

Title: Relationship between Digital Marketing and Enterprise Growth

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ABSTRACT

Digital marketing has been a large focus in the UK, USA and Australia which has forced both new and old businesses to use digital innovative to achieve higher consumer base. This dissertation intends to look at the impact of digital marketing on enterprise growth. The research instrument used are, interview questionnaire and other secondary data sources to extract quantitative data. This research paper focuses on mixed design components to obtain data to create a hypothesis of “the importance of Digital Marketing for Enterprise growth”. It has been observed that digital marketing contributes high turnover and growth for businesses specifically for start-ups. The main reason Digital Marketing has its advantage is that the form of communication is direct to the consumers therefore, the research indicates that utilising digital marketing platforms are definitely a great opportunity for businesses to achieve its goals. Digital Marketing platforms have a reduced cost of marketing in comparison to mainstream media marketing with a direct and increased impact. Hence, small and medium businesses have been increasing their digital marketing budget and focus to achieve growth, revenue and targets.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Marketing has changed over the decades; it has evidently become challenging for businesses due to its competition. The way companies market their products have changed from TV commercials and banners to social media marketing, website content marketing, search engine marketing to reach geographically spread audience. Moreover, the focus of customers towards online shopping has also provided an opportunity for companies to increase their revenue and grow within the industry and around the globe with low investment (Taiminen, and Karjaluoto, 2015). This dissertation intends to look at the impact of digital marketing on enterprise growth; the topic has been introduced in this chapter by giving the background and objectives of the research along with its significance. It also includes a structure that the research will follow. The chapter has provided an understanding of the readers as to what it wants to achieve.

1.2 Background of Research

Digital Marketing has its impact for a few years now and research indicates that the growth is significantly high with an expectancy of growing 10 times faster than traditional marketing. Stone and Woodcock (2014) stated that businesses are using digital marketing to ensure that they survive in the highly competitive business environment, they attract new and geographically spread customers, to achieve sales and revenue growth, and to provide better and more effective customer service. Digital Marketing in the UK is among the highest growing industries, the sector has been experiencing consecutive years of growth, in 2018, and its growth rate was 4.8%. The number of small and medium companies in the UK getting involved in online activities is increasing significantly, 30% of these companies were selling their products through online operations in 2013 and the rate increased to 42% in 2017 and is following an increasing trend (Robertson, 2019). On the other hand, digital marketing is also emerging in the USA with a growth rate of 9% annually and the investment in this industry will reach \$146 billion by 2023 (Sweeney, 2019). This shows that businesses are using digital media marketing increasingly in both markets to ensure growth and success.

On the other hand, recent reports and studies have corroborated the importance and significance of digital marketing for companies, and the fact that companies have shown greater interest in contemporary marketing practices. This can be attributed to the fact that it has offered a fair chance to all companies, irrespective of their size and nature of operations, to promote their offerings with online branding and advertising, which in turn can contribute in improved brand image and reputation, as well as increased competitiveness in the industry (Stone and Woodcock, 2014). However, this is not the only reason that companies have embraced digital marketing, but there are other factors as well; for instance, engaging in digital marketing practices and techniques is cost-effective, and has higher reach and exposure when compared against traditional marketing practices. This may be argued as the dominant reasons that companies are more motivated and influenced into embracing digital media for marketing purposes, as they have greater control over the content to be shared and disseminated, and the strategies that can be implemented for improved coordination with the target audience (Sweeney, 2019). This in turn can guarantee the companies about result-driven engagement, and can influence the commitment of the customers; thereby resulting in improved conversions, which remains the central objective for engaging in digital marketing strategies.

Various models support the use of digital marketing to implement consumer-centric strategies. Such models include AIDA which stands for Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action. This model is implemented to attract the attention of customers, develop their interest in the product, creating a desire, and acting on fulfilling such desire. Another model is the customer's journey process in which businesses get an opportunity to know their customers better. It can be considered as a customer analysis model that helps businesses in designing and implementing suitable strategies. Furthermore, Pestle analysis conducts external market analysis to understand the market mainly the macro-environmental factors. Pestle Analysis has never been tested to its extreme until year 2020 during COVID-19 due to disruptive technology changes. These models can be applied since they support digital marketing and enterprise growth. Start-ups have been heavily focused on its Digital Marketing Efforts to engage with customers by using metrics to drive success.

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The research aims at determining the role of online activities for start-ups in the UK, USA and Australia. The aim has been achieved through the following objectives;

- To determine start-up businesses within the UK, USA and Australia, assess the effect of online activities conducted by start-ups and small and medium enterprises (SME) by linking with literature overview.
- To present and analyse the advantages and disadvantages of undertaking business in the UK, USA and Australia. The research would cover internal and external factors and the success rates of start-up, and Small and Medium Enterprises.
- To analyse and discuss the results provided by the research methods.
- To provide a conclusion about the overall impact of online activities on start-up and SME, providing recommendations to improve the quality of human interaction (internal-external).

1.4 Significance of Research

Enterprises have had its major turning point when digital marketing has disrupted the market. Digital Marketing including Social media marketing, E-mail Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, Search Engine Optimisation, Influencer Marketing, Content Marketing, YouTube Marketing, and referral marketing are strategies that start-ups and SME's are focusing on to boost growth. Wymbs (2011) stated that the use of digital media has increased in a very short span due to the advantages and cost effectiveness that have caused business to increase sales and growth. It has also led to global expansions which have definitely created an impact for the businesses as it creates a demand for customers around the globe to purchase goods or services via internet.

The research will determine the value of digital marketing for start-ups and SME's as to how are the businesses leverage social media marketing to market their products and services. This research has made a comparison between the start-ups in the UK, USA and Australia while using few important models to understand customers and recommend strategies such as AIDA and Pestle analysis. The research will indicate comparisons between the countries whilst

providing insights on the markets and customers when it comes to designing a successful digital marketing strategy for the businesses (including start-ups and SMEs).

1.5 Structure of the Dissertation

This research comprises of five chapters which are defined as under;

Chapter one – An introduction about the current trends in the market by comparing both digital and traditional marketing to determine its success. The research indicates the importance of digital marketing in years to come and how would businesses benefit from it.

Chapter two – This research will be linked with literature review that includes various models such as AIDA, PESTLE, and customer's journey in the chosen markets.

Chapter three – During the research methodology process, questionnaire and quantitative data to extract a hypothesis to support the importance of Digital Marketing in Enterprise growth.

Chapter four – Analysis and discussion in which the result has been analysed to determine the findings of the research. It also links the result with the objectives of the study.

Chapter five – A conclusion of the research by summarising the findings, data analysis and theories. Finally, a recommendation will be provided to link Digital Marketing and future growth of a business.

1.6 Digital Marketing vs Traditional Marketing

Traditional Marketing as we know are in a form of films, television, radio, billboards, face-to-face, physical print and point of purchase. According to [Blackman, 2014](#), magazine has the highest life span of traditional marketing in comparison to the rest. In traditional Marketing, magazines have been a go-to marketing campaigns for most businesses as it carries a longevity return on investment. Additionally, traditional marketing indicates the importance of human connection such as a simple coffee meeting or formal conferences where two parties gather and build a business relationship that could be beneficial for a long-term growth.

My dissertation is in fact proving that Digital Marketing is the new way of marketing to determine start-ups and SME's business growth. We will touch on how Digital Marketing combines traditional marketing into an online approach to create a winning strategy for businesses. Covid-19 for example has shifted the market by utilising disruptive technology. For

example, traditional marketing revolves around networking and conference which is important for businesses (with a secondary focus). However, Covid-19 has provided a solution for people around the globe to continue network via internet. For instance, Ad world conference is a successful event based in the US with speakers predominantly from large businesses. Ad world have decided to continue running the conference via the internet by connecting marketers, companies, and individuals with the speakers and build an online community. The shift is considered interesting for many businesses however, it helps businesses to save time and money by moving online. In saying that, face-to-face conferences are significantly important for networking however, it is not impossible for businesses to connect via the internet which produces an equal result if not a light-speed result.

[pwc.com](https://www.pwc.com), 2020 indicates the importance of shifting print magazines to digital, a result measured from 2015-2020. The chart indicates that the revenue from print is slowly declining whereas the revenue from digital is increasing. The main advantages of print magazines moving to digital formats are, the huge reduction of the cost of prints, papers, and postage. The web and app formats provide an ample of space for the magazine a wider opportunity that the print unable to provide.

In years to come, companies will become more agile to digital marketing to create a strong connection between brands and people. As brands track individual consumer behaviour in real time, they have the capabilities to utilise the metrics gained to provide a tailored experience for the individuals on a mass scale (that traditional marketing will fall behind on).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter helps to summarize the information gathered by previous research studies in conjunction with digital marketing and its contribution to the growth of the enterprise. Within this chapter, there is an evaluation of ideas and viewpoints shared by previous scholars according to the particular topic of the study. By analysing relevant information, this chapter identifies the need for suitable marketing concepts and determine the need for market research directing to enterprise growth. To attain a better outcome, this research has been designed systematically to have defined clarification of ideas gathered through secondary sources.

