

## EXPLORING THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL OF COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN E-MARKETING: A CUTTING-EDGE INVESTIGATION INTO THE EMERGING ERA

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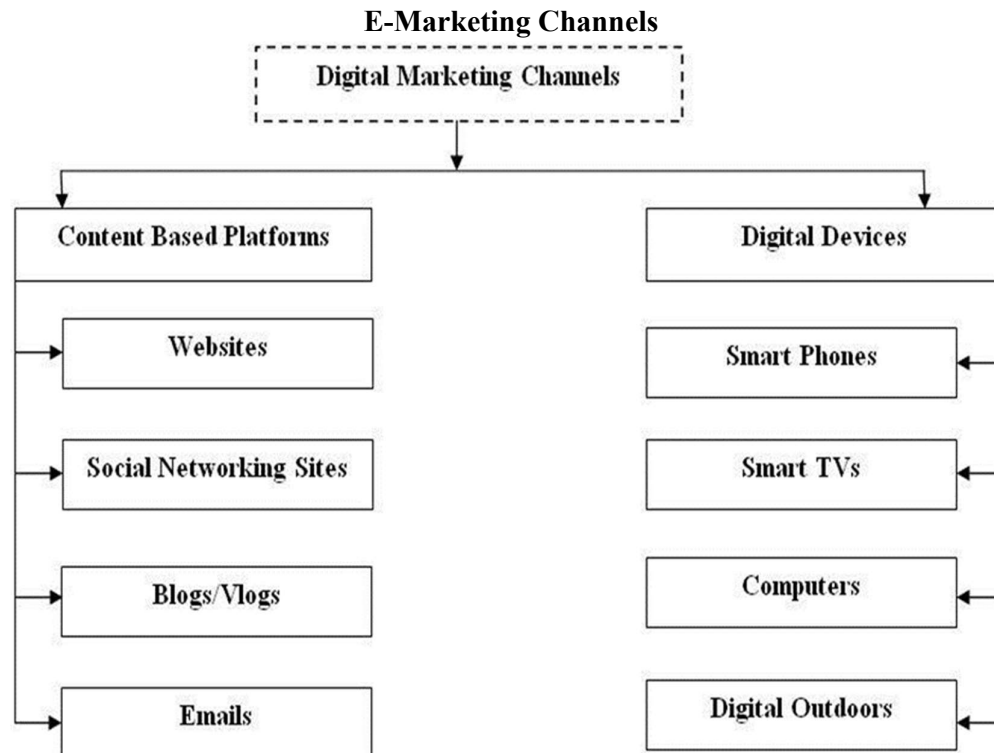
### Abstract

As the government of India has launched many programmes such as "Start-up India," "Make in India," and "Digital India," people are considering launching their own businesses. In this case, E-marketing may be very effective, efficient, and beneficial component of their start-up or business's growth. E-marketing is serving as a catalyst and facilitator to increase the organization's marketing and promotional operations. In the consideration of these facts; business firms' motivating drivers for adopting E-marketing are studied along with problems faced in the implementation. A sample of 420 business firms is selected by snowball sampling technique in India. To analyze the collected data; descriptive statistics and factor analysis are used. The study revealed that there are five main drivers which induce firms to implement E-marketing namely; organization, technology, floating customer attitude, business environment, and management to promote and sell their products and services. Further, businessmen are facing data-security-related issues in the implementation of E-marketing. In addition to this, respondents' most effective mode of E-marketing is social media marketing and the highly preferred social media channel is Facebook.

**Keywords:** E-marketing, E-marketing channels, social media, business firm

The word " E-marketing" is used differently by everyone as digital marketing, online marketing, and internet marketing and other terms are also used for it. Even though all of these expressions are related in some manner, they are distinct (Rowan, 2002). The use of the internet to promote and advertise goods and services is referred to as internet marketing (Hanson and Kalyanam 2007). E-marketing is also known as electronic marketing where a live internet connection can be used to promote and sell products and services (Hoge, 1993). Simply put, E-marketing is the digitally marketing of various products and services, as well as the use of various IT technologies and techniques for the advertisement and promotion of products and services. E-marketing is the practice of building and sustaining client relationships using electronic media and numerous online activities. It's a different process from traditional marketing. Unlike traditional marketing, digital marketing is a dynamic process that is always changing (Wymbbs, 2011). Digital marketing is effective because its facts, stats, and data can be measured. It reduces the quantity of hectic door-to-door activities. It's also a cheap and easy way to interact with people without bothering them. People believe it is an easy, convenient, and effective way to obtain information. There is an increasing demand for specialists who can deal with electronic media challenges. Everyone nowadays has a cell phone, especially a smartphone. The industry is developing regularly, and so is the breadth of E-marketing. The important point is that traditional marketing does not allow us to be everywhere, whereas digital

marketing (through the internet and electronic media) allows us to be everywhere, at any time, and from any location on the planet. Businesses use digital marketing channels to carry out various digital marketing activities by using digital marketing channels such as websites, blogs, emails, social networking websites, digital TVs, smartphones, and other popular digital marketing platforms (Wertime and Fenwick 2011).



