

The CIM (2023) writes that the definition of marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably. Marketing in the modern day has evolved; it depends on a data-driven discipline that sits at the heart of organisational strategy. As opposed to traditional methods that relied heavily on newspapers, television, and radio, contemporary marketing works within a digital ecosystem defined by rapid technological growth and continuous connectivity. The rise of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and LinkedIn has fundamentally changed how organisations communicate with their audiences. These platforms permit brands to communicate directly with consumers, build communities, and gather live feedback, making marketing more interactive and personalised than ever before. Chaffey, D. and Ellis-Chadwick, F. (2019) indicate that marketing is no longer confined to promoting products or services; it plays a central function in shaping brand identity, driving customer relationships, and informing business decisions. Data analytics, influencer alliances, and targeted advertising enable organisations to accurately engage specific demographics, increasing both output and impact. In this environment, marketing functions as a strategic driver of growth and comparative advantage. Understanding the influence of social media and the expanding role of marketing within organisations is therefore essential to analysing how businesses succeed in today's fast-paced, digitally linked world. This essay aims to analyse the role of marketing within an organisation. Factors and trends influencing the macro environment using PESTLE , and how this impacts marketing decisions within organisations, as well as how organisations may need to adapt their marketing in an increasingly digital world

Marketing plays a central strategic role in organisations by aligning business activities with customer needs and ensuring the achievement of wider corporate objectives such as growth, competitive advantage and profit maximisation. As previously defined by the Chartered Institute of Marketing (2023) as the process of identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer needs profitably, marketing moves beyond simple promotion to become a driver of organisational direction. The marketing concept (Kotler and Keller, 2016) and market orientation theory (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990) both emphasise that firms which systematically understand and respond to customer needs outperform competitors, highlighting marketing's importance in sustaining performance. Effective marketing increases reach, expands the customer base and strengthens market share through segmentation, targeting and positioning strategies, thereby supporting organisational growth. For example, Apple Inc. uses premium branding and innovation-

focused messaging to maintain high margins and strong loyalty, demonstrating how marketing enhances perceived value and reduces price sensitivity. Similarly, Tesla, Inc. reinforces its differentiation strategy through sustainability and technological leadership narratives, aligning with Porter's (1985) view that competitive advantage stems from cost leadership or differentiation, both of which rely heavily on effective marketing communication. Marketing also creates value for customers, encouraging repeat business and long-term profitability; relationship marketing theory suggests retention is more cost-effective than acquisition (Grönroos, 1994), a principle illustrated by Amazon through personalised recommendations and subscription services that enhance customer lifetime value. Marketing objectives such as increasing market share, improving brand awareness, or entering new segments directly contribute to broader organisational goals, as shown by Ansoff's (1957) growth matrix, which links market penetration and development strategies to expansion. Consequently, effective marketing underpins organisational growth by increasing demand and revenue, strengthening competitive positioning through differentiation and brand equity, and ultimately contributing to profit maximisation and long-term sustainability, demonstrating that marketing is not merely a functional activity but a core strategic mechanism for achieving organisational success.

The macro-environment consists of six broad external forces—Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental factors—commonly analysed through the PESTLE framework (Johnson, Scholes and Whittington, 2017). These elements shape organisational marketing decisions because, although firms cannot control them, they must respond strategically to their influence. Political factors include government policy and stability; Economic factors involve inflation, interest rates and consumer spending power; Social factors reflect demographic change and evolving consumer attitudes; Technological factors concern innovation and digital transformation; Legal factors relate to regulation and compliance; and Environmental factors focus on sustainability and ecological pressures. Collectively, these forces influence segmentation, targeting, positioning and the overall marketing mix. At present, technological developments—particularly artificial intelligence (AI)—are among the most impactful influences on marketing practice. AI enables firms to gather and analyse large datasets, automate communications and deliver personalised experiences, enhancing efficiency and return on investment. For example, Amazon uses AI-driven recommendation systems and dynamic pricing to increase conversion rates and customer lifetime value, while Netflix relies on algorithmic personalisation to improve engagement and retention. This shift reflects the growing importance of data-driven decision-making in achieving competitive advantage (Porter, 1985). However, technological advancement also intersects with legal considerations, particularly data protection and privacy regulation, constraining how organisations deploy AI in