2.2 Role of Digital Marketing in Consumer Behaviour

At this time and age, digital marketing has a greater scope to expand a start-up and small and medium enterprises and is considered more effective than traditional marketing. For every organisation, digital marketing plays an important role to have an increased profit margin, as well as for the expansion of business in a wide audience (Charan and Dahiya, 2015). In the competitive world, the majority of consumers are attracted with brands via social media platforms as it brings the brands and consumers closer by building trusts with the consumers. Social Media has a growth of billions of people around the world with potential audiences spending hours a day browsing social media on a daily basis. Essentially, social media is the “online word of mouth” to share news, both positive and negative. In saying that, influencer marketing has become the next important digital segment where businesses are setting a portion of marketing budget to engage with highly desirable influencers to connect consumers with their brand.

The report of Solomon et al. (2012) indicated the high impact of digital marketing on consumers due to the vast elevation in the purchasing rate after the implementation of digital marketing strategies. According to Gao and Bai (2014), customers found it beneficial to engage in shopping and other activities by using electronics means as compared to traditional means. With the involvement of digital marketing, the processes including manufacturing, selling, and advertising have changed and contribute to building strong relationships with customers (Pinarbasi, 2019). The evolution on social media has brought the marketplace closer to the potential audiences. For instance, Facebook’s marketplace and Facebook pay to increase smooth and impulse purchase. These methods have essentially made shopping easy for consumers around the globe. Facebook marketplace makes it easy to discover to buy and sell goods locally or shipped. It has almost become mandatory for brands to add shopping on their Facebook and Instagram to achieve a potential growth online. Additionally, Facebook conducts tutorials to help start-ups and Small and medium enterprises to achieve a full potential use to maximise profits via Facebook and Instagram.

Digital marketing facilities also help to provide flexible operations so that it ultimately increases the speed of business and productivity rate. The role of digital marketing can be

analysed by discussing the benefits of these strategies as this provides ease for the customer by having free access to the site (Cohen et al. 2014). With the help of digital marketing, a customer spends lesser time to purchase a product or services as opposed to a traditional form of marketing. (Pinarbasi, 2019). For instance, a hungry customer may go through Yelp.com to evaluate different food option. On the other hand, a highly dissatisfied airline passenger might rant their negative experience via Twitter. The point of this research indicates that people are aware which platforms will help to speed up their purchase decision or to get across certain messaging.

Based on the current technological era, consideration of advanced ways to attract consumers is found as the major requirement; hence digital marketing offers facilities for consumers to be updated. Dennis et al. (2014) considered digital marketing as the source to keep consumers up-to-date with the services, products, offers, and any latest changes and trends. This portrays a positive impact on the consumers as makes them feel more valued and connected with the brand or organisation. Another perspective discussed by Gao and Bai (2014), digital marketing promotes quick service and offers convenience to consumers and allow them to access the information through various platforms via positive reviews or testimonials of consumers. It has been observed that digital marketing indeed encourage businesses to expand and reach global audiences, as a result, the expansion will increase the chance to discover new market as well as positively affect the behaviour of current consumers. In addition, this provides an opportunity for businesses to be successful with the right strategies and campaigns that is suited for their target market. By this, it costs lower as compared to traditional marketing tactics. Tiago et al. (2014) included the viewpoint by which the role of digital marketing can be determined as the social media platform manages the buying practices efficiently and help to maintain the reputation of the business. With this, it has become convenient for consumers to build trust with businesses, and increases engagement.

In contrast to this, Stephen (2016) confirmed some negative impacts of digital marketing in which the freedom of speech for consumers may decline the business reputation. The negative feedback or criticism from customers has a potential of affecting positive purchase decisions of other consumers. However, there are ways to turn negative reviews into positive results. In digital marketing, negative review has a potential to leverage negative comments to drive sales. 86% of people mentioned that authenticity is crucial when they decide what brands to follow,

support and purchase. As much as having positive review on the platforms, negative review indicates that a business is genuine and simply not censoring or fabricating their reviews. When a potential buyer visits the profile, the positive comments will seem much more credible automatically increasing a brand's authenticity.

2.3 Impact of Online Activities on Start-up Business in Developing Countries

The number of people using smartphones has been expanded around the world and the same is the condition in developing countries. People have become very comfortable with technology and use such technology for their shopping needs as well. Poushter, Bishop, and Chwe (2018) conducted research where 19 developing and emerging countries were surveyed between 2013 and 2014 and it was found that a median of 42% across these nations accessed the internet at least occasionally and have a smartphone. By the year 2017, this percentage increased to 64% while internet use remained flat in advanced countries with a median of 86% using the internet at least occasionally in 2015 and the percentage was 87% in 2017. Baltes (2017) mentioned that online shopping is a very useful component when it comes to internet usage since people have increased shopping online due to busy routines and facilities provided by companies' via online in relation to the sale and purchase of almost all kinds of products. This makes it very useful for small businesses to operate online to increase flexibility for customers to purchase at their own time via mobile or laptop using internet sources. Small start-ups have limited budgets to market their businesses, making digital marketing platforms the most affordable marketing channels. When it comes to advertising online, social media marketing has made it possible for all businesses to control their funding and marketing spend to reach their potential customers. Not only that, Facebook have an option to remarket advertisements to the potential audience to increase brand awareness and conversions.

According to Foroudi et al., (2017), consumers have become more conscious about the sellers on social media as consumers have become more aware of the brands as they build a connection. In saying that, consumers are not afraid to disclose unverified or fraud sellers to help protect other buyers, therefore, it has become a trustworthy source for consumers to purchase online. This has caused companies to implement social media customer support team to help provide a positive customer experience to build long lasting relationship with the buyers. Edelman and Heller (2015) highlighted the importance of selling via digital marketing as it could

highly reduce the reach and awareness of potential customers if a brand decide not to utilise digital marketing to implement the sales strategy.

2.4 How does Digital Marketing affect consumer behaviour?

The buying behaviour of customers holds great significance since the online market is saturated with high competition. Majority of the businesses on online marketplace are consumer-centric therefore increasing the chance for customers to switch to another brand in a fingertip.

There are various factors that stimulates the buying behaviour of customers such as current trends and fashion according to the influence of media. Xu (2014) stated that without considering current trends and predicting future changes whilst marketing the products, it could have a serious repercussion on the future growth of an enterprise. Moreover, buying behaviours of customers are different according to their age and personal choices, hence no matter how effective the digital marketing for a business, customers will tend to search according to their wants and needs. Therefore, it is on the best interest of a company to consider the choices and preferences of customers based on their age and personal choice (Larsson, 2019).

People spend most of their time on search engines to find a scope of information therefore it has become vastly important for businesses to create more content about the brands to influence the decision-making of a customer.

Everyone enjoys a great deal. Another factor of influencing new customers is through offers and discounts. Majority of businesses are working with influencers and affiliate partners to create offers and discounts with their audience. Back in the days, businesses utilise traditional marketing to create a discount voucher or pamphlets or a card with a reward system. This day and age, we can utilise different platforms within digital to create a more semantic approach to engage with potential audience.

Status and income range also affects the buying behaviour of individuals. High-income earners may purchase expensive products without any hesitation while low or middle-income earners will look for affordable products hence, a business has to establish its target audience to market the products accordingly (Mathews et al., 2016). Few other factors affect the buying behaviour of customers such as culture or religion, for instance, the consumption of alcohol may be perceived as negative by some customers but on the other hand it is a means of getting the marketing across to the potential audience. Beliefs, attitudes, and motivation also impact

customer's buying behaviour and these elements fall under psychological factors. The main component of digital media marketing is to identify its audience using metrics and data analysis. Therefore, an interest of a particular individual may be a relevance when promoting the message across on digital platforms.

2.5 Aspects to Promote Start-Up Business via Online Activities

It has been commonly observed that the majority of businesses have shifted to the online platform and found digital marketing practices as beneficial to attract customers. Since there is a significant role of digital marketing in shaping consumer behaviour, but there are some other aspects that need to be considered for promoting a start-up business via digital activities. According to Gielens and Steenkamp (2019), digital marketing covers various aspects like content, advertising, creative strategies, customer relationship management, etc. However, Sahu (2017) suggested studying the customer's buying behaviour, environmental behaviour, communication behaviour, and client services to meet the satisfaction level. Specifically, for online activities, Kingsnorth (2019) found it important to investigate the internal team structure because the overall management and structuring of services are based on the working criteria of the respective team. For promoting the start-up business through online activities, Muller (2016) focused to create awareness in consumers that help the brand to promote their services or products. In first world countries such as the UK, USA and Australia, creating strong connections with the audience is significant. Therefore, it is important to create and design an internal team that are aligned with the business goals and beliefs.

Additionally, Kingsnorth (2019) discussed the impact of environmental behaviour on the consumer buying rate as the feedback and satisfaction level of other customers highly affect the purchasing decision power of an individual. Therefore, it is found essential to investigate environmental behaviour before approaching the market. Nikunen et al. (2017) supported the viewpoint and included communication behaviour as the main aspect needed to promote start-up business via online activities. Numerous studies have discussed that effective communication behaviour is the key term for the growth of the business as this eliminates the assumptions of consumer, and integrate customer's attention to the concept. It has also been determined that progressive communication behaviour leads the brand to recognize the behaviour of the target market positively, as well as reinforce them to promote the business (Gielens and Steenkamp,

2019). With the help of effective communication, either by examining environmental behaviour or communication behaviour, this promotes the customers to engage and direct the process towards the accomplishment of goals.

