, such as liking or commenting, but these actions can collectively influence brand perception and reach (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014).

As a result, organisations are increasingly investing in strategies designed to encourage this form of interaction. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok enable firms to move beyond static advertising by incorporating visual storytelling, user-generated content, and real-time communication. Yet, the effectiveness of these strategies cannot be assumed. While interactive features are widely available, the extent to which they translate into meaningful engagement depends on how they are used (Ashley and Tuten, 2015).

Despite the growing body of research on digital marketing, there remains a degree of uncertainty regarding how specific strategies influence customer engagement in practice. Much of the existing literature addresses digital marketing in broad terms, often without sufficiently accounting for contextual differences in consumer behaviour. This creates a gap between theoretical assumptions and actual consumer responses, particularly within specific national settings.



The United Kingdom provides a useful context in which to examine these dynamics. With high levels of internet penetration and widespread use of social media, UK consumers are deeply embedded in digital environments. This makes the market particularly relevant for exploring how marketing strategies translate into engagement behaviours. At the same time, the maturity of the digital ecosystem in the UK raises important questions about whether commonly used strategies remain effective in increasingly saturated online spaces.

Against this background, the present study investigates the relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement in social media advertising, focusing specifically on UK consumers. Using survey data collected from social media users, the study examines whether and how digital marketing strategies influence engagement behaviours such as liking, sharing, and commenting on brand-related content.

This study makes several contributions. First, it provides empirical evidence on the relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement within social media environments. Second, by focusing on the UK, it offers context-specific insights that extend beyond more generalised discussions in the literature. Finally, the findings have practical relevance for organisations seeking to design digital marketing activities that do more than attract attention but actively encourage participation.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. The next section reviews the relevant literature and outlines the theoretical framework underpinning the study. This is followed by a discussion of the research methodology, including data collection and analytical procedures. The subsequent section presents and analyses the findings, before the paper concludes with key implications and directions for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Marketing Strategies

The growing reliance on digital technologies has positioned digital marketing as a central element of contemporary marketing practice. As internet infrastructure and communication platforms continue to evolve, organisations are no longer limited to broad, undifferentiated messaging but can increasingly tailor their communication to specific audiences. In contrast to traditional approaches, digital marketing offers both scale and precision, allowing organisations to reach wider audiences while simultaneously delivering more personalised content (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). This dual capability has fundamentally altered how marketing strategies are designed and implemented.

A defining feature of digital marketing lies in its interactive nature. Whereas traditional channels such as television and print media largely operate through one-way communication, digital platforms enable ongoing exchanges between organisations and consumers. Users can respond to marketing messages in real time through actions such as commenting, sharing, or reacting to content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). However, while this interactivity is often presented as an inherent advantage, its effectiveness depends on the extent to which organisations can stimulate meaningful participation rather than passive exposure.



Among the various digital marketing approaches, social media marketing has attracted considerable attention. Social media platforms provide organisations with a space not only to disseminate information but also to cultivate visibility through continuous interaction. Firms frequently use these platforms to share promotional content, brand narratives, and user-generated material, with the expectation that such content will encourage consumer participation (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Nevertheless, the assumption that presence on social media automatically leads to engagement is increasingly being questioned, particularly in environments characterised by content saturation.

Content marketing has also emerged as a key component of digital marketing strategies. Rather than focusing solely on direct promotion, content marketing emphasises the creation of material that is informative, relevant, or entertaining to the target audience. This may take the form of articles, videos, or visual media designed to attract attention and sustain interest over time. Pulizzi (2014) argues that value creation is central to effective content marketing; however, the challenge for organisations lies in distinguishing their content in an increasingly crowded digital space where consumer attention is limited.

In addition, the use of data analytics has significantly shaped the development of targeted advertising strategies. Digital environments enable organisations to collect and analyse detailed information about consumer behaviour, including browsing activity and interaction patterns. This has made it possible to design highly personalised marketing campaigns aligned with individual preferences (Tiago and Veríssimo, 2014). While such personalisation can enhance relevance and improve engagement outcomes, it also raises questions regarding consumer privacy and the extent to which targeted advertising may be perceived as intrusive.

