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# **AN OVERVIEW OF DIGITAL MARKETING PRACTICES**

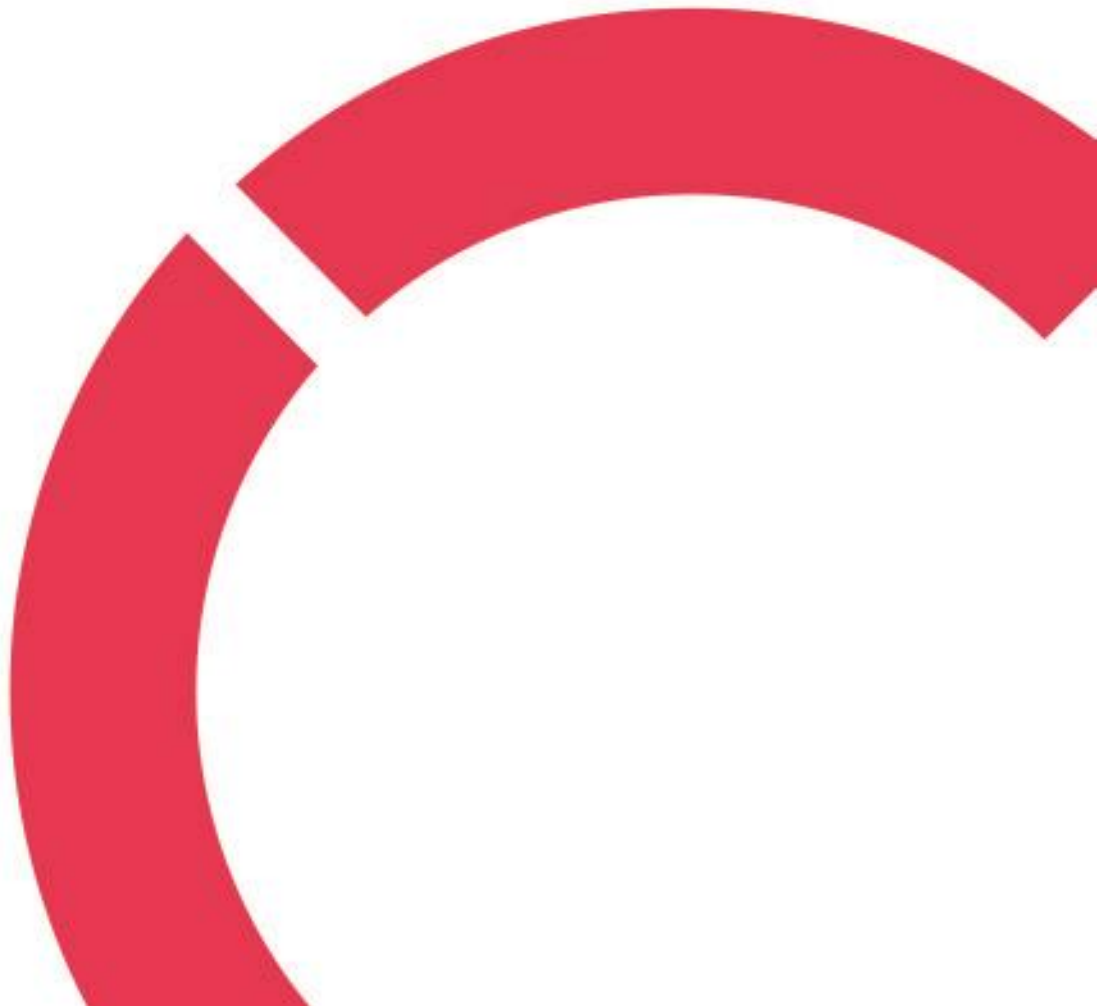
**Analysing Platforms and Tools for Business Growth**

**Thesis**

**CENTRIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES**

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**ABSTRACT**

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| <p>This thesis explored digital marketing practices, goals, and challenges of businesses across various industries, focusing on identifying common strategies, performance metrics, and budgetary considerations. A survey was used to collect data from micro to large businesses in Finland to examine how they leverage digital platforms to achieve primary goals such as increasing sales, building brand awareness, and acquiring new customers.</p> <p>The results showed that platforms like Facebook and Instagram dominate the digital presence of most respondents, and newer platforms like TikTok and YouTube remain underutilized. Popular strategies include social media marketing, SEO, and content marketing, with metrics such as website traffic and engagement rates most frequently tracked to evaluate performance.</p> <p>Limited budgets and the difficulty of managing multiple platforms are the main challenges among the respondents, indicating resource limitations as a critical factor in digital marketing decision-making. Although most businesses intend to maintain their current digital marketing budgets, a portion plans to increase spending on digital marketing, showing cautious optimism toward digital growth.</p> |                             |   |
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**ABSTRACT**  
**CONTENTS**

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>                          | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>2 CHARACTERISTICS OF DIGITAL MARKETING .....</b> | <b>3</b>  |
| 2.1 The 5D's of digital marketing .....             | 4         |
| 2.2 Dynamic customer segmentation .....             | 4         |
| 2.3 Challenges of digital marketing .....           | 6         |
| 2.4 Creating a digital marketing plan .....         | 7         |
| <b>3 DIGITAL MARKETING CHANNELS .....</b>           | <b>10</b> |
| 3.1 Search engine marketing .....                   | 10        |
| 3.2 Social media marketing .....                    | 12        |
| 3.3 Display- and video marketing .....              | 18        |
| 3.4 Mobile- and email marketing.....                | 20        |
| 3.5 Partnership and referral marketing.....         | 22        |
| 3.6 Influencer marketing .....                      | 25        |
| <b>4 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>       | <b>27</b> |
| 4.1 Quantitative research method.....               | 27        |
| 4.2 Validity and reliability .....                  | 28        |
| <b>5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION .....</b>               | <b>30</b> |
| <b>6 CONCLUSIONS .....</b>                          | <b>48</b> |
| <b>REFERENCES.....</b>                              | <b>50</b> |
| <b>APPENDIX 1</b>                                   |           |

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis brings up the history of digital marketing evolution, and how it came to be such an important part of today's marketing strategies. The thesis introduces different digital marketing channels and explains how businesses can use them to gain a competitive edge. The thesis also presents the features of each of the digital marketing channels that will help a business find the most effective way to market its products or services to the right customer segment. Digital marketing has become a vital component for companies that seek growth in today's competitive market. By leveraging online channels to reach new customers and connect with them, digital marketing offers companies new opportunities to increase their market share. As new technologies have become part of our everyday lives, traditional marketing efforts have become less cost-effective. Digital marketing helps businesses to create content that instantly reaches a wider audience.

Many businesses find it difficult to successfully leverage digital marketing channels to fuel their growth. With no clear strategic framework companies will not hit their desired targets for the marketing efforts. This in turn leads to wasted time and opportunity that will leave the company behind in a highly competitive market. This thesis will outline the major obstacles that companies face when utilizing digital marketing platforms. Coordination between content published on various marketing platforms is key to creating content that raises interest and engagement among the customers. The aim of the thesis is to present an overview of digital marketing that is useful for businesses wanting to increase their sales and exposure to potential customers. The main objective of the thesis is to identify and explain the most important digital marketing tools and the strategies that can be implemented to increase growth and build brand awareness and customer engagement. The thesis will explore various digital marketing tools such as social media platforms, search engine optimization (SEO), Search Engine Advertising (SEA), email and newsletter marketing, and content marketing, looking into their specific functionalities and effectiveness in different business contexts.

The thesis is based on available theories on digital marketing. The thesis introduces tools and platforms that are commonly used by companies today for digital marketing purposes. The thesis also presents theory on how to create a functioning digital marketing plan and addresses common challenges in the digital marketing environment.

The thesis uses quantitative research in the form of a survey that was sent out to businesses via email. The businesses operate within different industries and are of various sizes. All responding businesses are located in Finland. The survey poses questions about how businesses handle digital marketing, and whether they outsource it or manage it internally. The survey also contains questions on the marketing plan and metrics used to review the marketing efforts.