Other than this, Chaffey (2019) mentioned the delivery of products and services as the aspect required to promote the online business. Potential customers find that attractive packages influence their buying decision as it contributes to the psychological of a customer's buying behaviour. Additionally, a timelier delivery and effective customer service play a strong part in the process of customer's purchasing cycle and then for the customer to be an advocate to a brand. Customers are generally impatient and always looking to receive their products immediately. Companies such as Amazon has been a huge success due to its deliverable methods. People are more inclined to pay for Amazon Prime service to receive their products as immediate as within a few hours or the next day. Lastly, an effective customer service increases the potential of creating an advocate buyer and repeat purchasing behaviour.

2.6 Models and Concepts supporting Digital Marketing and Enterprise Growth

Based on the current research topic that is relating to investigating the relationship between digital marketing and enterprise growth, it is extremely important for businesses to include marketing models and concepts as part of the Marketing plan objectives to increase enterprise growth.

2.6.1 AIDA Model

According to Ghirvu (2013), AIDA model helps to identify the cognitive stages of an individual to recognize the buying process of customers relating to any products and services. AIDA model is the purchasing funnel that is supporting the consumers to influence buying decisions. Zhang et al. (2017) considered AIDA as the advertising research model as this can be used effectively for marketing. It has been observed that the AIDA model helps to develop communication with consumers by analysing specific aspects i.e. Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action. Based on the factors considered by the AIDA model, it is found that business activities need to consider these aspects to attract a high customer base, as well as make the corporation able to reach the growth level. According to Hassan et al. (2015), AIDA specifically shapes the digital marketing activities by simplifying the version of purchasing rate.

Moreover, the main focus of the AIDA model is to attract the attention of consumers and design marketing strategies accordingly. Lee and Hoffman (2015) added to determine the existing needs of consumers in the practices of an awareness as this helps to organise the key strategies of the business. Similar to this, to achieve success for a start-up business by using online activities, it is found necessary to consider the discussed aspect. Added to this, other factors associated with the AIDA model include an interest rate that is the main trigger point to capture customer's attention. In the view of Ghirvu (2013), digital marketing strategies for start-up business needs to investigate the interest level of consumers as this assist to demonstrate the benefits as well as drawbacks of the business strategies. On the other hand, Zhang et al. (2017) AIDA model presents the aspect of creating a desire for consumers by determining their needs on specific services. Many research studies emphasized on these attributes and considered it as an essential one to satisfy the needs of targeted consumers. The last factor of the AIDA model is an action that will assist the start-up business to lead customers towards purchasing (Lee and Hoffman, 2015). It can be said that the Action aspect helps to design customer behaviour towards purchasing or rejecting the services.

In digital marketing, AIDA model can be referred as communication model rather than a decision-making model. In another word, AIDA model can be used on communication campaigns to help create a tailored plan for the digital process.

Awareness – This stage helps a start-up or SME to create awareness of the products or services for their potential customers. This includes on how messages should be created to target the potential audience on the digital platforms. Additionally, this stage helps to identify which platforms are crucial to build a connection with the target market.

Interest – What activities will gauge interest with the audience and how to input this information on digital format that could best help to attract potential audience. During this stage, content strategy will play a major role as to how are the businesses going to be an authoritative figure.

Desire – At this stage, is where the internal team come together and discuss on what makes their products or services desirable. This is where businesses think about interacting personally to make an emotion connection.

Action – In digital marketing, call to action (CTA) is extremely important for customers to take an action (i.e. purchasing your products or services). During this stage, it is vital for marketers to think about the platforms and campaigns.

There is a final last step which is quite important but never discussed on as much as the rest of the model – Retention. This final step is to retain loyalty so at what stage in digital marketing a business should encourage this?

2.6.2 Customers' Journey Process

The study of Lemon and Verhoef (2016) discussed the customer journey process to decide the growth rate of business activities and to create the visual pathway of its success. According to Lemon and Verhoef (2016), customer journey mapping is important to block in digital marketing as this allows the business activities to perceive from the end of consumers. Added to this, it has been demonstrated by Rosenbaum et al. (2017) that the customer journey process assists start-up businesses to use the ultimate needs of customers to make a decision or for implementing the final action plan. Thus, Haugstveit et al. (2016) found it beneficial for improving customer experience. Along with this, customer journey analysis is considered as the management tool that can be used in marketing, advertising, and sales purpose. Some of the benefits have been examined by Rosenbaum et al. (2017) by which any business can be supported to increase the growth rate by using digital marketing. As it is stated that the customer journey process helps to bridge the gap between operations, marketing and sales, added to this, Lemon and Verhoef (2016) predicted the usefulness of this process to build an emotional connection with the consumer. Therefore, it can be said that the consideration of the discussed process will lead to enterprise growth.

Just like the AIDA model, customer journey process is extremely important in digital marketing to understand the potential customers to increase user experience. A digital customer's journey map provides a full analogy to create engaging marketing campaigns.

Awareness – In digital marketing, this step is considered extremely crucial as to where the consumers will find you. For example, public relations, online display and word-of-mouth. When it comes to online display, the cost is extremely low and the reach is exponential.

Consideration – How would a customer consider purchasing your products? What kind of communication strategies are to be applied during this stage? A business will reach its potential customer via email-marketing, social media, website or landing pages, direct mail, paid content and a basic search.

Purchase – How accessible is the purchase funnel looking? Your products or services can be purchased via a store or branch, agent, mobile app/ site, and your website. This stage helps to influence the buyer to purchase your products or services in a more convenient way.

Services – How effective is the customer service? It's important for a business to consider online bots, online chats, social chats, or a call centre.

Advocacy – To increase a repeat purchase or convert your customers into an advocate, it is crucial to include offers in invoice, promotion, and online loyalty programme. This method can be communicated on social media and blogs, and lastly to conduct a survey to identify what's working and what needs to be changed.

2.6.3 PESTLE Analysis

Pestle Analysis help digital marketers to plan ahead as it highlights key influencers that are crucial for a successful marketing strategy. Pestle is an external marketing plan factoring macro-environmental and is a part of strategic decision-making tool. The main point of pestle analysis is to dodge any problems that may arise in the future. This means this analysis should be completed before the marketing begins as this analysis focus on legal and environmental factors for a business.

Pestle analysis stand for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental.

Political factors – As briefly discussed on this research, political is crucial as it is important to understand the political impact a country may have where the product is produced and will be sold.

Economic factors – The economic factor determines any changes within the economy that may affect a business and how these changes may affect the buyer behaviour. The economic factors include inflation rates, interest rates, foreign exchange rates, and how do these rates affect a business.

Social factors – The most recent pandemic has created a major issue for businesses that are predominantly on larger gathering events such as high street shops and events. However, businesses at this stage have been focusing on digital marketing to increase awareness and to achieve its marketing growth. This transition could be beneficial for businesses in a long run.

Technological factors – This advancement in technology has affected the way businesses operate in the UK during coronavirus pandemic as most businesses have switched to digital and are

heavily focused on e-commerce. It has now become affirmative that businesses should focus on building a strong website with a content marketing plan to increase awareness online.

Legal factors – Another crucial factor for digital marketing. When GDPR policies came effective in the UK in 2018, all websites, e-mail marketing and lead generation had to include a clear identification of the GDPR policies to ensure that businesses meet the legal expectancy.

Environmental factors – Climate changes can definitely impact the way a business runs, online or offline. For instance, during a hurricane or monsoon season, online marketing can be affected when it comes to delivering goods to customers. Therefore, it is always important to create a planner indicating all possibilities that can affect a business.

2.6.4 Social Networking theory

The application of the concepts and knowledge of sociological sciences in marketing emerges as effective approaches for enhancing marketing practices and enterprise growth. The theory developed by sociological think tanks Emile Durkheim, George Simmel and anthropologist Radcliffe-Brown is one of the similar concepts that can be extended to digital marketing and is well known as Social Networking theory. The network theory analyses all type of relationships between human and other creatures on earth. For instance, between people and animals and other things. The theory further discusses the ways through which relationship develops between different creatures and the impact these relationships create over human behaviour

Since the networking concepts used in this theory are quite related to the concepts used in digital marketing as the digital marketing also focuses on building relationships among different entities in a form of producer, marketer, seller and consumer. Therefore, several researchers have extended the concept of the social networking theory to digital marketing and have successfully developed conclusions that can serve the purpose of efficiency of digital marketing practices and enterprise growth. For instance, in one of the studies, Dervan (2015) discussed the relationship between social networking theory and the rise of digital marketing in light of Big Data. The author stated that due to lack of awareness among corporates concerning the use of digital marketing tools the efficiency of the marketing practices cannot be achieved at the level of optimality. The author argues that the complexities related to digital marketing in the contemporary world where big data is creating a great impact over networking practices can be

overwhelmed through the use of social networking theory. The author concludes that this approach will allow corporates to predict user characteristics, through the application of the concepts of intelligence to target, time, tailor and trigger the release of persuasive content on networking sites.

Ubaldi, et al., (2016) reports that the social networking theory considers the social interactions in terms of the nodes and ties. The terminology of the nodes refers to the players or individuals that develop a relationship while the ties refer to the nature and strength of the relationships between nodes. The social network can be observed as a set of nodes and ties that are interconnected to each other in multiple ways. The types of ties between different nodes differ in terms of their natural strength and the level of influences over each other. The author argues that a similar network can be developed to understand consumer behaviours and their influencing capacities on social networking sites to improve digital marketing practices and enhance enterprise growth. The recent concepts related to social media influencer marketing, where corporates employ celebrities or social media sensations to market their products and services, is an extension of the social networking theory. Since the celebrities and social media sensations are the players or nodes that have strong and influencing ties with other multiple nodes that can be easily convinced by them.