Despite these advantages, the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies cannot be assumed. The sheer volume of online content means that consumers are exposed to a constant stream of marketing messages, many of which compete for limited attention. As a result, simply adopting digital channels is unlikely to guarantee engagement. Organisations must instead focus on how marketing content is structured, delivered, and experienced by consumers. This suggests that the success of digital marketing strategies is less about technological capability and more about how effectively organisations translate these capabilities into meaningful and engaging interactions.

Recent studies show that social media marketing strategies play a significant role in shaping how consumers perceive brands and how they interact with them online. For instance, Kim and Ko (2012) found that social media activities like those offering entertainment, interaction, trendiness, and customization can substantially increase customer equity. In a similar vein, Mangold and Faulds (2009) noted that social media has fundamentally changed promotional communication. Instead of simply receiving brand messages, consumers are now actively involved in spreading and shaping them.

Research by Malthouse et al. (2013) further highlights how companies are increasingly turning to digital communication strategies to build and manage customer relationships in these interactive environments. This marks a clear shift away from traditional transactional marketing toward a more relationship-focused approach, where customer participation and genuine interaction have become central to marketing success.



Customer Engagement in Social Media

Customer engagement has attracted increasing attention within marketing research, particularly as organisations move toward more interactive forms of communication with consumers. Rather than focusing solely on transactional outcomes, recent studies emphasise the extent to which consumers are cognitively, emotionally, and behaviourally involved in their interactions with brands (Brodie et al., 2011). This shift reflects a broader recognition that value is not only created at the point of purchase but also through ongoing consumer participation.

Within social media environments, engagement takes on more visible and immediate forms. Consumers can respond to brand-related content through actions such as liking, sharing, or commenting, as well as through the creation of their own content. While these behaviours are often treated as indicators of engagement, they do not necessarily reflect the same level of involvement. For instance, a “like” may signal minimal interaction, whereas sharing or commenting may indicate a deeper level of interest or endorsement. This suggests that engagement on social media is not a single construct but a continuum of behaviours with varying degrees of intensity.

Existing literature highlights the multidimensional nature of customer engagement. Hollebeck, Glynn and Brodie (2014) conceptualise engagement as comprising cognitive, emotional, and behavioural elements, each contributing in different ways to the overall consumer–brand relationship. However, the extent to which these dimensions manifest in digital environments may vary depending on the context and the type of content being presented. As such, it is important to avoid assuming that all forms of online interaction carry equal significance.

The interactive capabilities of social media platforms are often cited as a key driver of engagement. Unlike traditional communication channels, these platforms allow organisations to respond directly to consumers, creating opportunities for dialogue rather than one-way messaging. This has the potential to strengthen relationships by fostering a sense of connection and responsiveness (Dessart, Veloutsou & Morgan-Thomas, 2015). At the same time, such interaction places greater expectations on organisations to maintain consistent and meaningful communication, as superficial or delayed responses may undermine rather than enhance engagement.

Studies have also revealed that the way people engage on social media varies considerably depending on the platform and the type of interaction. Smith, Fischer, and Yongjian (2012) observed notable differences in user-generated content across Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, suggesting that each platform’s unique features and communication style influence how users choose to engage.

Furthermore, Laroche, Habibi, and Richard (2013) found that active participation in brand communities on social media can significantly strengthen customer relationships and build greater brand trust. Their work shows that engagement goes well beyond simple likes or comments because it helps foster deeper, longer-term connections between consumers and brands.



The Relationship Between Digital Marketing Strategies and Customer Engagement

The relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement has been widely discussed in recent literature, although there is less agreement on how consistent or predictable this relationship is in practice. While it is often assumed that effective digital strategies naturally lead to higher engagement, emerging evidence suggests that outcomes depend heavily on how such strategies are designed and implemented.