## 2 CHARACTERISTICS OF DIGITAL MARKETING

As Ryan (2014, 2-3) states, the history of digital marketing started in the late 1990s but advertising as a phenomenon has been around since ancient Egypt, where papyrus was used to make fliers. The importance of word-of-mouth was recognized already then, and throughout time people have been using all forms of media available to influence and make an impact on others. The printing technique was developed during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries and is considered a breakthrough in marketing. Advertising in newspapers was made possible in England during the 17<sup>th</sup> century and subsequently, the new marketing method started to spread globally. This was the seed of what we today know as mass-media advertising. (Ryan 2014, 2-3.)

The popularity of newspaper advertising kept growing during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, and at the same time, mail-order advertising began to take off. This is the beginning of today's vast direct mail and direct response sector. The first advertising firm was founded in Philadelphia in 1843. At first advertising agencies were simply brokers of ad space in newspapers, but they soon expanded to become full-service businesses offering creative services as well as ad-placement services to their customers. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the invention of radio and TV marked a new milestone for marketing, offering new media for businesses to use. As the century came to an end, the internet broke through among trendsetters and turned into a useful tool for commerce and communication for the general public. (Ryan 2014, 2-3.)

Today the internet has become an important part of people's lives, and it has become easy for businesses to reach customers all over the globe. Consumers have a wider selection of products available for purchase, and prices often vary between sellers. The decision-making process for the consumer is faster when different offers are directly comparable on the screen. The evolution of digital marketing has brought more negotiation power to consumers and put more pressure on companies to build strong brands. The consumer buying process has been simplified, and the selection of available products has been increased with digital marketing. Another positive outcome for the buyer is cheaper alternatives, or simply being able to spend less for the same item since offers from different stores are easier to find. (Ström & Vendel 2021, 9.)

## **2.1 The 5D's of digital marketing**

To better realize how vital digital marketing is for marketing in the future it is good to imagine the different scenarios on how to understand and manage audience interactions. These days, digital marketing encompasses far more than just websites. It involves a broader range of audience interaction and requires us to evaluate how companies can meet their marketing goals by looking at the rate of adoption in customers. To accomplish the marketing goals, digital marketing includes utilizing the 5Ds for handling interactions. These are digital devices, digital platforms, digital media, digital data, and digital technology. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 5.)

The interaction of the audience nowadays spans to using multiple digital devices such as tablets, laptops, smartphones, computers, television, devices for gaming, as well as virtual assistants. A browser created by e.g. Google or Microsoft, or an app from popular platforms or online services like YouTube, X, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and Apple is used for the majority of interactions on these devices. Digital media are the many different channels for communication that one can use to reach the target audience and engage with them. These involve messaging, email, advertising, social networks, and search engines. According to Ström & Vendel (2021, 20), email and SMS are specifically referred to as direct digital media. As businesses collect more digital data on the profiles of customers and their interactions, a majority of countries have legislation that protects the data and the customers. Digital technology refers to marketing technology or “martech” in short. This technology allows for the creation of interactive user experiences through websites and apps on smartphones. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 6; Ström & Vendel 2021, 6.)

## **2.2 Dynamic customer segmentation**

Grensman (2020, 112) states that segmentation is key to successful communication since the marketing becomes more efficient when targeted at a specific group of customers. A customer segment consists of people with similar needs, who can be met and targeted with the same method. (Grensman 2020, 112.) Digital marketing has opened up the possibility of dynamic customer segmentation. In traditional marketing, customers have more or less value to the company based on their interests, needs, and behavior. The important customers already know and like the brand and are regular customers. Traditional marketing efforts target these customers to increase their purchases, thus saving marketing costs and increasing profitability. In traditional marketing companies have often selected the customer

segment based on static data, for example surveys and interviews. Static data does not take into consideration that the customer's situation, behavior, or values may have changed. Hence, new selling opportunities may be missed. (Ström & Vendel 2021, 68-69.)

Through digital marketing channels, companies can apply dynamic customer segmentation. Factoring in the customer's situation in real-time, dynamic segmentation makes it possible to reach a selected audience with selected content at a specific time. This is called contextual marketing. Stable segmentation models based on stable factors act as the base structure for contextual marketing. The segmentation will then be fine-tuned based on each unique scenario. Different goals of segmenting the customers are for example to increase traffic, to convert new customers, or to increase brand loyalty. (Ström & Vendel 2021, 70.)

Social listening can be used as a method for customer segmentation. Billions of social media interactions occur daily, many of which are relevant to businesses and cover topics like the brand, competitors, industry, and customer needs. Social listening and monitoring tools help a company find valuable insights within this data by searching specific keywords, such as your brand name, to extract relevant content. As shown in Figure 1, social listening refers to the process of finding and examining information that has been posted on social media sites. This is typically done by concentrating on a particular search word, e.g. a brand name. (Meltwater 2024)

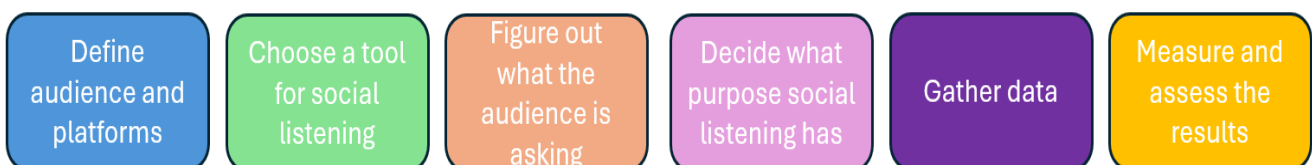


FIGURE 1: The process of social listening. (Adapted from Patel, 2024)

Present-day social listening services compile information from a variety of sources, including blogs, discussion boards, consumer reviews, and social media platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. It is also possible to scan through podcast material using AI technology. This dataset can then be analyzed for insights, which benefit social media marketing efforts and make it possible to develop data-driven campaigns aligned with business goals. (Meltwater, 2024)

### 2.3 Challenges of digital marketing

One of the major challenges in digital marketing today is the constantly changing platforms. Marketers have difficulties with post ranks and engagement swings because of shifting platform algorithms, particularly in multi-channel marketing. Adopting an agile mentality is a smart move. A business should stay informed of market developments, invest in platform knowledge, and provide adaptable content for cross-platform usage. To improve the tactics, it is good to use data insights from dashboards and tracking tools. This method makes multi-channel navigation easier and aids in successfully addressing important digital marketing issues. (IDEE 2024)

Since there are numerous large brands that do digital marketing today, the competition within the field is high. Due to smaller investment possibilities and smaller market presence, new businesses find it very difficult to compete with major brands. Businesses need to pay attention to authenticity and niche, and properly adapt the published content to the target demographic highlighting the special qualities of the business. Real, tailored interactions may help to overcome this digital marketing difficulty by enhancing brand identification and making the business stand out from more established rivals. (IDEE 2024)

In a busy online environment, producing original, captivating content is a major digital marketing problem that calls for flexibility and inventiveness. To stand out, the business can use a variety of information types, such as infographics, videos, and behind-the-scenes photos. Businesses can use AI to create personalized posts with filters to target a specific group of people. Creating a content calendar with a variety of ideas to keep up a consistent flow of interesting material is helpful when managing the digital marketing. Businesses often find it difficult to develop a successful content strategy. Determining the audience's preferences and prioritizing them in the content is important. Businesses can utilize engagement metrics and surveys to make content that appeals to readers. (IDEE 2024)

Another common challenge in digital marketing is keeping all content and ads mobile-friendly. More consumers than ever before are using smartphones and tablets for browsing and purchasing. It is crucial to make sure that the website is optimized for mobile viewing, as over half of all internet users now shops on mobile devices. A study by App Annie claims that COVID has permanently altered consumer behavior on mobile devices, users now spend 25% more time on their applications than they did previously. (DMCG Global 2022).