2.6.5 Theory of collective intelligence

The theory of collective intelligence is also a sociological concept that can be extended to digital marketing practices in order to address the objectives of enterprise growth. According to Krafft (2019), the theory of collective intelligence is a process where a large number of individuals concurrently converge agree upon the same point of knowledge, concept or and ideology. This theory emphasises over-targeting different groups of people and converge them individually towards a point of knowledge rather focusing on a sum of people. In the context of digital marketing, crowdsourcing is a concept that finds its roots in the theory of collective intelligence. The crowdsourcing approach is a digital phenomenon where the projects are broken down into smaller work breakdown structures and are assigned to individuals separately in order to meet the project objectives. In crowdsourcing, the selected individuals are believed to have collective intelligence characteristics.

According to Bauch et al., (2020) in order to develop a collective intelligence among the targeted individuals in collective intelligence theory the four principles are necessary to practice. These four principles are openness, peering, sharing and acting globally.

The first principle refers to the terminology of openness that emphasise over cooperates and their marketing professionals to introduce their product through social networking sites. This principle requires cooperates and their marketing professionals to develop effective promotional content and spread it through social media platforms in a way that can access a wide range of the consumers using internet facilities (Smith, 2017).

The second principle refers to the terminology and concepts of peering. The practice of peering involves the retrieval of the old information or product and perform modifications over them to match the needs of the customers with the features offered in the new product or service in order to ensure optimum utilization of the product or service to fulfil the consumer needs. The peering practice enables the corporates to inherit effective traits from the old product and integrate it with the new product eventually enhancing the features offered in new product and services over the standards of customer satisfaction (Kaur and Shah, 2018)

The third principle of collective intelligence theory is sharing. The sharing practice involves the approaches to spread of the intellectual property in form of new product information among different target groups. The sharing activity must allow the continuous exchange of ideas and criticism through which the productivity can be enhanced. In the context of digital marketing, social media platforms can efficiently serve the principle of sharing. Corporates can get instant views and criticism over the products offered through social networking sites and can work over the efficiency of the sharing practises accordingly(Lee and Jin, 2019).

The principle of acting globally is most often based on the globally renowned communication technologies that allow corporates to extend their marketing practices without any geographical restrictions. Cooperates more particularly start-ups and small and medium enterprises can avail the time and cost-efficient tools of the digital marketing like social media and e-mail facilities to address the principle of acting globally (Bauch et al., 2020).

2.6.6 Generational theory

The genet rational theory was developed by William Strauss and Neil Howe that initially aimed to describe the hypothesised recurring generation cycle in the history of the United States.

However, with time, the theory got evolved and the scope of the theory was extended to multiple fields of knowledge by the researchers. A typical and generalized definition of the generational theory as presented by Lepeyko and Blyznyuk (2016) states that the era in which an individual was born creates an impact over his perceptions towards the world and the phenomenon occurring around him. Furthermore, the theory states that our values are shaped in the formative period of our life by our parents, siblings, friends, communities, substantial events and the general epoch to which we belong. In the context of marketing, it can be stated that consumers belonging to the same epoch carry similar attitudes and behaviours since they share experiences that influenced their early age life and shaped their views.

The current era is well known as an era of digitization and as per the concept of the generational theory, the attitudes and behaviours of the modern generation are moulded by the content spread through the internet and online practices because the individuals in the current world get access to the internet in their early ages. Since the sales growth of a product or a service is guided by the consumer behaviour and attitudes, therefore, the cooperates need to have a proper understanding of the contemporary phenomenon that builds the consumer attitude and behaviour. A proper understanding of the external environment factors in the contemporary world that shape the consumer behaviour that shapes the consumer behaviour like social media and internet content can enable corporates to control the buyer's decision-making ability (Tsopatsa, 2020).

Similarly, in the current era of digital marketing, the concepts of the generational theory can be applied to improve different digital marketing practices to ensure enterprise growth. For instance, various studies have observed that digital content development can be strongly correlated to the concepts of the generational theory. According to Katunina and Kashtanova (2018), the theory of generation can be extended to develop efficient practices for digital content development. The authors investigated the application of the generational perspectives over digital content development based on two experiments performed over the two groups of the population that differed in values, preferences, and behaviour from each other. The author named the two groups as Gen X and Gen Y and approaches these groups with the same digital content and observed their reactions. The author concluded the study with the revelation that understanding of the consumer perception in the contemporary era of digitalization is necessary to shape effective programs that can efficiently manage the digital content on the internet.

2.6.7 Marketing Analysis

Since the majority of businesses are operating via online activities such as digital marketing to increase the involvement of consumers, this ultimately elevates the growth rate. Regarding this, Prasad and Holzinger (2013) elaborated on the importance to analyse the market in which new business is going to operated. Laestadius et al. (2019) supported this viewpoint and discussed marketing analysing aspects that help to examine the environmental, political, economic, social, and legal conditions of the market. Along with this, the growth rate of a business depends on the individual stability of business i.e. the strengths, opportunities as well as on weaknesses of the respective business. Thus, it is found essential for the start-up business to consider market analysis as the essential key determinant to predict the growth rate of the business. From the perspective of marketing, Pradeep et al. (2013) emphasised to show concern towards market analysis in which an opportunity to target suitable consumers has been obtained. With this, the practice to conduct marketing analysis also helps to improve the behaviour of consumers.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology provides research methods used by researchers in particular research based on the suitability with the topic (Mackey, and Gass, 2015). This chapter justifies as to how a particular method selected is suitable for the study and why it has been chosen. The chapter is an important part of the dissertation because it includes the manner in which data has been collected and how such collected data has been analysed by the researcher. It makes the research methodology easily comprehended by including research methods and the implementation strategy for the research. It does not only define the method used but other potential methods as well and why such methods are not suitable for the study. The rationale for selecting such methods is the major part of this chapter. The chapter also includes ethical guidelines followed by the researcher and how such guidelines have made the research more valuable along with the research constraints that limit the scope of the research being uncontrollable for the researcher. Hence, this chapter is a complete guideline of how the research has been conducted and how such methodology is in line with the research topic.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy refers to a belief that a researcher follows during research in which either subjective or objective data is trusted to be valuable as per the research. Kumar (2019) stated that subjective data is detailed data as provided by primary or secondary information sources however, objective data is either numeric data or a single word or phrase answers. Subjective data is inculcated in the interpretive philosophy of research while objective data is in the positivist philosophy of research. According to Jonker and Pennink (2010), the interpretive philosophy of research states that real happenings can only be identified correctly using real experiences and knowledge rather than numbers. However, positivism philosophy mentions that numbers provide better conclusions since they are accurate so the result can also be accurate and easily understandable using positivism research philosophy. Pragmatism refers to an approach that is a blend of both positivism and interpretivism design. This study is based on both subjective and objective reality and pragmatism research philosophy because the topic requires discussing in detail how digital marketing practices leads a company towards growth. It needs

arguments to determine whether digital marketing shall be conducted or not. Reasoning as to why and how small business owners support the implementation of digital marketing requires a detailed discussion of and viewpoints of small business owners who have successfully survived. Therefore, this research philosophy has been chosen.

3.3 Research Approach

The research approach is a direction that a researcher follows in terms of data and hypothesis. Jamshed (2014) highlighted that in a deductive approach, a hypothesis is developed at the beginning of the research which is a statement directly associated with the topic and the research intends to either accept or reject such statement by the end of the research to answer the research question. It is a properly structured approach because the direction of data is very clear i.e. towards the hypothesis. However, this research has used an inductive approach in which there is no hypothesis at the start but the research is more of an explanation or discussion rather than accepting or rejecting the hypothesis. In the inductive approach, data is added at every stage so that every important aspect of the topic is covered rather than only testing the hypothesis. The inductive approach is less structured because the direction of data is not very clear (Choy, 2014). Moreover, the result of this research is also not very specific but generalised. This topic was suitable for the inductive approach because it looks at various aspects of digital marketing and how it is beneficial for business growth using detailed responses of small business owners.

The application of this particular approach is in accordance with the directions and guidance of Saunders et al. (2015) as well as of other scholars and authors. In particular, the studies and findings of Saunders et al. (2015) have mentioned about the use of inductive approach with interpretivism and pragmatism philosophies, as doing so leads to the establishment of methodological fit. If the researcher had used deductive approach with pragmatism philosophy, it would have led to numerous challenges and difficulties for the researcher, as hypothesis had to be formulated to be tested, and this would require the use of statistical tools and techniques. Though this could have been a value-added aspect in this research, doing so would have changed the direction from determining to investigating the impact of online activities on the growth of the start-ups in the UK and USA. This is the reason that it was most appropriate to employ inductive approach, which was in accordance to conduct this research and to individually analyse the responses obtained and the information available in

the literature. This is a critical aspect of the research since the knowledge and experiences of subjects hold significant importance, which is supported by the inductive approach. This justifies the application and use of the inductive approach in this research, and the fact that the use of this particular approach has resulted in in-depth information and insights related to the effect of online activities by start-ups, and the analysis of the opportunities and challenges, as well as the advantages and disadvantages associated with the way of doing business in developed countries.