A number of studies indicate that interactive and participatory elements play an important role in shaping consumer responses. For instance, digital campaigns that incorporate features such as polls, competitions, or user-generated content are frequently associated with higher levels of interaction (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). These approaches provide consumers with opportunities to contribute rather than simply observe, which may enhance their sense of involvement. However, participation is not guaranteed; consumers may still choose not to engage if the content lacks relevance or fails to capture their interest.

The role of content itself is also central to this relationship. Marketing messages that are perceived as informative, entertaining, or emotionally resonant tend to attract greater attention and are more likely to prompt interaction. At the same time, the increasing volume of digital content raises questions about whether these characteristics alone are sufficient to sustain engagement over time. In highly saturated environments, even well-designed content may struggle to maintain visibility.

Personalisation has similarly been identified as a key factor influencing engagement. By tailoring messages to individual preferences, organisations can increase the perceived relevance of their communication, which may, in turn, encourage interaction (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014). Nevertheless, the effectiveness of personalisation is not without limitations. In some cases, highly targeted advertising may be viewed as intrusive, potentially reducing rather than enhancing consumer willingness to engage.

Collectively, these perspectives suggest that the relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement is complex and context dependent. Factors such as content quality, platform characteristics, and audience expectations all play a role in shaping outcomes. This implies that engagement cannot be treated as an automatic result of adopting digital marketing tools, but rather as an outcome that depends on how effectively these tools are aligned with consumer needs and preferences. Additional studies continue to highlight the strong connection between digital marketing activities and customer engagement. Hajli (2014) found that interactions on social media significantly influence consumer decision-making and trust, particularly when users perceive the communication as authentic and genuinely interactive.

Similarly, Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) demonstrated that social media communication plays a vital role in shaping consumer perceptions and levels of brand engagement. Their findings show that both firm-generated content and user-generated content can have a substantial impact on how consumers respond to marketing messages in digital environments.

Furthermore, De Vries, Gensler and Leeflang (2012) argue that the popularity of brand posts is heavily influenced by content characteristics such as vividness, interactivity, and emotional



appeal. This emphasises the need for organisations to carefully design their social media content to effectively capture attention and maximise consumer engagement.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

This study is anchored in the assumption that digital marketing strategies play an important role in shaping how consumers engage with brand-related content within social media environments. However, rather than treating this relationship as automatic, it is necessary to consider the mechanisms through which such influence occurs. Drawing on customer engagement theory alongside insights from digital marketing literature, the study develops a framework that links strategic digital communication to observable patterns of consumer interaction.

Customer engagement is typically understood as a multidimensional construct comprising cognitive, emotional, and behavioural elements (Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek et al., 2014). While these dimensions are conceptually distinct, their manifestation within social media contexts is often behavioural and highly visible. Actions such as liking, sharing, and commenting are frequently used as indicators of engagement, yet these behaviours may reflect varying levels of underlying involvement. This raises an important consideration: engagement in digital environments is not only about activity but also about the depth and quality of that activity.

On the other side of the relationship, digital marketing strategies encompass a range of practices, including content development, social media campaigns, targeted advertising, and interactive communication techniques (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Tiago & Verissimo, 2014). These strategies are often designed with the intention of capturing attention and encouraging participation. Nevertheless, their effectiveness depends less on their mere adoption and more on how they are executed, particularly in terms of relevance, timing, and the value offered to consumers.

The interactive nature of social media platforms provides a useful lens through which this relationship can be understood. Unlike traditional channels, social media facilitates ongoing exchanges between organisations and consumers, allowing for immediate feedback and dialogue (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). In theory, this creates conditions that are conducive to engagement. In practice, however, the presence of interactive features does not necessarily guarantee meaningful interaction, as consumers remain selective in how and when they engage with content.

Personalisation further complicates this relationship. By leveraging consumer data, organisations can tailor marketing messages to individual preferences, potentially increasing their relevance and appeal (Stephen, 2016). While such personalisation can enhance engagement, it may also produce mixed responses, particularly where consumers perceive targeted content as intrusive. This suggests that the impact of digital marketing strategies is not uniformly positive, but contingent on how these strategies are perceived by the audience.