### Review of Literature

The following literature is studied in order to meet the objectives of the study.

Dunne et al. (2010) attempted to discover the reasons behind young people's use of online social networking sites-a uses and gratifications perspective in their study Young people's use of online social networking sites-a uses and gratifications perspective with special reference to Bebo. The study's findings revealed that individuals used Bebo for personal reasons as well as to retain a certain persona and identity in social contexts. Because of the impersonal nature of social media, young people may now negotiate practicalities, build identities, and sustain relationships. Edosomwan et al. (2011) also investigated the evolution of social media and its implications for business. They addressed how social media has influenced human communication and interaction. They studied the history of social media. They found that for businesses, social media sites generate a buzz about the brand. They have also found that social media is popular due to its low cost. Whereas; Chugh (2012) examined if social networking is a boon or a curse for corporate enterprises. He has explored the benefits and drawbacks of social networking for corporate companies. The study revealed that social networking networks are a noble approach to expanding a firm globally and have completely transformed the commercial sector. They also decided that there is a big future potential for these, as the internet is itself a future. In addition to this, Hajli (2014) studied the influence of social media on customers. He has emphasized how social media has given customers new ways to interact and

communicate on a global scale. Online communities are increasingly playing an important part in business growth and development. He stated that current improvements and technological innovations on the internet have benefited both consumers and businesses. Sharma et al. (2020) explored the use of digital marketing in travel firms. The study's goal is to determine whether or not travel firms employ internet marketing to grow their businesses. According to the findings of this study, some travel companies employ conventional marketing while the majority of travel agencies use both traditional and digital marketing techniques.

The literature review depicted that E-marketing is emerging as a significant aspect for commercial organizations in all sectors as technological upgrades and breakthroughs continue to accelerate. This excites one's interest in examining reasons for adopting E-marketing as well as hurdles in the adoption process encountered by businesses and enterprises; hence, the following objectives are established to undertake the current study:

- To identify the drivers behind the adoption of E-marketing.
- To study the hindrances in the adoption of E-marketing.
- To identify the most effective E-marketing mode.
- To identify the most preferred social media channel for E-marketing.

## Research Methodology

### Sampling

For the aim of the study, a sample of 420 businesses in India that use E-marketing or different forms of E-marketing for promotion, advertisement, and selling of their products and services are chosen using a snowball sampling technique. For data collection, businesses engaged in the food and hospitality, IT, legal, automobile, retail, telecom, consultant services, real estate, agricultural, education, production and manufacturing, healthcare, tour and travel, and banking sectors are approached. As India is the area of study, four regions of india are chosen for the purpose of the research namely North, South, East and West.

### Data Collection and Statistical Tools

The current study is based on both primary as well as secondary data. Secondary data is collected through existing literature on E-marketing, different subsets of E-marketing, magazines, reputed journals, and official websites. Primary data of the study is collected with the help of a well-designed questionnaire. The collected data is analyzed by using different appropriate statistical methods to achieve the objectives of the study. SPSS software 20.0 version is used to apply tools such as mean, standard deviation, and exploratory factor analysis.

## Results and Discussions

### Drivers behind the Adoption of E-Marketing for Business Firms

To identify the drivers which motivate business minds to adopt E-marketing; a comprehensive literature survey is conducted and twenty-one statements are framed to achieve this objective. Further, the reliability of the statements is checked with the help of Cronbach alpha and the results are highlighted in the following table.

**Table 1 Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.843	21

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 depicts the alpha value as 0.843, which is a sign of high consistency among the statements therefore the statements' data can be used further for exploratory factor analysis to find out the drivers behind the adoption of digital marketing. To check the fit of factor analysis the KMO and Bartlett test is performed in the table below.