3.4 Research Design

Research design can be qualitative, quantitative or it can be mixed design. Mangal and Mangal (2013) stated that quantitative research design is the one that believes in and supports quantitative data i.e. numeric data and not explanations, it is highly in favour of accuracy which is getting from quantitative data such as survey questionnaires and company websites. Major instruments for quantitative data can be survey questionnaires, annual reports, websites like the World Bank website, etc. However, Basias and Pollalis (2018) highlighted that the qualitative design of the research is the one which believes that data should be explained and not only reported in the form of numbers, data should be general and have details inculcated in it. This study, therefore, uses the mixed design of research since the requirement was assessing the usefulness of digital marketing for enterprise growth. The application of mixed methods holds significant importance in this research, as it has led to the sharing of both qualitative and quantitative findings, which was impossible to do so through the use of mono-method (i.e. qualitative or quantitative design). If the study had just concentrated on the use of qualitative design, the study would have shared in-depth and rich insights regarding the effects of online activities but may have lacked any empirical findings; whereas the application of quantitative design would have resulted in empirical findings because of the testing of hypothesis, but would lack any support from the existing literature. Based on this very aspect, the application of mixed methods is most suitable in this research and has allowed the researcher to share information regarding the effects of online activities and the advantages and disadvantages associated with such activities.

3.5 Data Collection

Data collection can be done using two sources of information; either primary or secondary. Supino and Borer (2012) stated that the primary source helps a researcher to gather data that did not exist before current research and has been gathered only for current research due to which it is called fresh data. This is collected directly by the researcher from participants of research and the research instrument used can be survey or interview questionnaires, focus group, or observation. On the other hand, Jonker and Pennink (2010) highlighted that secondary information sources are those where data is second hand i.e. it has been used before by some previous researcher or analyst and is now being used again. Research instruments can be websites, research articles, annual reports of companies, etc. This data is extracted by someone other than the current researcher. In this study, the researcher has used both primary and secondary sources of information. Primary data is extracted using interview questionnaires with small business owners to determine their views and opinions regarding digital marketing and business growth while secondary data is extracted using websites and research articles. For primary data, interviews have been conducted with 15 small business owners in the UK, USA, and Australia, 5 in each country. The inclusion of both kinds of data has made the research more valuable, a primary source has collected qualitative data while secondary sources have collected quantitative data based on the topic of the study.

In this research, the primary data has been collected through the use of semi-structured interviews, and this means that all of the participants were asked the same questions. The researcher had the opportunity of asking additional questions as per the requirement; for instance, if the subjects had shared any information that was difficult to understand, additional questions were asked from them to remove the inconsistency and uncertainty. This facilitated the researcher in better understanding the responses shared by them, while allowing the researcher to interpret the findings, and in the process of extracting meaning from the responses. The key reason for engaging in the interview process was embedded in the knowledge and experience of the business owners regarding the influence of online activities, and how these have contributed to their respective success and failure. This information cannot be understood and explored into through the use of any other research instrument; for instance, if the researcher had used questionnaire, it would have become impossible for the researcher to understand the experiences of the business owners and would have just contributed in establishing a causal relationship in

between online activities and business growth. Hence, the researcher has capitalised and leveraged semi-structured interviews in this research.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis is an important part of the research study once data has been collected so that the meaning of the data is made clear. Data can be analysed considering what kind of data has been extracted for the study (Kumar, 2019); since this study includes qualitative data mainly through interviews, therefore, it has used thematic analysis to analyse such data. However, it also includes quantitative information in the form of trends and success rates, etc.; such data has been discussed as part of the findings. Thematic analysis has been conducted properly through the interview questionnaire, based on the responses of participants, the researcher extracted codes from the responses, and these codes are the gist of the response that answers the question. Considering such codes, the researcher designed a few themes and divided the responses in such themes so that the topic can be discussed based on such themes. A major focus of such themes was the comparison between the responses of business owners of the three countries to look at the similarities and differences in their opinions regarding digital marketing and enterprise growth.

3.7 Ethical guidelines

When a research study entails human elements i.e. participants are approached to answer the research question, it needs a proper ethical guideline to ensure that the participants are protected from any harm. A primary consideration in a research study whether the study includes the human element or not is the avoidance of plagiarism i.e. copied work which is an offence in academic writing. This requires the researcher to properly paraphrase the content extracted from secondary information sources. Moreover, the researcher required the participants to fill the consent form to show that the participants have voluntarily taken part in the research and no participant was forced to do so. Their contact information was kept confidential to avoid any possible harm to the participants. The researcher has reported all the findings honestly without any bias, no personal statement by the researcher has been made part of the research which shows that the research is genuine work and there is no biased statement.

While using secondary information sources, the researcher has taken care that only genuine sources are used so that no fake data is made part of the research. The researcher has been objective in selecting the methods of research so that the topic can be covered successfully by only including suitable and effective research methods. Ethical considerations have helped the researcher in making the research a genuine piece of work, although the researcher has used secondary information sources, proper reference has been given to the work.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

4.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter “Data analysis” depicts the findings of the study by analysing the collected data. The theme of this chapter is to examine the data systematically by which the researcher can evaluate the result. This chapter focuses to integrate the data accurately and adopts an appropriate method to analyse the data. As aforementioned that data was collected by primary and secondary methods, therefore, the structure of this chapter includes the thematic analysis and qualitative analysis. The themes are designed in the alignment of objectives so that the required outcome can be achieved.

4.2 Thematic Analysis

The interviews have been conducted with 15 small business owners in the UK, USA, and in Australia, 5 from each country. The business owners were represented as Respondents A, B, C, D, and E of the UK, USA, and Australia respectively.

4.2.1 Digital Marketing for E-Commerce Growth

Respondent	UK	USA	Australia
A	I found digital marketing to a helpful platform to reach millions of consumers at once and help e-commerce to grow aftermarket the product online.	Digital marketing has a positive impact on the buying decision of consumers that help the business activities to have a loyal customer. This ultimately helps the Ecommerce to grow	With the focus towards technology and advancement, e-commerce is entirely based on online functions, thus operated by digital marketing.
C	The digital marketing aspect helps to boost the product visualisation, and resultantly directs the growth of E-commerce.	With the help of digital marketing strategies, there is an opportunity to capture the attention of the market in this digital age	Digital marketing helps to increase the sales rate

By evaluating the responses from the interviewee, it has been identified that majority of start-up business persons considered digital marketing as a successful source to grow the business as this practice of marketing helps to attract the attention of consumers and contributed to increasing the sales rate. According to Kingsnorth (2019), there is a significant role of digital marketing to shape consumer behaviour where it is considered as beneficial marketing source as compared to traditional marketing. By analysing the collected data, it has been observed that digital marketing helps to involve technology and advancement to improve the e-commerce business. Hence, it can be said that an increment in the consumption rate of the market with the help of digital marketing directs the growth of E-commerce. On comparing the importance of digital marketing in E-commerce growth by considering three countries, all the responses shared the viewpoint in a similar direction that mainly focuses to target a large consumer base and to enhance the customer experience.

Owing to the E-commerce growth offered by the digital marketing to start-ups as observed in the above-mentioned responses the approaches to digital marketing that ensure E-commerce growth become significant. Over the year's research studies have identified a wide range of digital practices for E-commerce growth. For instance, Kapoor et al., (2016) identified Pay-Per-Click advertising (PPC) as one of the effective digital marketing tools. The author discussed a number of advantages of the Pay-Per-Click advertising approach of digital marketing and argued that despite some criticism over PPC due to fraud and other issues the approach still significantly contributes towards enterprise growth and higher rates of accessing product and services consumer through internet. Terrance et al., (2017) discussed the effectivity of Search engine optimization (SEO) and argued that it can effectively serve the purpose of Search Engine Marketing Management (SEMM) of the websites of the corporates and start-ups. The author stated that the use of search engine optimization increases the traffic on websites which eventually benefits the business through higher rates of sales revenues. The research study further addressed the importance of keywords analysis and its impact on the efficiency of search engine optimization and other SEO friendly technique that improves the digital marketing process.

Similarly, the research studies have identified several other approaches to E-commerce growth. These approaches include content marketing, influencer marketing, social media marketing, email marketing, and affiliate marketing. The content marketing focuses over the content developed to address the consumers in textual and graphic forms, influencer marketing refers to the employment of celebrities to promote products and services, social media marketing is based over the promotion of the product or service through social networking sites like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and Twitter etc., email marketing is an approach that allows marketers to have a one to one conversation with consumers via emails, and affiliate marketing focuses over giving commissions to the people for promoting the product or service and generating revenues.

4.2.2 Impact of Online Activities on Your Start-Up Business

Respondent	UK	USA	Australia
D	I have experienced many benefits of doing my start-up business online as it gives me global access and facilitates me with cost-saving practices.	With the help of online activities or online business opportunities, I can have an opportunity to communicate with customers effectively. This further helps me to get the feedback of customers easily.	For my start-up business, the techniques of online activities are found beneficial to increase the growth rate because of the fact to have easy access. I found online activities as the open and transparent connections that contribute to reaching the success criteria.
E	The online activities or digital marketing helps to eliminate the huge operating	After implementing online activities, I have an opportunity to	With the help of online activities related to the start-up,

	cost and allows my business to eliminate the inventory cost. Thus, I found the positive impact of online activities on my start-up business.	access the worldwide market without any restrictions and boundaries. Moreover, online activities allow me to capture customers through attractive offers and promotions.	I found it helpful to influence the customers positively and cover a range of audiences with the platform of online activities.
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In comparing the responses of the UK, USA, and Australia related to identifying the impact of online activities on your start-up, the majority of responses are sharing the positive effect of online activities on the start-up. According to them, online activities helped them to upgrade the business by low operating costs and capture a large customer base. Referring to the online activities adopted to run the business, the business person has experienced positive results and has an opportunity to grow the business on a limited budget.