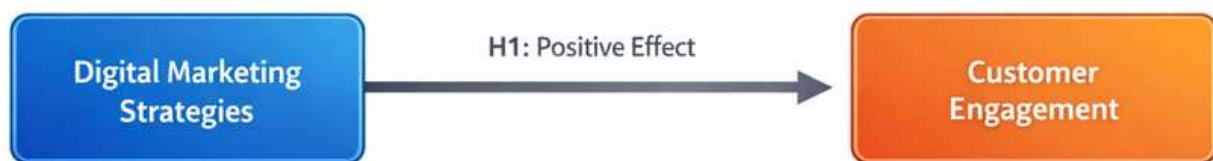
Commulatively, these arguments indicate that digital marketing strategies have the potential to influence customer engagement, but that this influence is shaped by a range of contextual factors. Despite these nuances, a consistent theme within the literature is that well-executed digital strategies are more likely to encourage consumer interaction than poorly designed ones.

On this basis, the study advances the following hypothesis:

H1: Digital marketing strategies have a positive and significant influence on customer engagement within social media advertising.

The conceptual framework derived from this hypothesis positions digital marketing strategies as the independent variable and customer engagement as the dependent variable, as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study



Hypothesis Development

Drawing on the literature, the study formulates the following hypothesis:

H1: Digital marketing strategies have a significant positive effect on customer engagement in social media advertising.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

To examine the relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement, this study adopts a quantitative research approach. This approach is particularly suited to analysing relationships between variables and testing hypotheses through statistical procedures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). By working with numerical data, it becomes possible to identify patterns in how respondents perceive and respond to digital marketing activities.

Data were collected using a survey design, which remains a widely used method in marketing research due to its efficiency in reaching multiple respondents within a limited timeframe (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). In the context of this study, the survey approach was considered appropriate because it allows for the direct capture of consumer perceptions and self-reported engagement behaviours within social media environments.

The analysis focuses on the relationship between digital marketing strategies as the independent variable and customer engagement as the dependent variable. Statistical techniques were applied to determine whether variations in perceived digital marketing strategies are associated with differences in engagement behaviours.



Target Population and Sampling

The study targets social media users in the United Kingdom, given their regular exposure to digital marketing and online advertising. This group represents a relevant population for the research, as their interactions with digital platforms provide insight into how marketing strategies are experienced in practice.

Due to practical constraints, a convenience sampling approach was employed. Participants were selected based on their accessibility and willingness to take part in the study (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). Although this method limits the extent to which findings can be generalised, it is frequently used in studies exploring behavioural patterns where controlled sampling is difficult to achieve. A total of 46 valid responses were obtained. Respondents were active users of platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, where exposure to social media advertising is common.

The use of convenience sampling is common in exploratory and behavioural studies, particularly where access to respondents is a key concern (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Similarly, previous studies on social media engagement and online consumer behaviour have often adopted convenience sampling due to the practical difficulties of obtaining probability-based samples from active digital users.

Data Collection Method

Primary data were gathered through an online questionnaire distributed via digital platforms. This method was chosen to align with the nature of the study, as participants are themselves active internet and social media users.

The questionnaire was structured into two sections. The first captured demographic information, including age and patterns of social media use. The second focused on respondents' perceptions of digital marketing strategies and their engagement behaviours in relation to social media advertising.

Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." This scaling approach is widely applied in marketing and behavioural research to assess attitudes and perceptions (Joshi et al., 2015), and it allowed respondents to express varying degrees of agreement with the statements presented.

Measurement of Variables

Two main variables were examined: digital marketing strategies and customer engagement.

Digital marketing strategies were operationalised through items that assessed how respondents perceived the content they encounter on social media, particularly in terms of its relevance, informativeness, and ability to capture attention. The focus here was not on specific platforms or campaigns, but on the overall effectiveness of digital marketing content as experienced by users.