**Table 2 KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.809
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity:	
Approx. Chi-Square	2805.70
Df	210
Sig.	0.000

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows that KMO value is 0.809, with a chi-square value of 2805.70 which is an indication of sample adequacy with a strong relationship among the statements in the data. To extract digital marketing adoption drivers for firms; the Varimax method of rotation and Principal Component Analysis are used. The undermentioned table 3 shows the percentage of cumulative variance explained along with eigenvalues, factor loading, and reliability. As the eigenvalue controls the number of retrieved factors, so factors with values greater than one are considered for factor analysis. Table 3 shows that five factors are there with a value of more than one. Further, the overall cumulative percentage variance is also larger than 60 percent which indicates that every factor is eligible for consideration. The rotation sum of squared loading analysis is used to find variables with the highest loading values on the same component or factor. Factor loadings larger than or equal to 0.5 are also considered for variable reduction.

### **Interpretation of Drivers Motivating Business Firms to Adopt E-Marketing**

The exploratory factor analysis has extracted five drivers which motivate the respondents to use digital marketing to promote and advertise their products and services. It can be seen in table 3 that the most important driver which influences the business to use digital marketing is Organization. It contains four statements with 4.968 eigenvalues and 0.846 of Cronbach alpha along with 15.861 total variance. In addition to this respondents do agree that the organization's modern technological infrastructure demands the use of digital marketing and the Organization's productivity has grown as a result of the adoption of digital marketing technologies. Moreover, the Availability of funds enables the business to implement digital marketing. Technology is the second most influential driver for using digital marketing for the promotion and selling of products. Five statements are clustered in this driver since its eigenvalue is 3.318 along with 0.831 reliability among statements. in today's time, digital marketing has completely replaced traditional marketing wherein organizations can't ignore the prerequisite of a digital marketing strategy because of being faster, more effective, and cheaper than the old style of marketing The floating Customer Attitude driver consists of four statements with 2.059 of eigenvalue and 0.794 Cronbach alpha. It is the third important driver which stimulates firms to adopt digital marketing for their business purpose. only extraordinary

and worth-sharing advertisements should be visible to customers on digital platforms reason being good and creative advertisements will significantly increase brand awareness and sales.

**Table 3 Extraction of Drivers behind the Adoption of E-Marketing for Businesses**

Drivers	Statements	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalues	Reliability	Total Variance
Organization	Organization's modern technological infrastructure demands the use of digital marketing	0.812	4.968	0.846	15.861
	Organization's productivity has grown as a result of the adoption of digital marketing technologies	0.738			
	Due to the ongoing influence of the internet and technology, digital marketing is emerging as a component of the work style	0.655			
	Availability of funds enables the business to implement digital marketing	0.574			
Technology	Adoption of contemporary technologies minimizes the cost of digital marketing	0.817	3.318	0.831	30.318
	Utilization of Artificial Intelligence, chatbots, etc. tailored digital marketing campaigns	0.798			
	Technological innovations make it easy to adopt digital marketing	0.735			
	Data management of activities is easier in digital marketing adoption	0.648			
	Technological advancements in digital marketing aid in boosting the effectiveness of promotional and marketing operations conducted on a digital platform	0.511			

Floating Customer Attitude	Clients like to engage with businesses via digital marketing	0.843	2.059	0.794	43.169
	Preferences of consumers have shifted from conventional media (newspapers, TV, radio, etc.) to digital media (social media, blogs, websites, apps, etc.)	0.820			
	Customers spend enough time on the internet as it is convenient	0.740			
	Digital marketing allows for more personalized messages to be delivered	0.650			
Business Environment	Usage of digital marketing is required in the corporate environment	0.770	1.414	0.769	53.223
	Social networks inspire organizations to implement digital marketing	0.725			
	Digital marketing is adopted to gain a Competitive advantage	0.659			
	Government programmes, policies, and security encourage the use of digital marketing	0.619			
Management	Management recognizes the significance of digital marketing adoption	0.758	1.350	0.738	62.144
	Digital marketing is inexpensive as well as simple to execute and requires little effort	0.553			
	Management was ready to provide help for training in digital marketing as well as its activities	0.518			
	Management expects good returns from the implementation of digital marketing	0.476			

### Source: Primary Data

The fourth important driver to use digital marketing is the business environment by administrating 1.414 as eigenvalue and 0.769 consistency among grouped four statements. As per the participants, areas like competitive advantage, social networks, government schemes, and policies do encourage business enterprises to implement digital marketing to promote products and services in the new digital age. The fifth and least influencing driver in the adoption of E-marketing is management, with a 13.50 eigenvalue and alpha value of 0.738. As per the participants, management provides excellent support in training digital marketing because this is cost-effective and easy to implement with high maintenance. Participants further said that organizations do understand the importance of the adoption of E-marketing. Here the understanding is based on the belief in getting good returns from E-marketing.