The primary challenge for the start-up business comes up in the form of convincing and capturing the consumers that are already occupied by existing business tycoons. The studies have revealed that fact that online activities can help the start-ups in this regard supporting the above-mentioned argument that states that online activities positively affect the start-up business. For instance, Acquier et al., (2019) argued that online activities offer incredible scalability for start-up businesses. The author argues that scaling a business is a complex job for entrepreneurs however online activities can make this simple through the provision of worldwide access to the start-ups and expansion of the business irrespective of geographical constraints. On a similar note, research studies have identified that online activities provide limitless freedom to startups. The limitless freedoms can be understood in the way that the business is not bounded to any central physical location rather they can be operated from any location worldwide with the help of an electronic gadget and a strong internet connection. Kraus et al., (2018) argues that online activities eliminate a huge cost associated with offline business practices. For instance, the owner can get rid of the high volume of investments over the physical space requirement and infrastructure development for business. Similarly, the investment over the marketing workforce

in offline approaches can be replaced by simple and cost-effective online marketing strategies. This approach offers low overhead cost and high-profit margins for start-up businesses. Furthermore, the online activities broaden the scope of start-ups and provide them access to a worldwide market and customers from different ethnics, nationalities and geographies. This will increase the probability of an increase in sales of start-ups since they work over a comparatively larger population compared to the offline business practices.

4.2.3 Business Success via Online Activities

Respondent	UK	USA	Australia
A	I believe that online marketing or digital advertising offers me the ways to track the performance of different channels by which I regulated the business.	With the help of online activities, the actionable data helps me to improve the performance of strategies that are required for business growth.	An efficient targeting and promotional efforts help me to improve the business criteria and measure the success level by cost effecting tactics. Added to this, online activities are considered as a competitive advantage to sustain the position in the market.
B	According to my experience, online activities help me to reach a wider audience and allow me to expand the business in new areas and locations.	I found online activities as the modern tech medium to build the brand name and thus this can be used to achieve the success criteria. With this, online activities help to enhance the interaction level of	With the number of benefits associated with digital marketing such as cost-effective techniques, brand name, and geographical expansion, I found it easy to reach the

		consumers towards the brand.	audience at a low cost.
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On examining the responses of the interviewee, it has been examined that online activities help to reach the global marketplace and hence helps different countries to capture a large customer base. The result gathered from the interviewee of three countries reflected that digital marketing improves the engagement criteria of consumers and provides more advanced ways to capture the attention of the audience. According to Chaffey (2019), social media platform helps to generate the customers meanwhile the majority of traditional companies are also focusing to attract the customers via this platform. On the other hand, Mathews et al., (2016) shared the importance of digital marketing to allocate affordable budget and resources for any brand associated with any country. Thus, it can be obtained that online activities allow the start-up business to establish an effective brand position as well as increase the interest rate of consumers.

Several studies have highlighted approaches to business success via online activities. For instance, Biedenbach and Manzhynski (2016) identified branding as the key success and sustainability factors for the businesses. In a branding approach, businesses introduce their products as a brand. The branding functions are not limited to the introduction or promotion of a product in the market rather it focuses over the act of distinguishing a product or service from similar products available in the market. At this day and age, businesses build online communities in order to expand the brand and increase brand recognition among the target audience. Additionally, the objective of search engine optimization is to increase traffic to the website ultimately to increase growth and conversion. However, Bala and Verma, (2018) argue that the efficiency of the search engine optimization tool can be challenged if the business website does not offer an interesting or attractive user experience. The content available on websites should be engaging by using interesting videos, animated images and games to increase user experience.

4.2.4 Internal and External Factors Affecting the Success Rates of Your Start-Up Businesses

Respondent	UK	USA	Australia
A	Based on the consideration of digitalised era, the attractive advertising strategy and innovative marketing plan is something that helped my business to grow and sustain profitability.	While talking about my start-up business, the market and consumers are the main aspects on which the success criteria of my business depend on. Along with this, finance and resources are other considerable aspects that have been contributing to my business as well.	I consider effective communication as a powerful factor affecting the success factor to promote the business where marketing and satisfied customer services help my business to grow and expand.
B	I think the great marketing and advance customer services is the main pillar for the success of my business, added to this, I would like to add the quality improvement aspect as the success factor for my business.	According to my experience, consideration of an accurate decision is one of the supportive factors leading to my business growth. With the help of accurate decisions, I got an opportunity to set the standards of expanding my business.	

Based on the viewpoint collected from the business owners of the UK, USA, and Australia, it has been determined that varied external and internal factors are affecting the success rates of a start-up business. The majority of business owners revealed that advertising strategy, innovative marketing, customer service, and accurate decision making are some of the highlighted factors affecting the success rate for the growth of the start-up. Moreover, the

responses shared that marketing and enhancement of communication help to upgrade the customer services, where the satisfied customers are resultantly considered as the success rate of a start-up business.

In the context of the advertising strategy Hæreid. and Indregård (2015) argues that the development of an effective strategy is vital for start-up businesses since the need to introduce their product to the target audience to increase awareness of the products and services offered. In addition to this, it is important for new businesses to penetrate into a market that is already occupied and concentrated.

The necessity of effective customer service for start-ups have also been addressed by a number of research studies. The primary benefit of offering customer service as identified by a number of research studies is that it serves as a marketing tool for the business. A good customer service raises the probability that the customer will return to the same organisation in future or can act as a promotor of the product or service by motivating his social circle to purchase the products offered by the business.

Accurate decision making refers to an act of taking the right decisions on the right times and right situations. The primary decision in case of success of a start-up business remains the choice of right time and place for launching a business. In addition to this, the selection of right production and marketing strategies of the product remains equally important for start-up businesses.

Calvino et al., (2016) identified some of the key factors to identify the success of a start-up business. The author argued that employment growth, return on capital employed and labour productivity serve the purposes of the assessment of the success of a business over time.

4.2.5 Aspects Needed to Consider to Promote Start-Up Business via Online Activities

Respondent	UK	USA	Australia
C	According to my perspective, the most important aspect needed to consider is the social media platform and relative strategies. The social media business helps to attract more customers by which the services or products can be promoted in the market.	Considering the online activities, it is essential to determine the effective medium of communication that can be work via digitalisation. In this manner, the social media platform is found as a promotional aspect to promote start-up business.	For the promotion of business, I found digital marketing as a beneficial aspect to attract customers. With the help of digital marketing, the expectation to create the awareness level in consumers can be raised.
E	I suppose that communication behaviour is the aspect to promote the start-up business because effective communication leads to maintain the loyalty of customers.	I think the delivery of products and services is an important aspect that is helpful to promote the start-up business via online activities, but still, there is a need to involve the marketing aspect to aware of them relatively.	The most considerable aspect to consider is the trigger factor to promote customer behaviour. Meanwhile, customer behaviour requires promotional strategies and advertising criteria to capture the market.

It has been identified by the viewpoint of business owners that advertising, digital marketing, consumers' attention tactics, and environmental behaviour are some of the essential aspects needed while promoting the start-up business. Moreover, it has been found that globally,

some common aspects are needed to consider to start-up the business irrespective of the region. In the view of Foroudi et al. (2017), it is required to focus on the awareness level of consumers as the promotion of business highly depends on consumer choice.

4.3 Quantitative Analysis

UK, USA, and Australia have completely different marketing culture and digital ecosystems. One of the most recent retail start-ups in the UK, Mindful Chef, that delivers delicious recipes to their clients on their doorstep has started their operations in the year 2015 and has been growing by leaps and bounds ever since (Chaffey, 2019). The increasing revenue shows smart digital marketing which is affecting their enterprise growth positively. The company's digital market is mainly channeled through content and social media. Internet users in the UK tend to be more active on the internet platforms as compared to the U.S and Australia (Quinton and Fennemore, 2013). Mindful Chef uses mainstream platforms such as Pinterest, Facebook, and Instagram to promote their services and has been a success ever since. Consumers in the UK tend to rely on the feedbacks of other consumers as compared to ads and billboards. The fast-growing stats of the internet networks show the growth of enterprise through digital marketing in the UK to be at its peak (Chaffey, Smith, and Smith, 2013).