Customer engagement was measured through self-reported behavioural indicators, including liking, sharing, commenting, and other forms of interaction with brand-related content. These behaviours are commonly used as observable proxies for engagement in digital contexts



(Hollebeek, Glynn and Brodie, 2014), although they may reflect different levels of underlying involvement.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected for this study were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). A combination of statistical techniques was employed to explore the relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement.

To begin with, descriptive statistics were used to provide a general overview of the dataset and to summarise respondents' perceptions. Measures such as means, frequencies, and standard deviations were examined to identify patterns within the data.

The internal consistency of the measurement scales was then assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. This step was necessary to determine whether the survey items reliably captured the constructs under investigation, particularly digital marketing strategies and customer engagement.

To examine the relationship between the key variables, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. This made it possible to assess both the strength and direction of the association between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement.

Finally, linear regression analysis was applied to evaluate the predictive effect of digital marketing strategies on customer engagement. This technique allows for a more detailed assessment of how changes in the independent variable are associated with variations in the dependent variable, and it was used to test the study's proposed hypothesis.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues were considered throughout the research process. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the purpose of the research before completing the questionnaire. This ensured that participation was based on informed consent.

Anonymity and confidentiality were also maintained. Respondents were not required to provide any identifying information, and all data collected were used strictly for academic purposes. These measures were intended to protect participants and to ensure that the study adhered to accepted ethical standards in social science research.

RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Respondent Profile

A total of 46 valid responses were included in the analysis. The sample comprised individuals who actively use social media and are regularly exposed to digital marketing content across different platforms. Focusing on active users was important for this study, as it ensured that participants had sufficient experience with online marketing interactions to provide meaningful responses.

Most respondents indicated frequent use of platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, alongside other digital networks where advertising content is commonly encountered.



This pattern of usage suggests that the sample is appropriately aligned with the study's focus, given that regular exposure to social media environments increases the likelihood of interaction with marketing content. While the sample size is relatively modest, the level of engagement with social media reported by participants provides a reasonable basis for exploring how digital marketing strategies relate to customer engagement behaviours.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to summarise respondents' perceptions of digital marketing strategies and customer engagement behaviours. The results provide insight into the overall patterns and central tendencies of the responses.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Digital Marketing Strategies	46	3.78	0.64
Customer Engagement	46	3.65	0.71

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that respondents generally expressed **moderately positive perceptions** regarding digital marketing strategies and customer engagement. The mean score for digital marketing strategies ($M = 3.78$) suggests that respondents perceive digital marketing content as relatively engaging and attractive.

Similarly, the mean value for customer engagement ($M = 3.65$) indicates that respondents frequently interact with digital marketing content through behaviours such as liking, sharing, and commenting on advertisements.

Reliability Analysis

A reliability analysis was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales used in the questionnaire. The reliability of the constructs was evaluated using **Cronbach's Alpha**, which is widely used in social science research to determine the consistency of survey items (Hair et al., 2019). The reliability statistics presented in Table 2 indicate that the measurement scales achieved acceptable levels of internal consistency.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Digital Marketing Strategies	5	0.82
Customer Engagement	5	0.79

The results indicate that the measurement scales demonstrate acceptable reliability levels, as the Cronbach's Alpha values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). This suggests that the items used to measure digital marketing strategies and customer engagement are internally consistent and suitable for further statistical analysis.



Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement. As shown in Table 3, the correlation analysis demonstrates a positive relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

Variables	Digital Marketing Strategies	Customer Engagement
Digital Marketing Strategies	1	
Customer Engagement	0.62**	1

Note: $p < 0.01$

The correlation results indicate a moderate to strong positive relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$). This finding suggests that respondents who perceive digital marketing strategies as effective are more likely to engage with brand-related content on social media platforms.

The positive correlation confirms that digital marketing strategies play an important role in encouraging consumer interaction with online marketing content.

Regression Analysis

To further examine the influence of digital marketing strategies on customer engagement, a linear regression analysis was conducted. The regression results presented in Table 4 and model summary in Table 5 further explain the predictive influence of digital marketing strategies on customer engagement.