Developing a strategy for omnichannel marketing is an effective way to meet the customer's needs but can be challenging for new businesses. Customers are increasingly using all available channels, both online and offline, to obtain what they desire. However, omnichannel marketing recognizes that different customers have different needs. While some consumers prefer clear but simple, round-the-clock contacts, others demand greater assistance for certain transactions. Therefore, businesses that offer a range of smoothly connected channels and guide consumers toward the most effective solutions are engaging in effective omnichannel marketing. (McKinsey & Company 2024)

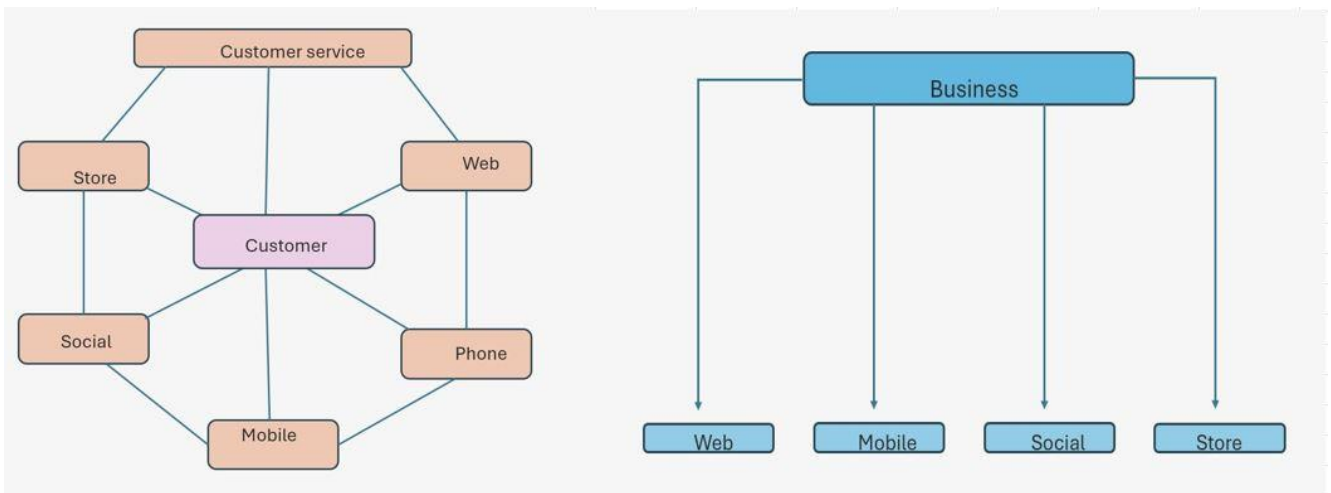


FIGURE 2: The difference between customer-focused omnichannel marketing (left) and company-focused multichannel marketing (right). (Adapted from Semrush 2023)

A practical example of a situation where omnichannel is customer-focused is when a customer researches a product, e.g. a shirt on their laptop, and then visits a physical store to try it on. Before making a purchase, the customer might use the brand's app to ask a question of customer service. Together, these various touchpoints guarantee that consumer experiences are coherent and consistent, as explained in Figure 2. Omnichannel marketing increases consumer happiness by offering a smooth experience. (Semrush 2023)

## 2.4 Creating a digital marketing plan

When a business decides to start marketing through digital channels a plan for the marketing efforts is crucial. The plan has to cover the company's main goals with the marketing, beginning with an over-

look of where they stand today and who their customers are today. The plan covers which digital marketing tools will be used to reach the goals. The effectiveness of the plan is directly connected to how specific the plan is. Not only is the plan a roadmap for digital marketing, but it is also a means of measuring how successful the marketing efforts have been. There are six stages to making the plan, as shown in Figure 3. (Hollensen, Kotler & Opresnik 2017, 4)

The first stage of creating the plan is to figure out the main objectives and targets. When a company has set clear targets for a marketing campaign, the follow-up is also easier since they can determine and recognize when the campaign it is not going to plan or when it falls short of the goals. This makes it possible to quickly respond and fix the problem. The objectives of the plan also involve the ROI of the marketing efforts, i.e. the Return on Investment. A good marketing plan takes advanced metrics into account, such as generated leads, conversion rate, and web referrals. (Hollensen et al. 2017, 4-5)

The second step is to assess where the company stands today in terms of social media activity and how it compares to the competitors' efforts on social media. (Hollensen et al. 2017, 6-7) A SWOT analysis is a simple yet effective tool to assess the company and analyse its closest business environment. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick 2019, 148) The plan preferably contains information on the online platforms that current and potential customers use the most, and through which platforms the majority of the company's followers are connecting with them today. An audit is a good way of keeping track of important numbers and platforms, and the audit needs to be updated regularly. Each platform used by the company for marketing purposes should have a mission statement - the company needs to have a clear reason for using the platform. If the need for using a platform changes in the future so that the mission statement no longer applies, the account on said platform should be deleted. (Hollensen et al. 2017, 6-7)

When the plan includes a clear assessment of where the company stands today, in the third step it is time to choose which platforms will be used from now on. These will be the ones that best fit the businesses' mission and goals with the marketing. Selected platforms to work with must have an up-to-date company profile that speaks to the audience specific to that platform. To engage with a larger audience the company can optimize the profiles for SEO, Search Engine Optimization, which will steer web traffic to their platforms, and uploaded content can be cross-promoted to different platforms. Information on the company needs to be completed in full on each platform, and pictures and written text have to be optimized for the platform it is used on. (Hollensen et al. 2017, 7-8)

The fourth step is to look at what competitors and industry leaders are doing to get inspiration for creating their own content. Awareness of what types of content are popular among the audience helps the business to grow on the platform. Pay attention to the writing style and analyze how e.g. influencers write texts that catch the attention of their audience. Timing also plays an important role in publishing content that quickly becomes popular, so it is good to plan when content should be published. (Hollensen et al. 2017, 8)

Creating a plan for the content and timing is the fifth step of the process. The plan covers strategies that will be used to make and publish content on the platforms and a calendar-based time plan for releasing content. The plan needs to cover what kinds of content will be published and how often, which audience will be targeted, and how the content will be promoted. The plan also specifies who will be creating the content. The time plan covers the dates and times of content publishing during the marketing campaign. Scheduling content release means that the company can work in advance and stressful and rushed writing can be avoided. Previously in the making of the digital marketing plan, the company has assigned mission statements to each platform used for marketing. If the company has e.g. set up a LinkedIn profile intended to generate leads, they have to make sure that the content published on LinkedIn is sufficient in terms of lead-generating content. (Hollensen et al. 2017, 8-9)

Finally, the sixth step according to Hollensen et al. (2017, 10-11) is to test and evaluate the marketing plan and to continuously make necessary adjustments to it. This is important to get a clear understanding of which strategies work well and which do not, thus the company will use the resources more efficiently. URL shorteners are useful when wanting to find out which links get the most clicks. Google Analytics assists with measuring track page visitors when they originate from social media. The company can also ask the audience for their opinion on the content through surveys conducted either online or offline. A digital marketing plan needs to be consistently reviewed and changed to stay up to date. New platforms or networks bring new opportunities, and the company has to set new mission statements and goals. A growing business needs to increase its presence on digital platforms while taking into account new geographical areas with potential customers. (Hollensen et al. 2017, 10-11)

### 3 DIGITAL MARKETING CHANNELS

An essential part of marketing is creating content of high quality; however, it is at least as important to effectively market the content. Companies can develop strategies to bring their content to the customer's attention by getting their ads good visibility in the search engines. This is called Search Engine Marketing, or SEM. SEM can be split into two subcategories; Search Engine Advertising, referred to as SEA, and Search Engine Optimization, referred to as SEO. (Grensman 2020, 227)

#### 3.1 Search engine marketing

Search Engine Advertising includes all kinds of advertising in a search engine where the company pays for the ad to be published. The most common way of payment for advertising is PPC, which stands for Pay-Per-Click. This means that the company pays a certain amount of money for each click the ad gets. Another common way to pay for search engine ads is CPM, which stands for Cost per Thousand and refers to an agreed-upon price per one thousand views. (Grensman 2020, 236-242)

Search engine advertising can be done e.g. in Google Ads. When a company wants its ad to show as one of the first ones on the results page in Google, the advertising service used to accomplish this is called Google Adwords. Adwords uses keywords to match what the customer is searching for with what a company advertises through the service. Adwords operates through a bidding system. The company writes a text, including important keywords, that goes together with the ad, and places a bid on how much they are willing to pay for the ad spot on the results page. The highest bidding companies get their ad published. (Grensman 2020, 237-242) Target-based advertising targets customers who have previously shown interest in a product or service that the advertising company offers, and these ads are only visible to that certain target group. Target-based advertising often has a high conversion rate since the customer already has shown interest in what the company advertises. (Grensman 2020, 242)

Bing Ads, also known as Microsoft Ads, is another platform that is commonly used in Search engine advertising. It works similarly to Google Ads; the company places bids on certain keywords and their ad pops up when someone searches for these keywords in Bing. The advertiser then pays a small sum for each click the ad gets (PPC). Bing Ads however is cheaper than Google Ads, and there is less competition for keywords. On many workplace computers, Bing comes pre-installed as the default search

engine. Hence, Bing Ads can be beneficial for B2B advertising, as the audience is generally educated and often works with business or technology. (Brightbid 2023)

SEO aims to give the company a good spot on the results page when the customer does an organic search for a product or service that the company offers. (Grensman 2020, 227.) The process of optimizing the content for webpages for users and search engines is known as on-page SEO, it can boost organic traffic and page ranking on Google's search engine. Optimizing for URLs, search intent, title tags, and internal links is typical on-page SEO activity. Everything you do internally or on a webpage to raise the ranking of the webpage is called on-page SEO. When a user makes a query on Google the search engine looks at SEO elements such as keywords and other on-page SEO to meet what the user searched for. When Google ranks pages, on-page SEO is important in the ranking. Google uses an algorithm that is ongoingly evolving, but the user experience is a main focal point for Google and its mantra of people-first content that they advocate. Therefore, it is more crucial than ever to create content that gives value to users and matches their intent. (Lyons 2023.)