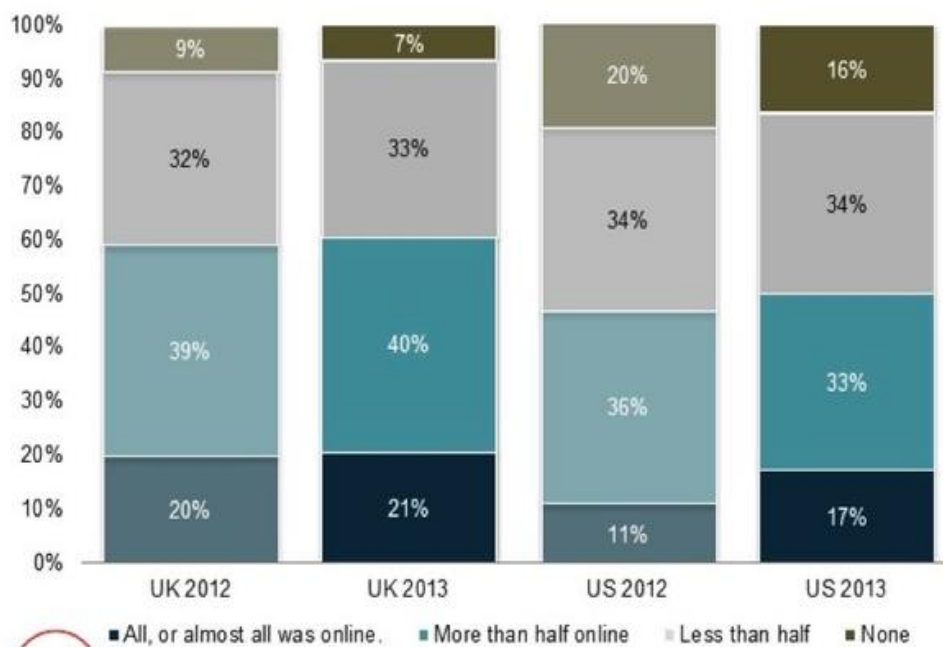


Figure 1 UK vs. USA digital marketing rise

Source: Chaffey (2019)

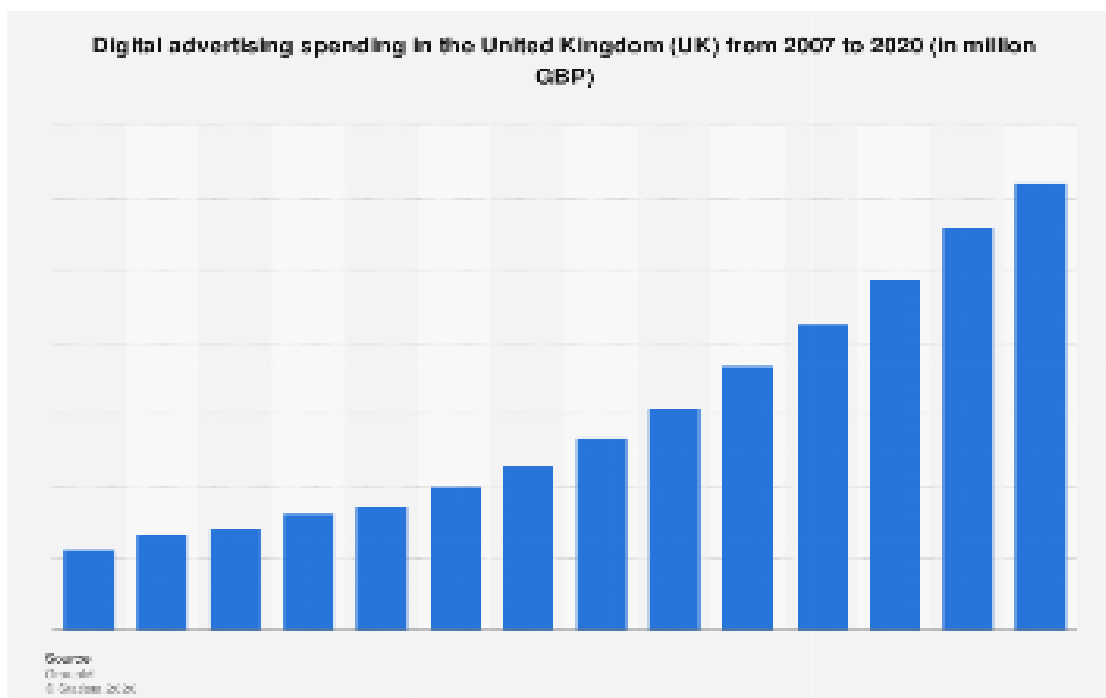


Figure 2 Increase in Digital marketing in the UK

Source: Smith (2011)

In comparison to the UK and Australia, USA consumers tend to focus on ads and billboard sources than digital platforms. However, in the past few years, there has been an exponential rise in the use of digital marketing to increase the profitability and revenue of the business (Smith, 2011). A recent USA start-up called Snackpass was initiated by some of Yale students in California in the year 2017. It is an app which allows users to order their meal ahead of time and save a lot of time. The app uses digital marketing and solely operates digitally. It has been successful in achieving over 70% market penetration in less than 5 years (Wymbs, 2011). Rather than investing money on the traditional, Snackpass is using social media as a promotion strategy and for the growth of their enterprise. However, in comparison to the UK, the USA lacks digital talent and faces the challenge of the lack of data analysis skills.

Australian start-up Canva that provides graphic designing services mainly uses SEO marketing strategy i.e. via internet websites and media marketing i.e. through social media accounts like Facebook and Twitter (Crittenden and Peterson, 2019). Unlike the UK and USA, Australian consumers have more faith in digital marketing platforms and are deemed to be more

effective. Brands spend lavishly on media and SEO for brand visibility and boost. Australian brands, however, fail majorly due to lack of commitment as compared to the UK and USA clients (Ryan, 2014).

Figure 3.5. Percent change in traditional advertising* vs. digital marketing spend in next 12 months by sector

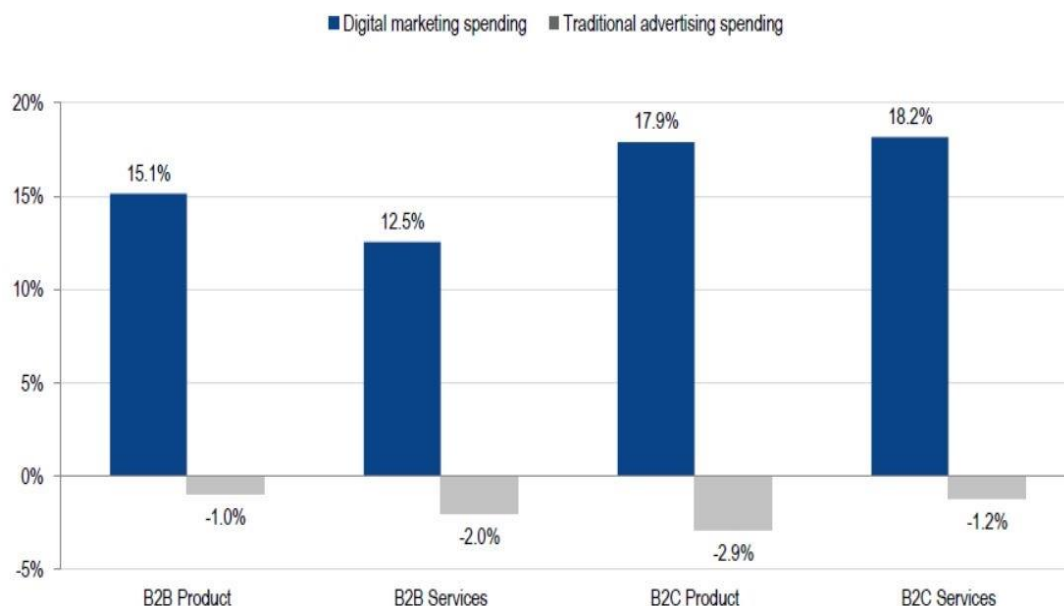


Figure 3 Digital Marketing Increase in Australia

Source: Boelsen-Robinson, Backholer, and Peeters (2015)

4.4 Discussion

Online platforms and marketing activities have been increasing with the increase in the use of smartphones. According to Turner and Endres (2017), consumers are becoming more tech-savvy every day and demanding the brands and businesses to provide tech median to provide ease so they can shop or search for their favourite times from the comfort of their homes. Physical brick and mortar shops are becoming less useful, although there are plenty of customers who enjoy shopping, however, e-commerce is penetrating the market and online shopping is becoming much more feasible and convenient because of the busy lives and schedules. Considering the growth of the business, Tiago et al. (2014) determined the connectivity of consumers as an important factor that helps the brand to promote its services or products. On comparing the viewpoint of three countries that is the UK, USA, and Australia, it has been

observed that promotional strategies and advertising tactics through the platform of digital marketing helps the start-up business to expand and allow the business owners to avail the opportunities of consumer base without investing high cost (Solomon et al. 2012). It has found that digital marketing has particularly benefitted online start-ups, for advertisements and previous methods of brand promotion and marketing tend to be extremely expensive (Edelman et al., 2016).

However, with the increase in the use of technology and social media platforms, it has become a lot easier for small brands that do not have enough finances to invest in the promotion agencies and marketing departments. Small businesses can now invest all the money and energy on improving the quality of their products instead of investing heavily in marketing companies (Hoogendoorn, Oosterbeek, and Van Praag, 2013). Digital marketing is not only cheaper but also provides the opportunity of a wider reach and audiences i.e. with the limited investment the start-ups can increase their brand visibility as per the business owners of developing countries (Smits and Mogos, 2013). Hence, social media and digital platforms provide a lot of benefits and companies that avoid failing to reach their potential customers and cannot increase their product visibility. In the view of Foroudi et al. (2017), the majority of consumers prefer to attract through the marketing strategies that are specifically designed to target online buyers. Not limited to this, it has determined that there is an effective contribution of digital marketing to the growth of a start-up business. Dennis et al. (2014) emphasized that start-up businesses do not have a high budget and cost structure to invest, as well as dealing with limited resources, therefore, the digital marketing practices are found to be the best practice for their expansion.