Table 4: Regression Results

Variable	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
Digital Marketing Strategies	0.58	4.89	0.000

$p < 0.001$

The regression analysis results indicate that digital marketing strategies have a significant positive effect on customer engagement ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$). The model explains approximately 38% of the variance in customer engagement, indicating that digital marketing strategies are an important predictor of consumer engagement behaviour.

These findings suggest that organisations that implement effective digital marketing campaigns are more likely to stimulate consumer interaction with brand content on social media platforms.

**Table 5: Model Summary**

Model Statistic	Value
R	0.62
R ²	0.38
Adjusted R ²	0.36
F	23.90

Table 5 shows that the regression model is statistically significant. The R value of 0.62 indicates a moderate to strong positive relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement. The R² value of 0.38 means that digital marketing strategies explain 38% of the variation in customer engagement, while the F-value of 23.90 confirms that the model is effective in predicting customer engagement.

Hypothesis Testing

The study proposed the following hypothesis:

H1: Digital marketing strategies have a significant positive influence on customer engagement in social media advertising.

Based on the results of the regression analysis, the hypothesis is supported. The findings confirm that digital marketing strategies significantly influence customer engagement behaviour among social media users.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine how digital marketing strategies influence customer engagement within social media advertising, focusing on consumers in the United Kingdom. The results indicate a positive association between perceived digital marketing strategies and engagement behaviours, providing empirical support for the proposed hypothesis.

Correlation analysis revealed a moderate to strong relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement. Respondents who viewed digital marketing content as informative, visually appealing, and interactive were more likely to engage with brand-related content, including liking, sharing, commenting, or participating in discussions. These patterns suggest that the design and presentation of digital content can meaningfully shape consumer behaviour in online environments.

Regression analysis further indicated that digital marketing strategies significantly predict customer engagement. The model showed that variations in perceived digital marketing efforts accounted for a notable portion of the differences in engagement behaviours among respondents. Strategies that incorporate interactive and personalised content appeared particularly effective, highlighting the potential of tailored campaigns to encourage meaningful consumer participation.

These findings align with conceptualisations of customer engagement as a multidimensional construct, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioural components (Brodie et al.,



2011; Hollebeek et al., 2014). The results suggest that engagement in digital contexts is not solely about observable actions but also reflects consumers' deeper responses to relevant and engaging content. Social media platforms, by enabling two-way interaction, appear to provide the conditions necessary for such engagement to occur.

Personalisation emerged as another key factor influencing engagement. By tailoring marketing messages to individual preferences, organisations can increase the relevance of their content, which in turn seems to encourage interaction (Tiago and Veríssimo, 2014). Nevertheless, personalisation may produce mixed reactions if perceived as intrusive, indicating that marketers must carefully balance relevance with user privacy.

Interactive and creative campaigns, such as those using storytelling, polls, or user-generated content, also appear to enhance engagement (Ashley and Tuten, 2015). These strategies transform social media advertising from a passive exposure to an interactive experience, inviting consumers to participate actively. Moreover, when consumers share content with their networks, they act as informal ambassadors, amplifying the reach of marketing messages through electronic word-of-mouth thereby shaping consumer decision-making.

The study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence that digital marketing strategies significantly influence consumer interaction with brand content, particularly in the UK context. While previous research has examined social media marketing broadly, these findings extend understanding by highlighting how specific strategic elements affect engagement behaviours.

From a practical perspective, the results suggest that organisations should focus not only on promoting products but also on creating content that delivers value, whether through entertainment, information, or emotional resonance. Leveraging social media's interactive capabilities can strengthen consumer relationships and increase engagement. Additionally, the use of analytics to design more targeted and personalised campaigns can enhance the effectiveness of marketing efforts.

The study is not without limitations. The relatively small sample size and the use of convenience sampling may limit the generalisability of the findings. Future research could explore larger and more representative populations, as well as examine engagement across different platforms or cultural contexts to determine whether these patterns hold more broadly.

