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Module code: LCMB7035

Module Name: Dissertation Proposal

Title: "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Digital Marketing Strategies like social media, online ads, and influencer marketing to improve its brand performance at Greggs PLC: A Case Study Approach"

Word Count: 2504

Submission Deadline: 7th November 2025

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Chapter-1: Introduction

1.1 Background and Rationale:

Due to the digitization of the food-on-the-go and Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) sectors, the background and reasons for examining the efficiency of digital marketing initiatives in the UK retail industry, namely Greggs, are crucial. Greggs digital marketing strategies—mobile apps, social media integration, click-and-collect, and partnerships with a logistics company—engage customers and affect business performance indicators (sales and market share) in the highly competitive UK retail market. The post-pandemic environment, where customers heavily rely on online systems for convenience, information, and ordering, makes efficient digital marketing essential for food businesses to survive and grow (Clickbox Agency, 2023). A good digital campaign can lead to great growth and profitability, as Greggs has shown with its strategic orientation towards digital platforms and Greggs App success (Greggs Corporate, 2024; Entyce Creative, 2020).

The quantified lack of clarity and fragmentation of Greggs digital marketing inputs with consumer engagement and financial performance, especially in a multi-channel, integrated scenario, will be solved. Digital marketing is important and enumerates key customer performance indicators (KPIs) like Customer Lifetime Value (CLV), Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC), and Sales Velocity (Greggs Corporate, 2024; ResearchGate, 2022), but it does not assess and quantify the effects of the Greggs digital strategy on these KPIs. The online-to-offline (O2O) attribution issue, which measures sales and customer loyalty in the store to digital touchpoints, has always plagued retailers, making it difficult to calculate the ROI of digital campaigns (Bird, 2025). This study fills a large gap in the literature by developing an analytical framework to quantify Greggs' digital strategy, leaving anecdotal success behind and providing a data-driven picture of how their use of digital platforms results in a specified, measurable change in consumer engagement, an important but under-quantifiable part of their growth strategy.

1.2 Research Aim:

To analyze and quantify the relationship between Greggs digital marketing strategies and measurable consumer engagement metrics to evaluate their effectiveness and

contribution to overall business performance within the competitive UK food-on-the-go retail sector.

1.3 Research Objectives:

- a) To identify the key digital marketing channels utilised by Greggs to reach and engage consumers.
- b) To evaluate the effectiveness of Greggs digital marketing strategies in enhancing consumer engagement across online platforms.
- c) To analyse the contribution of Greggs digital channels to business performance outcomes, with a focus on online-to-offline sales conversion.
- d) To investigate the measurement and attribution challenges Greggs encounters in evaluating online-to-offline sales conversion from its digital marketing activities.

1.4 Research Questions

- 1. What digital marketing channels does Greggs use to reach and connect with its customers?
- 2. How effective are Greggs' digital marketing strategies in improving customer engagement online?
- 3. How do Greggs' digital marketing activities influence online-to-offline sales conversion and overall business performance?

1.5 Problems statement

The study is relevant to the issue of the low level of knowledge about how the digital marketing strategies developed by Greggs, including social media, online advertising, and influencer promotion, affect consumer interest and marketing performance. It especially addresses the issue of how to help measure online-to-offline (O2O) attribution in the UK food-on-the-go retail industry.

Chapter-2: Literature review

Digital marketing within the UK food-on-the-go retail sector is one of the growing fields of research, which is driven by the accelerated move towards omnichannel and mobile-first consumer behavior. The proposed study on Greggs has a theoretical basis that this literature review outlines, overviews the main research findings and

discussions, and defines the existing knowledge gap, which is the prelude to the actual research.

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

The use of online and offline marketing is based on the multi-channel and omnichannel retail theory, a theory that states that the consumer flows smoothly between the digital and the physical experience (Pantano and Viassone, 2015). This is furthered by the notion of online-to-offline (O2O) marketing, which emphasises digital interactions that influence in-store behavior (Anchanto, 2025). These phenomena are also supported by attribution theory: marketers should give credit to the right digital channel for a specific conversion event or risk measuring performance in the wrong way (Kannan et al., 2016). This is a problem due to the fact that online analytics tools (Pathlabs, 2023) can rarely see offline conversions (like a store purchase). To improve the ability to capture the impact of multi-digital touchpoints on offline behavior, multi-touch attribution models and sophisticated algorithms (Li et al., 2018) have been developed. A combination of these frames offers a strong basis to consider how the digital marketing channels can impact offline retail results through consumer engagement and consumer conversion channels.