Search engine optimization includes off-page SEO which is essential to bringing in more traffic and raising the ranking of business websites in search engines. To rank higher in organic search engine results, all actions that are done externally on a website are commonly called off-page SEO, it also goes under the name off-site SEO. Link building is the process of obtaining backlinks from other websites to your website and it is a key component of off-page SEO. The authority of your website is dependent on how many websites link back to your website, the more numbers of backlinks the higher the chance of showing up in more organic searchers, which is the goal of off-page SEO. (Evan Tarver 2023)

When search engines recommend websites to users, the reputation of the websites is a major factor when it decides to show them among the results. By improving the credibility of your website's off-page SEO it is more likely that search engines will show your website to users that are interested in it. Expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness (EAT) are crucial algorithmic ranking criteria. The main objective is to raise the (EAT) of your website. This can be done using building links as previously mentioned, along with getting more exposure to social media influences, and brands. (Evan Tarver 2023)

### 3.2 Social media marketing

With its headquarters in California, Facebook is an American company that launched early in the year of 2004. (Hollensen et al. 2017, 59) In an effort to rebrand Facebook, the founder Mark Zuckerberg renamed it “Meta” in 2021, as he wanted the new name and platform to be associated with his plans to create a Metaverse. This would be an online environment where people could connect with each other to work, play games, or just talk. (BBC News 2021) Although Facebook was founded 20 years ago, it is still an important social media platform for businesses looking to advertise and connect with their customers. (HubSpot 2024)

The main benefits of using Facebook as a digital marketing platform are cost-efficiency and its versatility as a platform. From both a consumer and business perspective, a Facebook account is easy to set up. It instantly gives access to an audience that is both wide and diverse. According to data collected in April 2024, the top three largest Facebook audiences are found in India, the United States, and Indonesia. It has over 3 billion active users over the globe. The platform is most favoured by older generations. Younger users are still actively using Facebook but mostly for the marketplace function and events. (HubSpot 2024)

Setting up a business profile is an effective way of marketing on Facebook for free. To enhance the profile, the company needs to pay attention to choosing a proper profile picture with the brand logo on. Writing a short description of what the company does in the About section is an efficient way to quickly tell the audience what you do. Posting interesting and useful content on Facebook that people will want to like, tag others in and share creates value for the company and is a powerful way to spread the word. Contests are one of the most successful ways to run a low-cost Facebook campaign that brings the company more attention. (Hollensen et al. 2017, 59-65)

Facebook Ads Manager is a tool for companies that want to publish paid ads on Facebook. It helps the user to keep track of all the company’s campaigns that are being run on Facebook and it allows for A/B testing of the ads. A/B testing means that different versions of the same ad will be published to see which one performs better among the audience. (Buffer 2024)

Instagram is a widely used platform and is especially popular among younger audiences, which makes it a very effective digital marketing platform. Instagram is estimated to have around 2 billion active users, and according to McLachlan (2023) over 62% of social users use Instagram as a go-to platform

to find information on brands or products that raise their interest. Instagram works well for digital marketing strategies that are based on creating organic content, publishing paid ads (through Instagram Ads), influencer marketing, and using different shopping tools that are available on Instagram, such as product tags, Instagram checkout, and shopping ads. (McLachlan 2023)

A professional account is easy to set up on Instagram, and like business profiles on other social media platforms, it is important to fill in all the contact information and to use as many applicable SEO keywords as possible. The profile picture must conform to the brand and the bio section also should include a functioning URL. For a company's marketing strategy to be successful, it is crucial to know who your targeted audience is. To determine this, a company can use the analytics tool and any collected data from traditional marketing. Instagram allows the company to see where their followers are based, and which age spans most of the followers belong to. (McLachlan 2023) When publishing marketing content on a business profile, it is important to remember that visually strong content appeals to Instagram users. The platform offers an opportunity for storytelling using beautiful pictures to build brand awareness and increase company visibility. The goals of publishing content can also be e.g. to envision company culture, share news regarding the company, or present the staff working in the company. (Hollensen et al. 2017, 99-100)

TikTok is a fast-growing social media platform focusing on content in the form of short videos. The platform uses an algorithm that presents the user with new kinds of content to discover, and it has become significant for businesses looking to drive their sales up or hoping that their videos will go viral. TikTok has become one of the biggest platforms for influencer marketing with just over 1 billion users worldwide. (Sprout Social 2024) When creating content for TikTok, the business needs to make organic content that tells its story quickly and in a captivating way making the users want to somehow engage with the video. The TikTok audience consists mainly of young millennials and Generation Z. Marketing through TikTok demands a proper understanding of the targeted audience since the success of the content stands or falls with the audience's opinion of it. (SK Agency 2024)

Creating content can easily become time-consuming for the company. To be successful on TikTok, the company needs to post videos regularly, two videos per week minimum and up to four videos per day is recommended. (Sprout Social 2024) It is also possible to do paid advertising on the platform through TikTok Ads, the cost of the paid ads is bid-based and depends on e.g. ad format, bidding strategy, and

campaign goals. When using paid ads, it is important to evaluate the success of the ads in order to optimize performance. TikTok offers analytics that are helpful when determining what kinds of videos do well with the audience. (Mega Digital 2024; SK Agency 2024)

Snapchat is another platform that has risen in popularity with over 300 million users. It is a platform where people can share messages, photos, and videos with each other using many effects and filters that Snapchat is known for. The messages users send are called Snaps. The messages will disappear after users have viewed them once unless they save them. Users have their own Snapchat profiles where they can post or share content. (Panigrahi 2023; Sprout Social n.d.) Snapchat is a platform that is often overlooked when it comes to digital marketing opportunities, due to a common belief that the platform is only suitable for personal use. The fact that content posted on Snapchat is meant to be published only for a short period of time also contributes to businesses skipping out on Snapchat as a marketing channel. Only about one percent of businesses make use of Snapchat in marketing purposes. (Panigrahi 2023).

Snapchat does offer many benefits to businesses willing to look into it, especially if the business has a young target group since the biggest part of their active users are aged 18-34 and they are online on Snapchat on average 30 minutes every day. Since about 60% of the users make impulsive buying decisions, the platform can be very lucrative for brands that target Generation Z. The platform can be used for snap ads and story ads as well as a business's own filters and AR lenses. Marketing campaigns on Snapchat can be simple but effective as user-generated content is preferable on Snapchat. Panigrahi (2023) writes about a campaign carried out by the watch business Daniel Wellington, a story instructing Snapchat users how to apply the new watch sticker to a selfie. The campaign created brand awareness for Daniel Wellington as users tried out the watch stickers published their content and reposted the company's story. (Panigrahi 2023).

Snapchat offers a variety of ways to publish paid ads on the platform. Snap Ads is the most common ones and can be e.g. a regular snap, a teaser video that can take the user to watch a longer video if they are interested, a web view, which is a snap linking to a website, or an App install, taking the user to a downloadable app. Geofilters are filters available to Snapchat users only in a specific place at a specific time and are commonly used for events or locations that are important for the brand. Audience filters are only available to a predetermined target audience. Sponsored Lenses use Snapchats AI technology and are mostly used by large businesses. Sponsored Lenses have a steep price tag and are only available upon request. (Sprout Social 2024).