It has been determined by the collected data that more small businesses are not only using digital marketing platforms but also have shifted to e-commerce markers in order to attract a wider range of customers. However, there some factors that new start-ups must consider before using online platforms (Turner and Endres, 2017). Internal factors such as business culture and quality, finances, operations are some of the major factors to consider. Added to this, the entire brand image and reputation are dependent on their work culture, ethics, and quality of their services and products thus, it is essential to portray the image of the brand via digital marketing. As beneficial as the online platforms are, bad feedback, recommendation, or review from a client can damage the reputation of the brand for good. Moreover, it has been evaluated that finance is another factor to be considered as even though the companies do not need to invest as much,

however, a new start-up is dependent on the cash flow and profitability. Furthermore, operation plays a key role in running a seamless business brand (Bhandari, 2012). Management must be efficient and the utmost experienced and determined to be able to run the business and make profits. Competitors within the market, technological change market dynamics, and variations within the trends are some of the external factors that must be considered by the company that is aiming to do online business.

One of the most important factors to take into account is the competitors in the market and how to outdo their services to attract more customers. Companies keep track of the ever-changing trends and technological transitions i.e. innovations to meet the marketing objectives and stay up to date. It has been found that digital marketing and social media strategies are market trends because of the major focus on online purchasing. In the view of Foroudi et al. (2017), the majority of consumers prefer to attract through the marketing strategies that are specifically designed to target online buyers. Not limited to this, it has determined that there is an effective contribution of digital marketing to the growth of a start-up business. Dennis et al. (2014) emphasized that start-up businesses do not have a high budget and cost structure to invest, as well as dealing with limited resources, therefore, the digital marketing practices are found to be the best practice for their expansion.

Market dynamics are another significant external factor that small start-ups must consider before entering digital marketing and online activities. Similar to this, the small business owners of the UK, USA, and Australia shared the importance of digital marketing for the growth of E-commerce as according to them; digital marketing is considered as the essential aspect to have positive consumer behaviour. Because E-commerce is exclusively depending on the online activities, therefore the advertising and promotional tactics are playing an important role to attract the market. According to Chwe (2018), digital marketing has numerous elements including social media, advertising, webpages, search engines, and many more, focuses to target the consumers and attain the market trends. In order to run a successful online and e-commerce start-up, it is significant to do complete research and study about the consumers' online buying behaviour (Baltes, 2017). Websites with great brand visibility and marketing also increase the likelihood of customers buying therefore the digital marketing is found as an essential element for the growth of an enterprise.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

Digital marketing includes marketing through digitalised channels such as social media marketing, E-mail Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, Search Engine Optimisation, website and landing pages, content marketing. It has become so common that consumers are now more comfortable shopping online. Online shopping has become a norm that has caused many brick-and-mortars to close down or switch over to online shopping. Chief Marketing Officers are using the budgets on technology and analytics in digital marketing to receive real-data analytics to create a strategy for mass users. According to techcrunch.com, USA has exceeded \$100 billion for the first-time last year on online advertising alone. Mobile advertising has become increasingly dominant with a year on year growth of 40%. As mobile advertising grow steadily, desktop advertising is fluctuating year on year, making mobile advertising lead digital marketing.

The relationship of digital media with business growth has been assessed in this research through qualitative and quantitative means. This chapter presents a summary of the findings of both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Based on the findings of the research, this chapter also provides recommendations to the digital marketers and management of organisations on how to use digital media marketing.

5.2 Summarised Findings

The study interviewed small business owners from three regions; US, UK, and Australia to obtain their responses regarding the value of digital marketing for business growth. The responses were compared and it has been found that business owners from all regions consider digital marketing as an important and effective platform to grow and achieve a higher customer base. They were of the view that online operations assist businesses in enhancing revenue and increases customer awareness since they can reach a geographically spread audience. It has also been found from the responses of participants that the impact of online activities on start-ups is positive for business growth. Digital marketing improves customer engagement as well since it is a more advanced way of capturing the attention of consumers and potential consumers. The study has also revealed that advertising strategy, customer service, innovative marketing, and

correct decision-making are few factors that affect the success rate of the business. Moreover, as to the use of social and digital media, it has been revealed that consumers in the UK are more active on social media in comparison to the USA and Australia. This shows that businesses can get more benefits from the UK in terms of the number of customers. The quantitative analysis has reflected that Australia, the UK, and the USA have a different pattern of marketing and digital platform. Consumers in the UK use social media more and rely on customer feedback rather than advertising and promotions. Overall, it has been observed that digital media can help businesses achieve higher business growth, specifically for small start-ups, it is a great opportunity to introduce the business to potential consumers.

5.3 Recommendations

Digital media marketers to focus on building digital marketing attractive since there is a huge competition online that needs innovative digital marketing strategies. It is crucial to set a business apart from another by defining a clear digital marketing strategy that is unique and tailored. The best practise for start-ups and SME's to create a distinctive digital marketing process is through the customer's journey process. The first step is to identify the buyer's persona which is essentially the target marketing narrowed down to potential buyers. A simple document that clearly identify the buyer's Age group, job status, income level, location, type of solution they need from your business, their best research method online, favourite social media channels, and best customer support channel. These details would allow a marketer to focus on marketing channels to likely yield results for the business.

Secondly, for year 2020, it is extremely crucial for businesses to optimise the content for search engines as it helps for your website to show up when visitors search for the solutions that a business would offer. It is suggested that start-ups and SME's to focus on updating blogs on a regular basis to gain an access to wider audience. Blogs contribute to the increase of the search engine optimisation that helps to create an authoritative figure online which eventually increase the reach on internet.

E-mail Marketing has significantly become an important player within the Digital marketing phenomena. More and more businesses should focus on creating personalised e-mail marketing campaigns to the subscribers to encourage them open your e-mails and click-through your website. E-mail helps to communicate with the subscribers and build the brand. E-mail

marketing is the fastest method to get a messaging across to the subscribers. There are several methods such as monthly newsletters, offers and promotions to increase sales and product releases.

Social media has essentially become a major component in all businesses (start-up or small and medium enterprises). Social Media platforms are credible to build a connection between a brand and its customers. Social Media is used widely to monetise, to increase awareness and act as a news broadcaster of the brand. Any reviews are now visible on the platforms which simply means customers are searching about a brand before deciding to purchase the products or services. As a new business, it is crucial to focus on few social media channels to regularly connect with the audience. Creating content and messaging on the social media play a key role in the growth of a business. A lot of businesses have a large focus on implementing influencer marketing programme to create more awareness online. Influencers essentially are a type of people with a decent amount of following and are an authoritative figure online. Their followers in fact engage with them on a more personal level making influencers a great potential to collaborate with. For instance, when it comes to tourism, businesses collaborate with influencers to engage with their followers by creating great content to circulate online. Influencer Marketing should be start-ups and small and medium businesses' bread and butter to help create awareness. Affiliate Marketing Programme is a great way for businesses to engage with audience by providing offers and promotions. Referral programme is a quick way to get the customers excited to share the news of the start-ups with peers and family.

Getting featured in major publications can help businesses to achieve the spike that is required by increasing visitors to help grow even larger. When a business builds a relationship with online editors, it helps to create a possibility to announce features to help land a surge in traffic which in fact means conversion in digital marketing.

Start-ups and SME's should focus on building a great customer service programme. The new way of customer services has moved over to live chats, social media, e-mail, chat bots, website FAQs, and finally to telephone. A business has its potential to grow and exceed by going an extra mile through customer support. The customer's journey cycle should create a positive experience for a customer as this creates an emotional connection with the customer itself which will then create a post-purchase experience.

Essentially, Digital Marketing helps start-up entrepreneurs and small and medium businesses (even large empires) to get a better understanding of customers, with cost effective marketing tools to boost online conversions. This helps to increase visibility online by creating brand awareness to increase customer engagement, ultimately to increase return of investment. Digital Marketing if utilised to its potential can help to create an impact for the business.

5.4 Conclusion

It has been concluded that the digital marketing platform is a great opportunity for businesses in the UK, USA, and Australia since this platform has reduced the cost of marketing and has increased its impact. Businesses can reach an audience around the globe through minimum investment. Consumers around the world, specifically the UK have moved to online shopping due to the busy routine while businesses are enjoying great benefits of social media marketing. It has become somewhat compulsory for start-ups entrepreneurs to focus on digital marketing efforts whilst understanding the effects of digital marketing to their businesses. Customer's journey process has made it effective for start-up entrepreneurs to identify their buyer's persona throughout the cycle to determine the success of digital marketing for their products or services.

The study has used primary qualitative and secondary quantitative sources and both of the sources have proved that digital media is a very effective channel for businesses to grow and achieve a higher consumer base. The research paper has indicated that Digital Marketing is the future for businesses to achieve its highest competitive edge. A brand without digital marketing efforts will unlikely succeed in years to come and in-fact it will fail due to competitors that are already ahead with the help of digital marketing. However, despite implementing digital marketing in the business, tradition marketing such as public relations should not be forgotten. Press releases have now moved online and on social media which is another reason why digital marketing and its analytics are extremely important for a business. Hence, small business owners and even big businesses should focus on digital marketing to achieve better revenues and growth. In conclusion, the research has confirmed that online activities have numerous benefits and opportunities for start-ups, and minimal level of risks and challenges when engaging on digital media, which is the reason that it should remain the priority of the companies with respect to marketing.

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Appendix***Interview Questions***

1. How Digital Marketing is helping E-commerce to grow?
2. What according to you is the impact of online activities on your start-up business?
3. How did you achieve this success by using online activities?
4. What are the internal and external factors affecting the success rates of your start-up businesses?
5. What are the aspects needed to consider promoting start-up business via online activities?