2.2 Key Themes and Models

Online Marketing Media and Interaction with the Consumers:

The studies in the area of the combination of online and offline touchpoints indicate that the efficient application of digital channels (mobile applications, social media, email, and click-and-collect) has the potential to increase consumer interaction by introducing coherent branded experiences and decreasing interchannel friction (MyTotalRetail, 2021). According to cross-channel marketing theory, the cooperation of various platforms on a seamless level enhances consumer trust and loyalty and increases the chances of conversion (UKPOS, 2024). Various publications indicate the significance of digital gamification and mobile application functionalities to spur customer engagement in a retail setting (Gupta, 2020). Nonetheless, there is a dearth of empirical research on the subject of food-on-the-go retail (as opposed to generic CPG) in particular in the UK. A lot of the literature is concerned with online interaction (clicks, likes, downloads) but not following up on the outcome of such interaction (store visits/purchases).

Contribution of digital channels to business performance through online-to-offline conversion:

The literature on O2O strategies highlights the necessity to turn online intent into offline behavior – i.e., by using click-and-collect, geo-targeted offers, QR codes and locator apps (Anchanto, 2025). The UK retail studies show that the sales are connected to both offline and online platforms, and offline performance is frequently affected by online presence (Emerald, 2024). However, it is difficult to determine the exact influence of digital channels on business performance. Though it has been demonstrated that digital marketing can affect sales in UK manufacturing (ResearchGate, 2023), there is a lack of studies demonstrating the impact of digital channels on sales in offline stores in the UK food-on-the-go market. The literature highlights technological and attribution challenges (OptimumClick, 2025), which restrict the knowledge of the role of the digital channel in the business results, especially through a combined omni-channel retail paradigm.

Measuring and Attributing Problems:

According to the literature on attribution modelling, integrating offline and online streams of data is challenging, and most of the studies concentrate on online resources because of a lack of offline data (Kannan et al., 2016). The difficulty in tracking a consumer's journey from receiving an online advertisement to making an online purchase in a physical store significantly limits the use of retail analytics (Pathlabs, 2023). It has been suggested that this gap can be bridged with the help of call tracking, promotional codes, CRM integration and geolocation techniques (Mediahawk, 2025), yet their practical usage remains uneven. Other studies emphasize that last-click attribution frameworks fail to appreciate the power of upper-funnel online interactions and do not consider offline conversions (Clearcode, 2015). Such methodological challenges complicate the process of quantifying O2O conversion and reduce the possibilities for practitioners and scholars to establish any definitive causal relationship between digital marketing and offline business outcomes.

2.3 Research Gap

Though the relevance of digital-offline integration is agreed upon in the context of theory and practice, the background of empirical research in the UK food-on-the-go retailer environment (which consists of the chosen case) on the role of digital

marketing channels in driving measurable offline store sales through the online-to-offline channel is obvious. Precisely, the available literature rarely measures the channel-by-channel influence on offline behavior or considers the complexity of attribution in a multitouch, multichannel setting. This study aims to close this gap by establishing an analytical framework that will estimate the O2O sales conversion of digital marketing strategies in the UK retail food-on-the-go industry.

Chapter-3: Methodology

This research approach outlines a robust study design aimed at gathering and interpreting data regarding the effectiveness of Greggs digital marketing strategies in engaging consumers. A secondary data approach is feasible due to the nature of assessing the overall marketing activities of a large publicly traded company, as well as its ethicality and efficiency in a narrowly scoped academic project.

3.1 Research Philosophy

The study will take a positivist philosophy, which presupposes that the reality is objective and could be measured by means of empirical observations and quantitative data (Saunders et al., 2019). The choice in favor of the positivist approach implies that the digital marketing activities of Greggs' and their online-to-offline effects on conversions are objective phenomena that can be measured and analyzed. This is in line with your objective of measuring the association of digital marketing activities with measurable metrics, including consumer engagement and offline conversions. The positivist philosophy is conducive to testing hypotheses and conducting statistical research on measurable variables, and thus it suits your aims.

3.2 Research Approach

It will be a quantitative deductive method. The inductive reasoning follows the principles of positivism: based on the purpose and objectives of the research, the development of measurable variables (engagement indicators, conversion rates), and the collection of data, it is conducted to validate relationships or hypotheses. The quantitative research is defined by structured measurement and numerical analysis of variables and can be employed in the situations when the researcher wants to test the relationship between variables in a population (UK RI, 2023). In your instance, as the emphasis is put on the quantification of the role of digital marketing of Greggs in online-to-offline sales conversion and the business performance, a quantitative method is

most appropriate: it enables you to obtain measurable data (e.g., the rates of click-through, the number of people using the app, the number of people going to the stores after the digital marketing campaign) and analyze them statistically. Indeed, by making such a choice, you can be certain that your research questions are in line with the research methodology that can deliver numeric data (How do Greggs' online marketing activities impact online-to-offline sales conversion?).