LinkedIn is a popular platform for B2B marketing, especially for businesses looking to generate leads and raise awareness of their brand. The platform has over 900 million users. (Sprout Social, 2024)

LinkedIn is a social media platform commonly used by businesses and recruiters who want to hire new employees and build networks in the professional world, and for job applicants who look for new job opportunities. A key difference between LinkedIn and other social media platforms is the absence of picture-sharing tools. The platform is designed to be used for business connections. (Hollensen et.al. 2019, 80) A business needs to have a clear picture of the goals they want to achieve through marketing on LinkedIn. A business is more likely to succeed with LinkedIn marketing if the business profile is optimized. It increases the reputation and portrays the brand in a favorable light. Additionally, it improves LinkedIn SEO both on the network and in search results. It is a good idea to provide more information than just the bare minimum of organizational details. Showcase the people behind the brand and what it is like working at the company. People will have a better comprehension of the identity and values of your brand as a result. (Sprout Social, 2024)

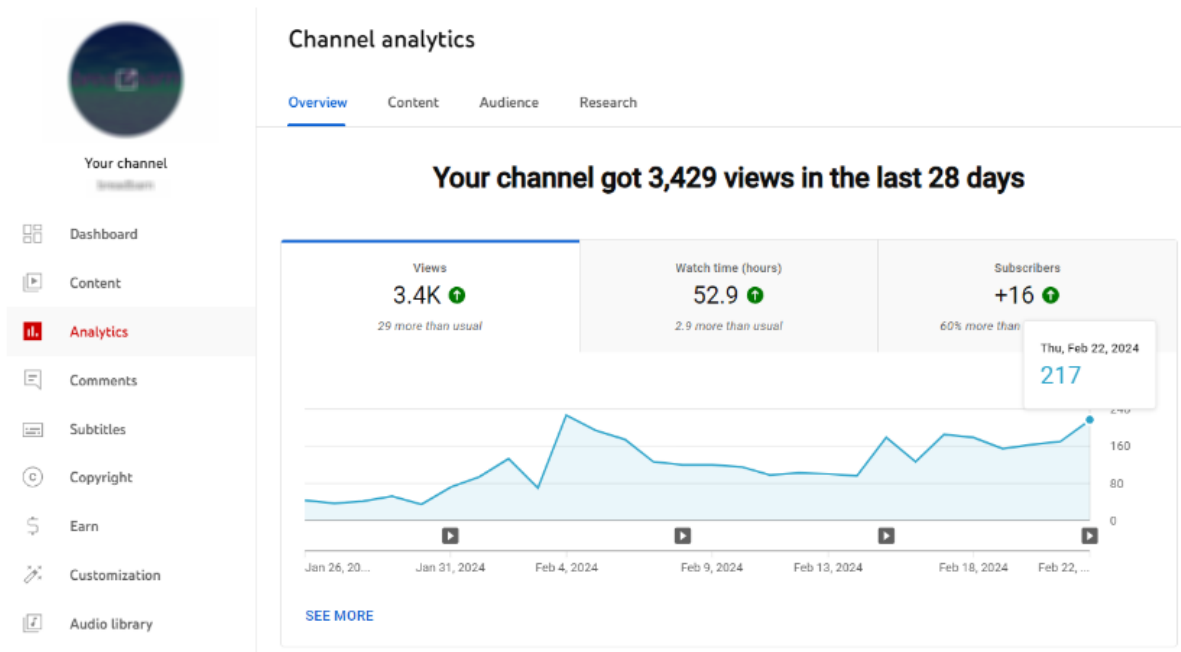
If a business is looking to pay for ads on LinkedIn it can be done through LinkedIn ads. The different ad types that the platform offers are sponsored content (native ads), sponsored messaging, dynamic ads, and text ads. The text ads are the simplest type of ads, featuring a short headline, text, and a picture (optional). The cost of these ads is PPC or CPM based. Dynamic ads are good for tailor-made marketing campaigns, sponsored content can be e.g. video ads or image ads that can be seen on the users' LinkedIn feed, and sponsored messaging allows the advertiser to send messages to users that fit within the marketing target group. Sponsored messaging ads compare to regular direct messages, and can contain external links or a button with a call to action. (McLachlan and Lauron 2024)

The platform X was previously called Twitter but had the name changed as Elon Musk purchased the platform in 2022. The platform has over 350 million users, and it experienced a dip in the number of users as a result of challenges connected to the rebranding, but according to eMarketer, X is still used by businesses for marketing purposes. X is a social media platform based on text, which means that posts (previously called tweets) typically contain only written text. X users are not on the platform to look for products to purchase, which has made marketing on X more challenging than on other social media platforms. Goals with campaigns on X can be e.g. to increase brand awareness, increase the amount of people considering purchasing from the brand, and increase conversion rate. X offers many different types of ads, such as image ads, video ads, and carousel ads. (eMarketer 2024) The cost of advertising on X has dropped over the years, but unfortunately so have the results from ad campaigns. The CTR (Click-Through-Rate) has dropped more than CPM (cost per 1000 impressions), which

should be considered a warning sign for businesses looking to publish paid advertisements on X. (Kraus Marketing 2024)

YouTube is a video-based social media platform. With its over 2.5 billion users it is the second biggest social media network worldwide. YouTube also ranks in second place among the most used platforms for product research among consumers, making it an excellent choice for businesses that want high conversion from their marketing efforts. Businesses can choose to publish their videos on the platform or use paid ads or influencer marketing to draw attention to their brand. Aside from being a significant social media platform, YouTube also works as a search engine and ranks second among the most visited websites in the world, with Google being the most visited. Additionally, social media and SEO are closely related. Having representative content on YouTube may help the business to reach more people outside of the platform. Improving the company's SEO on YouTube will likely raise exposure in Google search results since many of the results pages will show video thumbnails from YouTube. (Sprout Social 2024)

It is important to know what audience the business aims to target when creating their own content on YouTube. The gender split among YouTube users is almost even, and the platform has a large number of users of all ages. The content reaches a worldwide audience, and YouTube offers a tool called YouTube Analytics to help keep track of user demographics and sources of traffic to the company's YouTube channel. (Hootsuite 2024) Picture 1 shows what the tools overview tab can look like. (Sprout Social 2024) If a business plans to upload videos, inspiration for these videos can come from other successful YouTube channels, and good topics for the videos can be answering common questions that the customers have asked or content that relates to current trends in the field. (Hootsuite 2024)



PICTURE 1: YouTube Analytics overview tab. (Source: Sprout Social 2024)

Influencer marketing is frequently used for marketing on YouTube, and common types of content include unboxing videos and tutorials for products, as well as reviews. Influencers can also promote a company's products or services in their video in the form of micro-ads, or they can simply mention the products or services, or offer discounts. (Hootsuite 2024) YouTube Ads offers solutions to businesses who want to run paid ad campaigns on the platform. The ads that play before a video starts are called “bumper ads” and cannot be skipped by the viewer. Ads played during the video are called “In-stream ads” and can sometimes be skipped by the viewer. “In-feed ads” show up e.g. among the search results. “Masthead ads” appear on YouTube Home stream and mobile-only ads called “Outstream ads” appear on Google video partners pages. (Sprout Social 2024)

Since Google owns YouTube, any paid ad campaigns are managed through Google AdWords and are paid for on a bidding basis. One ad view costs on average 0.01-0.03 US dollars. The business can choose between the previously mentioned ad types available on YouTube. Skippable in-stream ads are an affordable option since the company only pays for the ad once it has been viewed for 30 seconds or longer, but it puts a higher demand on target audience accuracy than e.g. masthead ads, which Google recommends for reaching a wide audience since these ads are large and have good visibility at the platform's homepage. Masthead ads come with a steep price tag. Bumper ads are in general more expensive than skippable in-stream ads, since bumper ads cannot be skipped the business pays for every

view. The cost for bumper ads is between 10-20 US dollars per 1000 impressions. (Influencer Marketing Hub 2024)

### **3.3 Display- and video marketing**

To get more clicks, websites use banner ads to capture the attention of the users by placing a display ad on a certain place on the website. Banner ads can be displayed on both apps and websites. The ads are typically found in various places on the website for example below the header of the webpage but close to the start of the page. Another location of the banner ad can be found on the right side of the website. Banner ads can be spread across the website's content. They can also be positioned at the end of the browser tab. The main goal of using banner ads is to move traffic to product pages for webpages along with landing pages. Conversions are the goal, and this can come from app downloads, form submissions, and purchases. (Handley 2023)