Therefore, the findings underscore the critical role of digital marketing strategies in fostering customer engagement within social media advertising. Well-designed, interactive, and personalised campaigns appear most effective in encouraging consumer participation, highlighting both the theoretical and practical significance of these strategies in contemporary digital marketing.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusion

The rapid growth of digital technologies and the widespread adoption of social media have profoundly transformed the ways organisations communicate and interact with consumers. In



this evolving digital environment, traditional one-way marketing approaches are no longer sufficient. Instead, businesses increasingly rely on digital marketing strategies that aim to engage consumers, promote products and services, and foster meaningful interactions. This study examined the influence of digital marketing strategies on customer engagement within social media advertising, with a specific focus on consumers in the United Kingdom.

The findings provide strong empirical evidence that digital marketing strategies play a crucial role in shaping consumer engagement behaviours. Respondents who perceived marketing content as engaging, informative, visually appealing, and relevant were more likely to interact with brand-related content through liking, sharing, commenting, and participating in online brand discussions. These results highlight that engagement is not a passive process but rather an active, multidimensional experience, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioural involvement, in line with established customer engagement theory (Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek et al., 2014).

Correlation analysis revealed a moderate to strong positive association between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement, suggesting that the quality and design of marketing content significantly influence consumer participation. Furthermore, regression analysis confirmed that digital marketing strategies significantly predict customer engagement behaviour. This finding underscores that organisations investing in interactive, creative, and personalised digital campaigns are more likely to stimulate meaningful engagement and foster stronger connections with their audiences.

The study also highlights the theoretical significance of digital marketing in contemporary consumer behaviour research. By demonstrating the direct link between marketing strategy design and engagement outcomes, the research contributes to the growing literature on digital marketing effectiveness, particularly in the context of social media. It reinforces the notion that social media platforms are not merely channels for content delivery but are interactive environments where consumers actively co-create brand experiences.

From a practical perspective, the results offer actionable insights for marketing practitioners. Organisations should prioritise content that provides value, whether through entertainment, education, or emotional resonance. Leveraging social media's interactive capabilities can significantly enhance engagement. Additionally, the use of consumer data to deliver personalised and targeted marketing messages can increase the relevance of campaigns and improve engagement outcomes.

Despite these contributions, the study has some limitations. The relatively small sample size and the reliance on convenience sampling may limit the generalisability of the findings to the broader population of social media users in the United Kingdom. Future research could address these limitations by employing larger, more representative samples, exploring cross-platform differences, or examining cultural and demographic factors that influence engagement behaviours. Moreover, longitudinal studies could provide insight into how digital marketing strategies impact engagement over time.

In conclusion, this study confirms that digital marketing strategies are central to fostering customer engagement in social media environments. Well-designed, interactive, and personalised campaigns can transform social media interactions from passive exposure into active participation, strengthening consumer-brand relationships and enhancing marketing



effectiveness. As digital platforms continue to evolve, organisations that embrace innovative engagement strategies are likely to maintain competitive advantage and cultivate lasting connections with their audiences.

Theoretical Contributions

This study makes several important contributions to the literature on digital marketing and customer engagement. First, it provides empirical support for the theoretical argument that digital marketing strategies can significantly shape consumer engagement in online environments. The findings reinforce prior research suggesting that interactive and personalised marketing approaches encourage consumer participation and strengthen consumer–brand relationships.

Second, the study extends existing knowledge by focusing specifically on social media advertising, which has emerged as one of the most influential channels for digital marketing communication. While earlier research has examined online consumer behaviour more broadly, this study offers new insights into how specific digital marketing strategies such as interactive posts, content personalisation, and visually appealing campaigns can drive engagement within social media contexts.

Third, the research contributes to the ongoing development of consumer engagement theory in digital environments. By highlighting the relationship between digital marketing strategies and observable engagement behaviours, such as liking, sharing, and commenting, the study reinforces the view of engagement as a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioural components.