#### Hindrances Faced in the Adoption of E-Marketing by Business Firms

Adoption of E-marketing creates some hurdles, and these problems assist organizations in realizing their full potential (V. Kumar, S. Sunder, A. Sharma, 2015). Some obstacles are discovered in the literature survey (El-Gohary et al. 2009) (Leeflang et al., 2014) and business firms are asked to give their viewpoint in this regard on five points Likert scale. To present the responses of the respondents, mean values have been computed and shown in the following table.

**Table 4 Descriptive Statistics of Hindrances in Adoption of E-Marketing**

Sr. No.	Hindrances	Mean	Ranking
1	Data Security	4.06	1
2	Lack of creation in engaging content	3.86	2
3	Selection of appropriate Technology	3.81	3
4	Strategy Development	3.78	4
5	Insufficient Finance	3.76	5
6	Training of Staff	3.65	6
7	Competition Analysis	3.64	7
8	Government Plans/ Policies	3.23	8

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 displays descriptive statistics on the hurdles that businessmen experience while adopting E-marketing. According to the table, problem in Data Security is highly faced by the business firm with a 4.06 mean score followed by lack in the creation of engaging content, Selection of appropriate Technology, Strategy Development, and Insufficient Finance; entailing 3.86, 3.81, 3.78 and 3.76 respective mean scores. However least problematic hindrance faced by the organizations is Government Plans/ Policies with a 3.23 mean value followed by Competition Analysis, and Training of Staff since their mean scores are 3.64 and 3.65 respectively.

#### Most Effective E-Marketing Mode for Business Organisations

Respondents in the survey are asked to rate the most effective E-marketing mode on a five-point Likert scale. To draw a conclusion from the responses; mean scores and standard deviation are calculated and displayed below:

**Table 5 Descriptive Statistics of Most Effective Mode of Digital Marketing**

Sr. No.	E-Marketing Modes	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Social Media Marketing	4.410	0.913
2	Search Engine Marketing	3.848	0.945
3	Email Marketing	3.629	0.908
4	Search Engine Optimization	3.724	0.972
5	Content Marketing	3.562	0.850
6	Affiliate Marketing	2.419	1.316

Source: Primary Data

Table 5 states that social media marketing (4.410; 0.913) is one of the most effective digital marketing tactics, followed by search engine marketing (3.848; 0.954). whereas E-mail marketing (3.629; 0.908) and search engine optimization (3.724; 0.972) are averagely effective modes. In addition to this, affiliate Marketing was discovered to be the least effective E-marketing mode, with a Mean score value of (2.419; 1.316) followed by content marketing (3.562; 0.850). As a result of the findings, we can conclude that commercial enterprises have selected Social Media Marketing as the most effective way of E-marketing therefore, their strategies lean toward the use of social media marketing for promotion, advertising, and selling products and services.

#### **Most Preferred Social Media Channel by Business Firms for E-Marketing**

Various kinds of social media channels are used by businesses to promote and sell their products as well as services so here an attempt has been made to know the most preferred social media which is widely used and preferred by the organizations. To achieve this objective diverse channels are identified with the help of a literature survey and respondents are asked about their most preferred social channel for digital marketing on the Likert scale. The following table shows the mean values of the collected responses:

**Table 5 Mean Scores of Most Preferred Social Media Channels for E-Marketing**

Sr. No.	Social Media Channels	Mean	Ranking
1	Facebook	3.93	1
2	Instagram	3.76	2
3	YouTube	3.72	3
4	LinkedIn	3.45	4
5	WhatsApp	3.28	5
6	Twitter	3.24	6



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Source: Primary Data

As per table 5, Facebook (3.93) is the most preferred social media channel for E-marketing followed by Instagram (3.76) and Youtube (3.72). LinkedIn (3.45) comes in between the highest and least preferred social channels. However, Telegram is the least preferred social mode for the promotion of products and services by business firms followed by Twitter (3.24) and WhatsApp (3.28).

## Conclusion

As the world becomes more digital, businesses have begun to search for online platforms to help them grow. They see a lot of potential in digitalization as a result businesses have begun to use E-technology for advertising and promotional purposes. The current research paper found that there are five influential drivers namely, organization, technology, floating customer attitude, business environment, and management which drive firms to adopt E-marketing in business. The most important driver is the organization as it demands innovation to increase its productivity. The second most important one is technology; the reason is tracking customers and their data management is convenient in comparison to traditional methods of marketing as digital marketing is based on technology. However, the least important driver that stimulates businessmen to implement E-marketing to promote and sell products and services is management though it recognizes the importance of E-marketing and provides help in the activities during the implementation process. Further, firms are facing data Security issues in the implementation of E-marketing. The study also found social media marketing as the most effective E-marketing mode whereas; Facebook is the most preferred social media channel by business firms for E-marketing.

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