The way a banner ad functions is to match two parties in this case a publisher and an advertiser, the first one wants to generate capital from the website, and the latter wants to showcase their ad to the visitors of the publisher's website. By using digital advertising platforms businesses can send their ads through display networks that have many websites in it. To give an example, with Google Ads businesses have access to digital properties in the count of thirty-five million, leveraging tools such as targeting tools lets businesses have control of where they will be shown. Other platforms for digital ads are Meta Ads, Microsoft Ads, Amazon Ads, and Epom. These platforms give the business the opportunity to advertise where they want to, and the format of the advertisement also has the option to target the business audience. (Handley 2023)

Using video ads to create clips that are short but engaging is a way to advertise the company's brand, service, or products. The ads can be shown on websites, social media channels as well as different available streaming services. The main goals are to draw viewers in and deliver the message of the ads that will get the company increased sales and clicks. In comparison to other types of advertising that exist, video advertising tends to be more appealing and entertaining. This form of advertising can create a meaningful connection with the viewers. (Storyly 2024)

In video ads, conversion rates have been shown in studies to considerably increase compared to other advertising formats. The reason is that video compared to pictures shows more information in a short

time frame and it is easier for viewers to understand and connect to the ad. Subsequently, a higher return on investment (ROI) can be attributed to the pulling power of the video ads to convince people to make a purchase. As times have changed people's behavior has adapted to new technologies such as mobile platforms and being online. Younger audiences primarily use content in video formats as the main channel. The growth of social media channels like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok that use video as their means of distribution has led to the rise in video advertising. (Storyly 2024)

In video advertising, various kinds of formats and styles can be used for the advertisement. Each has its use cases for connecting to the target audience, and goals of marketing for the platforms. To get the most out of the social media platforms the marketing department needs to have a great understanding of the types of video advertising that can be used. The format most people are familiar with is in-stream video ads that are being used on YouTube. The ads can come before the video starts (pre-roll), in the middle (mid-roll) of the YouTube videos, and after the video ends (post-roll). Facebook and their other platforms, Instagram along with their competitors TikTok, and Twitter use a different format for video ads. They use a blend of standalone and in-stream advertisements, the ad for standalone shows up in the feed of the users when they scroll, which makes standalone advertisements more noticeable. The outcome of the result of blending these two ads depends on how well they integrate with the organic content, delivering useful information or entertainment that is engaging in a short period. (Storyly 2024)

Video ads that are intended to be shown in non-video content contexts such as in sections of an article or website are called out-stream video advertising. These ads will immediately begin playing when they become visible on the screen, when the viewer is done with a section of the article or website and scrolls down the ad will vanish. For advertisers, this gives them more flexibility on where the ad will be placed on the website or article. Interactive video ads give people who are participating a sense of engagement, and they stay in their minds. Quizzes, polls, and areas that users can click on, and other sorts of elements that are interactive and users can interact with these are the means of how interactive video ads are being used. Other forms of video ads are shoppable ads and with this ad, users can click on the ad and buy the product from the ad itself. Hotspots or embedded links are used in the ad to call the attention of the customer to click on the ad to either buy it at once or get more information on the product. Because the journey for the customer is shorter it drives the conversion rates higher. (Storyly 2024)

Ads in virtual reality that have 360-degree viewing experience, give the viewers the ability to interact with the ad which has never been done before. It is engaging for the viewers, and they can move in the space of the ad. By doing ads in virtual reality and having a 360-degree view it offers great content for storytelling that engages the viewer, it is also effective for exhibiting the company's products. Ads for native videos are made to blend in with the content around them, the ads can be seen on news websites, blogs, and in the feeds on social media platforms. The ads for native videos are more likely to be seen and interacted with when they are discreet and relevant to the viewers' interest. (Storyly 2024)

### **3.4 Mobile- and email marketing**

Mobile marketing is an efficient way for companies to promote their products and services to their audience who are on their tablets or smartphones. The technology behind it that makes it happen is mobile SEO, geofencing, and location services. The location of the user is commonly utilized by mobile marketing to show the most relevant advertising to the user. Geofencing is a strategy that marketers utilize to determine the location of the customer. When the customer enters a geofencing zone it makes a virtual boundary around a specific zone that triggers actions or notifications on the customer's smartphone or tablet. When a restaurant has a dinner special that it wants to promote to its customers geofencing can be used to target ads to customers who are within a 4.8 km radius. Whenever a customer is moving inside or going outside the geofencing zone it is a great marketing strategy for shops that have a fixed location, customers are more likely to go to the shops when they are inside a geofencing zone versus when they are outside of the area. (Leonard 2024)

The ads are very cost-effective when considering other marketing strategies such as TV adverts. The time it takes to show the mobile ads to customers is instantaneous from the moment they are sent. It also lets you fine-tune the ads to the target audience of the company. Companies can engage with their target audience as they browse their favorite social media channels with the use of mobile marketing. The downside of mobile marketing is that customers often overlook the ads and instead swiftly swipe over or close the advertising. To have fewer ads on their devices the customer may adopt to use ad blockers and pay a small fee for the service, this has the consequence that the firm's ad is blocked. Another issue is people may set up their devices to scroll horizontally and this causes it to be harder to keep them interested as it is not shown accurately. (Leonard 2024)

There are several strategies that marketers can use to engage customers in unique ways. SMS text messaging allows businesses to send ads or links to consumers' smartphones directly, fostering two-way interaction while following opt-in/opt-out regulations. Push notifications are clickable ads from apps that are displayed on the user's home or lock screen, the engagement rate is higher than emails. In-app advertisements within games or other applications are sent at intervals based on the user data and ad network. Scannable codes are called QR codes. These are images that link to a specific website or offer when the user scans them. When combined these strategies are an effective way for businesses to reach their target audience that is cost-effective while providing ads that are aligned with their interest. (Leonard 2024)

Email marketing for companies is an essential tool for communicating with your current customers and potential future customers. For e-commerce, sales can be increased with email marketing, additionally, for platforms it can deliver more traffic, as well for e-commerce, the customer's loyalty from the platform will increase, and the payoff is they will buy more so sales will be higher than before. The benefits of email marketing when it is properly managed, are threefold. Companies can reach more customers, it is cost-effective, and metrics can be used to track the performance of companies' email marketing campaigns. To see these benefits, companies must change their email marketing efforts to quality messages that engage customers rather than looking at the number of subscribers. (Grensman & Nordström 2020, 267.)

In the year 2020, 360.4 billion emails were sent daily. In 2025 the number of emails is estimated to rise to 376.4 billion. What makes email marketing attractive for marketers is that the cost of sending emails is very cheap, with the upside that many customers will read it. A study from 2021 found that email marketing yields an average return on investment (ROI) of \$36 for each \$1 that was spent. The ROI for email marketing varies across industries they included an industry-specific breakdown of average ROI per dollar spent. Consumer goods, retail, and economics with \$45 were the clear winners with advertising, PR, and marketing firms coming second with \$42. The software and technology sectors came third with \$36. Publishing, entertainment events, sports, and media were last with \$32 for every dollar spent. This illustrates the power of email marketing with just 1 dollar spent the return for firms can be very profitable. To craft a compelling email marketing campaign the subject line must be on point as it grabs the attention of the reader and incites them to read the email. Having a subject line that is better than rivals will make the reader choose the firm email rather than a poorly written one.