3.3 Research Methods

The collection of data will focus on a survey tool (questionnaire) to which Greggs' clients who have interacted through digital platforms (apps, click-and-collect, social media) and then attended a brick-and-mortar shop will be directed. Survey research is best adapted for gathering standardized information regarding behaviors, attitudes, and conversion results in a large sample; hence, it is suitably applied in the social sciences' quantitative studies. The questionnaire will also contain questions on digital interaction (what channel was used, how often it was used), online engagement (exposure to digital marketing, use of apps, communication with social media), and offline behavior (visit to the store with the help of the digital interaction, purchase). The sampling will target a representative sample of Greggs customers who consume digital services.

Data will be collected and then analyzed statistically: descriptive (mean, frequency) to profile the sample and inferential (correlation, regression) to evaluate the relationship between digital marketing exposure and engagement and online-to-offline conversion (store visits, purchases) as results of business performance. Quantitative analysis can test the power and significance of these relationships. This approach would be suitable, as your research purpose focuses on analyzing and quantifying how Greggs' digital marketing strategies have been associated with measurable consumer engagement indicators and their impact on business outcomes.

Also, secondary data (usage statistics from the Greggs app, store foot-traffic data, digital marketing campaign results) can be collected through the reports of the company in case it is available to provide support to the survey data and enhance the strength of the quantitative analysis.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

This research relies mainly on secondary data and causes minimal ethical issues connected to human research, including informed consent and anonymity (St Andrews, 2025). The integrity of the data will be observed, as well as its accuracy and critical assessment of the sources of credibility and bias, which will ensure the ethical rigour (Editage Insights, 2025; Simplilearn, 2025). No confidential or private data will be employed since only publicly available corporate or aggregated data will be utilized, which will protect privacy and ensure research ethics.

3.5 Feasibility

It is practical and scholarly to use a secondary case study on a leading business in the UK, such as Greggs. Data collection and analysis are possible, efficient, and within the academic schedule with publicly available statistics, existing databases, and analysis tools (e.g., Excel), which present rich, credible, and up-to-date information (ResearchGate, 2025).

3.6 Expected Findings

As a part of the digital marketing efforts, it can be expected that Greggs made efforts to engage its consumers online through its mobile-based application, social media, and click-to-collect service, which have positively influenced consumer usage, with the app in 12.5% of transactions managed by the company in 2023, as compared to 6.2% in 2022 (FCA, 2023; Quarterlytics, 2023). Moreover, the development of the delivery and click-and-collect channel, where the growth of the sales in this sphere has reached 23.6% in 2023, shows that these digital channels help enhance the performance of the offline business and improve the online-to-offline (O2O) conversion (Greggs Annual Report, 2023; Retail Insight Network, 2023). But the study is likely to uncover issues in attribution and measurement, like the challenge of isolating the effects of the separate digital touchpoints on in-store purchases, to be in line with the literature on O2O marketing faces (Anchanto, 2025). In general, the results are expected to demonstrate that although the digital engagement has a positive impact on the business performance, it is difficult to determine the exact impact of this activity on offline sales.

3.7 Limitations

This research has its limitation, as secondary data is used, and it may not be able to access finer details or proprietary data on the Greggs digital marketing campaigns and accurate online-offline sale attribution. The accuracy of the conclusions can be impacted by measurement issues, including the isolation of the effect of each digital channel on purchases in the store. Moreover, the implications may not be fully applicable to other food-on-the-go retailers in the UK and elsewhere, as the findings are specific to Greggs' strategies and consumer markets.

3.8 Timeframe

Research Chapter	Weeks	Time
Chapter-1: Introduction	1-2 Week	07 Nov - 21 Nov, 2025
Chapter-2: Literature Review	2-3 Weeks	21 Nov – 05 Dec, 2025
Chapter-3: Construct survey	1 Weeks	
Chapter-3: Result and Findings	2 Weeks	05 Dec – 19 Dec, 2025
Chapter-4: Data Analysis and Discussions	3 Weeks	19 Dec – 11 Jan, 2026
Chapter-5: Conclusion and Recommendations	1-2 Weeks	11 Jan – 22 Jan, 2026
Receiving the Dissertation draft / Working on feedback	1 Week	22 Jan – 30 Jan, 2026
Submission	1 Day	2 Feb, 2026

Conclusion:

The research will analyze the digital marketing programmes in Greggs and how they have affected the online consumer interaction and online-to-offline sales conversion. A quantitative, secondary-data approach will enable the study to gain knowledge about the effectiveness of digital channels and expose the issue of attribution, as well as offer evidence-based recommendations on how businesses should improve their performance.

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