marketing. Environmental factors are similarly influential, as rising consumer concern about climate change and ethical consumption has intensified demand for sustainable business practices. Green marketing and corporate social responsibility initiatives are now central to brand positioning strategies. For instance, Unilever integrates sustainability into its brand portfolio to appeal to socially conscious consumers, strengthening brand equity and long-term loyalty. Such developments demonstrate how environmental pressures reshape product development, packaging and promotional messaging. In conclusion, while all six macro-environmental factors shape marketing decisions, technological and environmental forces are currently particularly significant, driving innovation, ethical accountability and strategic adaptation within organisations.

Organisations increasingly operate in a digital environment where marketing strategies must adapt to technological change and evolving consumer behaviour. Digital marketing refers to the use of online channels, platforms and digital technologies to promote products, communicate with customers and build long-term relationships (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Its role within organisations is significant because it enables firms to reach global audiences, personalise communication, collect consumer data and measure campaign performance more accurately than many traditional methods (Kotler et al., 2017). As a result, many organisations have shifted their marketing activities to digital platforms such as websites, mobile applications, and online advertising, while also using analytics, automation tools, and AI-driven systems, such as chatbots, to enhance customer engagement and service delivery. Several key techniques illustrate how digital marketing enhances organisational marketing performance. Search engine optimisation (SEO) improves a company's website's visibility in search results, increasing the likelihood that potential customers will discover the organisation when searching for relevant products or services online (Ryan, 2016). Content marketing, which involves producing valuable digital content such as blogs, videos, podcasts, and newsletters, helps organisations build trust, demonstrate expertise, and attract audiences over time rather than relying solely on direct advertising (Tuten and Solomon, 2020). Social media marketing has become particularly influential, allowing organisations to communicate with audiences through platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and X while encouraging interaction, user-generated content and community building. Social media has developed as a marketing platform largely because of widespread smartphone adoption, the growth of online communities and consumers' increasing preference for interactive, real-time communication with brands (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). The platform offers several advantages, including cost-effective promotion, rapid information sharing, precise audience targeting and opportunities for two-way relationships between organisations and consumers. However, limitations also exist: algorithms can reduce organic reach,

negative feedback can spread quickly, and maintaining consistent engagement requires significant time and resources. Furthermore, concerns around data privacy and misinformation can affect consumer trust. Despite these challenges, research suggests that social media remains a powerful component of contemporary marketing strategies because it enables organisations to engage audiences, build brand identity and gather valuable consumer insights. Overall, when integrated with wider digital strategies such as SEO, content creation and data analytics, social media represents a strong and effective marketing platform that supports organisational competitiveness in an increasingly digital and interconnected marketplace.

In conclusion, marketing plays a crucial strategic role within organisations by aligning business activities with customer needs and supporting wider organisational objectives. Effective marketing enables organisations to identify and satisfy customer demands while achieving goals such as growth, competitive advantage and profitability. Through strategies such as segmentation, targeting and positioning, organisations can create value for customers, strengthen brand loyalty and increase market share. This demonstrates that marketing is not simply about promotion but is a key driver of organisational performance and long-term success.

The essay also highlighted how external macro-environmental factors influence marketing decisions through the PESTLE framework. Political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental forces shape the conditions in which organisations operate. Although these factors cannot be controlled by firms, they must be carefully monitored and responded to. In particular, technological developments such as artificial intelligence and increasing environmental awareness are significantly influencing marketing practices. These trends affect how organisations collect and analyse data, develop products and position their brands to meet changing consumer expectations and regulatory requirements. Finally, the discussion demonstrated that organisations must continuously adapt their marketing strategies to the digital transformation. Digital marketing techniques such as search engine optimisation, content marketing and online advertising allow organisations to reach wider audiences, personalise communication and measure campaign performance more effectively. The emergence of social media platforms has been particularly influential, enabling organisations to engage directly with consumers, build communities and gather real-time feedback while also managing risks such as negative publicity and algorithm changes. Overall, marketing's ultimate role within an organisation is to create customer value while guiding strategic decisions that support sustainable growth and long-term competitive advantage.

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