Furthermore, the fact that branded emails just have an open rate of 21.33 percent highlights the impact of the subject line. (Coursera Staff 2024)

### **3.5 Partnership and referral marketing**

Companies that cooperate and network with other businesses or people are called partner networks. To improve your company operations and reach a larger audience, you may leverage the knowledge, resources, and networks of the people or organizations you choose to partner with. The benefits of partner networks is that they can build a solid foundation for the company for the future, this can be from opening up new markets with the help of partners within the network to obtaining a competitive advantage against your competitors and presenting chances for innovation taking place that may not happen otherwise and to further expand your company. The partners in the network could come from vendors, distributors, suppliers, or other companies that have a comparable customer base. Every member contributes their distinct skills and assets to the network, built via interactions that benefit both parties. (Townsend 2023) As Kotler, Armstrong, Harris and Piercy (2013) state, the effectiveness of partnerships depends on the company's ability to choose correct partners with the same idea of customer value. (Kotler et.al. 2013, 48)

There are several advantages to developing a strong network of partners for the business you run. Businesses may access a larger client base and expand their market share by collaborating with companies that are well-known in other markets. Another benefit is the sharing of resources as partner networks let you take advantage of your partners' resources, knowledge, and talents. This could come in the form of creating a new product to align promotional efforts to achieve the best results and potentially access their distribution networks. Partner network also lets companies mitigate risks by having a large pool of partners in the network that they can lean on instead of just relying on the company's own skill set in their talent pool. To maintain the continuity of the company in the face of hardship other partners might give a hand to alleviate the problem the firm is facing. The growth of the company in the partner network is very cost-effective as they can use the member's experience as well as the current infrastructure that exists in their market. This is in contrast to the company doing it all on its own by creating a new product to sell on an unknown new market. (Townsend 2023)

Finding the partner that fits your company is the first step in creating a successful partner network. The company must consider factors such as the goals of the firm and evaluate and compare possible partners that would suit the company. The framework could be to ask a few questions about what the company's goal is in the short, and long term, and what is the expected outcome of joining a partner network. When the objective of joining a partner network is sorted out the next step is to analyze members who are in the network that have common ideals like your own, market segment, and sector. Consider their experience, skills, reputation, and track record in the sector. Have their relationships been effective in the past? Do they have a business culture of being creative and thinking long-term?

(Townsend 2023)

The company needs to also consider the member's advantages and disadvantages and decide how they would suit the company's interest. Building trust with partners in the network is key as it forms a mutual understanding with each other that has a long-lasting impact on both parties. The process of building trust is to facilitate communication that gives constructive feedback on problems in projects. Keep your word and fulfill the commitments you made; this will strengthen your reputation and show that your company has integrity. Keep in mind to be supportive of the hardships and goals of your fellow partners and assist them when you are in a position to do so. The goal should be to create a partnership in which both parties have something to gain. (Townsend 2023)

Marketing through Referral is a structured strategy where companies incentivize their customers to recommend their products or services, often through rewards or discounts. Word-of-mouth marketing, on the other hand, comes spontaneously where satisfied customers share their positive experiences without explicit incentives. (Nekvasil 2023) Within referral marketing, it is common for companies to ask their customers to give them a review or add pictures of the product on social media channels. (Fredriksson 2022, 133) A business can utilize two reward options for customers who can recommend its items to others a discount or exclusive offer. To motivate consumers to promote their items, companies may also provide an affiliate scheme or collaborate with an influencer. The result is it urges consumers to engage in the company's marketing efforts by discovering a prospective customer and making referrals, in addition to sharing information on the product. For customers, the great thing about referral marketing is that it supports them as well as companies that use this form of marketing. The outcome is it builds trust and expands the customer base and the potential profits with it. (Nekvasil 2023)

According to Nekvasil (2023), this form of marketing is very cost-effective as the premise is that the company has customers who have a passion for their products or services and come up with innovative referral marketing concepts along with a strategic plan of the process that will take place to have a positive impact on the balance sheet. (Nekvasil 2023) The lifetime value of the average customer is 16 percent lower than the customers who are referred to the company's product or services, this concluded the Wharton School of Business study. (Schmitt, P., Skiera, B., van den Bulte, C. 2011) Referrals will with time give a greater return on investment vs customers who come from other sources. Compared to more conventional types of promotions, conversion rates are higher for referral marketing. (Nekvasil 2023)

Companies that sell goods via business-to-business (B2B) can use referral programs to expand their business, one way is to reward clients who recommend you to their coworkers with discounts or other benefits. Points can be distributed in a loyalty program whereby clients recommending your company to their fellow associates can earn said points. Firms that sell their services can use discounts that have an expiration date and the range can be as long as a month or just one day. Credits are another option where the firm offers the clients the possibility for their services or purchases that can be made in the future. (Nekvasil 2023)

For firms that do business-to-consumer (B2C) marketing, there are excellent chances to do referral marketing as they interact with their customers daily to make the most of this opportunity. Providing incentives in return for referrals is one of the greatest referral marketing strategies for business-to-consumer businesses. The incentives could be a coupon code, gift card, a product for free, or any other means of gift that persuades them to speak about your products to their social group. A loyalty program can also be used in this case the same criteria apply as mentioned above. Referral marketing is also good for email marketing campaigns as you can have in the email a clickable icon for your social media channels. This will enable customers to quickly and efficiently share news and products on their social media channels. When designing a referral program, the customer experience should be at the forefront, everything from the checkout page to their first interaction with the website layout must be thought out. For analysis of all referral activity, ensure that your referral program has been linked with other important systems, like your customer relationship management (CRM), eCommerce, and point-of-sale systems. (Nekvasil 2023)

### 3.6 Influencer marketing

Influencer marketing is well-known influencers cooperating with companies to showcase their products or services to their followers. Since the inception of social media, these collaborations have existed informally. It reached a point in 2009 where the US Federal Trade Commission had to intervene and start to regulate influencer marketing with the Mommy Blogger law, other countries followed suit such as the United Kingdom, China, and India. After the regulations were introduced, influencer marketing has grown to be an industry worth \$21.1 billion in 2023. Platforms that catapulted the economy of influencer marketing were social media platforms such as YouTube and Instagram in Western nations. In China WeChat and Pinduoduo were the biggest social media platforms. (McKinsey 2024)

Influencers, consumers, and brands all benefit from influencer marketing. In a survey from 2014, McKinsey found that social media had a huge impact on the purchasing decisions of consumers. The analysis of over 2,000 marketing posts by influencers in 2022 demonstrated that brands using influencer marketing will give a profitable return on investment. Becoming an influencer is an attractive career opportunity for millennials and Generation Z. When asked in a survey from 2019, 54% of the respondents stated that if they could, they would become influencers. (McKinsey 2024)

Individuals who have significant social media profiles can affect the follower's opinions so that they make a buying decision. Influencers and brands use two models of how they will collaborate. The first model is a brand deal, which is when an influencer promotes a product or service, they are then compensated a set amount for each post. For smaller influencers, the flat fees can range from 5-figure to the lowest 3-figure. A celebrity's fee for a post can be as high as six figures. The second model that brands use for making deals with influencers is in the form of affiliate marketing, the influencers will get an affiliate commission whenever a viewer uses the link when buying the product or uses a coupon code that the influencer will give them in their posts. This form of affiliate marketing can be seen, for example when an influencer makes a YouTube video and posts the affiliate link in the description box. (McKinsey 2024)

The monetary deal can fluctuate as every influencer is different and has their own set of followers. There is consensus from influencers that a price range from 100 dollars (approximately 91 euros) per 10,000 followers is reasonable. Influencer marketing and endorsements from celebrities are two different types of marketing. For companies using celebrities, they invest a lot of capital and the return on

that investment is difficult to pinpoint. The ROI of influencer marketing is better to grasp when companies can monitor metrics such as shares, likes, and discussions online and other metrics can be used to further get more insight into the return on investment. (McKinsey 2024)

There are five categories in the size of the influencers, ranging from nano, micro, medium, macro, and mega. These categories stem from the amount of followers. For nano influencers, their following count is lower than 10,000. There are between 10,000 and 50,000 followers for micro-influencers. There are 50,000 to 100,000 followers for a medium-sized influencer. There are more than 500,000 followers for macro influencers. Those with more than a million followers are considered mega influencers. It is not always the best course of action for companies to collaborate only with macro influencers, as micro-influencers with a lower following can create content that is more engaging than their macro counterparts that heavily lean on extra staff, and consultants to help them create a post. In the case of macro influencers, they might promote a lifestyle that part of the audience might think is unachievable. This gives micro-influencers an advantage as viewers can connect more to them as they seem more accessible to them. (McKinsey 2024) Another problem with macro-influencers is that their large group of followers can have very different opinions and backgrounds, which in a sense makes the influencer less cost-effective. As a marketer, the company would have spent a lot of money on a macro-influencer where perhaps only a small segment of the followers actually fit within the target audience for the marketer. (Fredriksson 2022, 140)