Finally, by focusing on consumers in the United Kingdom, the study provides valuable contextual understanding of digital marketing effectiveness within a developed digital economy. The findings underscore the importance of considering market-specific factors, such as social media adoption rates and digital literacy, when assessing the impact of marketing strategies on engagement behaviours.

Managerial Implications

The findings of this study offer several practical insights for marketing practitioners and organisations operating in digital environments. First, businesses should recognise that digital marketing strategies are critical for stimulating customer engagement. To enhance interaction with their brands, organisations should focus on campaigns that encourage active participation rather than solely delivering promotional messages.

Second, marketers should prioritise the creation of high-quality, engaging content. Informative, visually appealing, and entertaining content is more likely to capture consumer attention and foster engagement. Techniques such as storytelling, video content, and interactive posts can make campaigns more compelling and encourage users to interact with brand content.

Third, organisations should leverage the interactive capabilities of social media platforms to build meaningful relationships with consumers. Two-way communication allows businesses to respond to feedback, address concerns, and engage in conversations with their audiences. Active participation in these dialogues can strengthen consumer trust and deepen brand loyalty.



Fourth, the use of data analytics and personalised marketing is critical. Digital platforms provide rich insights into consumer behaviour and preferences, enabling marketers to design targeted campaigns that align with the interests of specific segments. Personalised messaging increases relevance and enhances the likelihood of engagement, making campaigns more effective overall.

Finally, encouraging user-generated content and fostering online communities can further enhance engagement. Campaigns that invite consumers to share experiences, opinions, or creative content related to a brand can expand brand visibility, amplify marketing messages, and strengthen consumer–brand relationships through electronic word-of-mouth.

Therefore, these implications highlight that effective digital marketing is not simply about promotion; it is about creating interactive, relevant, and participatory experiences that foster meaningful consumer engagement and long-term loyalty.

Limitations of the Study

Despite the contributions of this research, several limitations should be acknowledged. One limitation relates to the relatively small sample size used in the study. The analysis was based on responses from 46 participants, which may limit the generalisability of the findings to the broader population of social media users in the United Kingdom. Future research could improve the robustness of the findings by collecting data from a larger and more diverse sample.

Another limitation concerns the use of convenience sampling. While this sampling method allowed the researcher to collect data efficiently, it may introduce potential bias in the selection of respondents. As a result, the sample may not fully represent the demographic diversity of social media users in the UK.

Additionally, the study focused primarily on the relationship between digital marketing strategies and customer engagement. However, consumer engagement behaviours may also be influenced by other factors such as brand trust, perceived value, brand loyalty, and consumer attitudes toward advertising. Future research could explore these additional variables to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence customer engagement in digital environments.

Directions for Future Research

Future studies could extend this research in several ways. First, researchers could examine the influence of digital marketing strategies across different social media platforms, such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube. Each platform offers unique features and communication styles that may influence consumer engagement in different ways.

Second, future research could explore the role of specific digital marketing techniques, such as influencer marketing, content marketing, and personalised advertising, in shaping customer engagement behaviours. Investigating these specific strategies could provide more profound insights into the mechanisms through which digital marketing influences consumer interaction with brands.



Thirdly, comparative studies across different countries or cultural contexts could provide valuable insights into how cultural factors influence consumer responses to digital marketing strategies. Such research could help organisations develop marketing campaigns that are tailored to the preferences and behaviours of consumers in different markets.

Finally, future studies could incorporate longitudinal research designs to examine how customer engagement behaviours evolve over time in response to digital marketing campaigns. Longitudinal studies would provide a deeper understanding of the long-term impact of digital marketing strategies on consumer–brand relationships.

Final Remarks

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that digital marketing strategies play a significant role in influencing customer engagement in social media advertising. As digital technologies continue to reshape the marketing landscape, organisations must adopt innovative and interactive marketing approaches that encourage consumer participation and foster meaningful relationships with their audiences. By developing effective digital marketing strategies, businesses can not only enhance consumer engagement but also strengthen their competitive position in an increasingly digital marketplace.

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