Two social media platforms stand out with influencer marketing. These are Instagram and TikTok. In a survey from 2022 that asked 2000 brands that are known worldwide, 80% of them said that they use Instagram. In 2023 the survey was done again, and this time TikTok was more widely used, as 56% of the participants were using the platform for their campaigns in influencer marketing. (The Marketing Hub 2024) This statistic should not discourage companies from using other platforms for their campaigns as they can find influencers who have huge followers on other platforms that may be of interest to them. The trend for influencers in the micro and medium categories is they are more active on Instagram, TikTok on the other hand those in the macro, and mega categories are found there. (McKinsey 2024) Since influencer marketing as an industry grows year by year, it becomes more difficult for both influencers and companies to stand out from the crowd. This calls for careful data analysis in order to evaluate the marketing efforts and come up with new marketing ideas when possible. (Fredriksson 2022, 141)

## **4 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of the research for this thesis is to find out which digital marketing platforms are used the most today, how much time and resources are spent on digital marketing, and whether the businesses implement any marketing strategies. The theory used for this thesis has a scientifically based foundation and consists of books, and online publications. The theory part aims to give the reader a good understanding of digital marketing, including how it operates, how vital it is, and what platforms and tools businesses may utilize in their digital marketing strategies. The research method for this thesis is quantitative. A survey has been sent out to multiple businesses in Finland, with the aim of collecting at least 30 anonymous answers. The survey contains questions relating to digital marketing practices. The survey aims to find out the trend of digital marketing practices in Finland today.

Through the survey information on the most commonly used tools and platforms for digital marketing is collected, and the results are presented in the following chapter. The aim of the survey is to find out whether the businesses follow a defined marketing plan or if they only spontaneously make updates on their marketing channels. The survey also touches on the budget for marketing efforts in relation to the company size. The survey reveals whether companies tend to outsource marketing, either entirely or partially, and what – if any- metrics are used to analyze the results and efficiency of the marketing efforts. The quantitative research method was chosen with the possibility of getting responses from a larger group of businesses. This research method also supports the goal of gathering more truthful responses because some budget-related questions may be difficult for businesses to respond to if their identity is made public and directly connected to their answers.

### **4.1 Quantitative research method**

The study plan and process that covers the range from general hypothesis to particular techniques used to gather, analyze, and interpret data is called the research approach. The most important decision one has to make is which methodology should be applied during the study of a subject. Any philosophical presumptions of the researcher, the research designs, and the techniques used in order to gather, analyze, and interpret data must be taken into consideration when making this decision. (Creswell & Creswell 2018, 50)

There are three different approaches to research, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed approach. When explaining the difference between a qualitative and a quantitative approach, it is often said that a qualitative research method uses words and open-ended inquiries, while a quantitative research method uses numbers and closed inquiries. Through the information collected, a quantitative research method studies the relationship between different variables and conducts a statistical analysis of numerical data. (Creswell & Creswell 2018, 51-52)

As Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2007) state, questionnaires are suitable for conducting descriptive research, which allows for an understanding of the variability among different situations. Questionnaires can also be successfully used in explanatory research, where the researcher will analyze and explain the relationships between the parameters, focusing on cause and effect. There are two main types of questionnaires, self-administered and interviewer-administered. Self-administered questionnaires are typically distributed online or using postal services, while interviewer-administered questionnaires are conducted via telephone calls or physical interviews. When choosing between these types of questionnaires, important factors are e.g. what kind of correspondents the researcher is targeting, the value of non-contaminated responses, and what kind of questions need to be posed. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007, 356-357)

The survey (APPENDIX 1) for this thesis was self-administered. It consisted of 19 questions split over five pages, covering e.g. platform usage for digital marketing, budget for the marketing efforts as well as digital marketing plans and reviews. The survey was sent out to a selected group of companies active in Finland, both local and remotely located, from small companies to large companies. The survey opened on October 7<sup>th</sup> and was accessible for 3.5 weeks until closed on October 31<sup>st</sup>. The survey was sent out to a total of 103 companies in Finland.

## **4.2 Validity and reliability**

How the questions are posed and the structure of the questionnaire have a significant impact on the internal validity and reliability of the data collected, as well as the obtained response rate. Accurate data collection is made possible by a valid questionnaire, and consistent data collection is ensured by a dependable one. The questionnaire must be easy to understand for the respondents, and the answer options clear and elaborate enough for the researcher to correctly interpret. (Saunders et. al. 2007, 364)

Internal validity refers to the ability of the questionnaire to assess what your research is intended to measure. The information obtained via the questionnaire must capture and reflect reality. (Saunders et. al. 2007, 366)

The questionnaire (APPENDIX 1) was available to the respondents in three different languages, English, Swedish, and Finnish, in order to ensure that the biggest part of the respondents were able to answer in their own native language, and therefore avoid misunderstanding the questions. The questions were posed in a logical order, beginning with questions regarding essential information such as size of business and field of operation.

## 5 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the survey that was sent out via e-mail to a total of 103 respondents across several different fields of operation. The survey was sent on October 7<sup>th</sup> and remained open until October 31<sup>st</sup>. A total of 30 businesses decided to answer the survey. Understanding how various businesses handle digital marketing in terms of platforms, resources, strategies, and obstacles is made possible by analyzing the results of the survey on digital marketing platforms and methods. Respondents come from a wide variety of industries, however manufacturing accounts for a sizable amount of the respondents. Respondents are also found within social services, hospitality, and other sectors. This points to the broad applicability of digital marketing in different industries. Given that most of the companies contacted have been in business for more than 10 years, it is possible that, despite their experience, they may encounter particular difficulties while adjusting to or growing their digital marketing initiatives.

All 30 respondents answered the single-selection question “What is the size of the business you represent?”, and the results indicate that businesses of varying sizes are represented. The largest group, 36.7%, are micro-enterprises with 1–10 employees, while 26.7% have over 250 employees. Because of this variety, a wide range of digital marketing strategies from various company sizes may be seen, which may have an impact on strategy complexity and the distribution of resources. Figure 1 shows the results in the form of a pie chart.

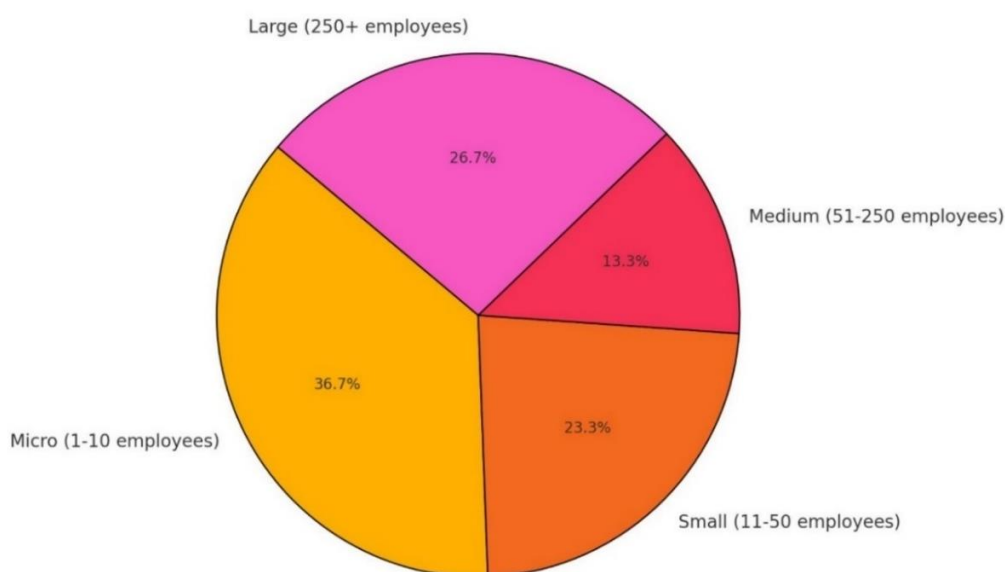


FIGURE 1. The size of the businesses represented in the survey

The second question, “What industry does your business operate in?”, shows that a majority of 43.3% of the respondents represent manufacturing, followed closely by various "Other" industries, totalling 40%. The respondents were asked to specify their industry if the “others” option was chosen, and the answers were “social services”, “social sector”, and “machine + spare parts”. Retail and technology have equal amounts of respondents, while the smallest group of respondents represents hospitality. The answers to the survey question suggest a wide range of industries are utilizing digital marketing, highlighting its importance across sectors, especially for manufacturing companies.

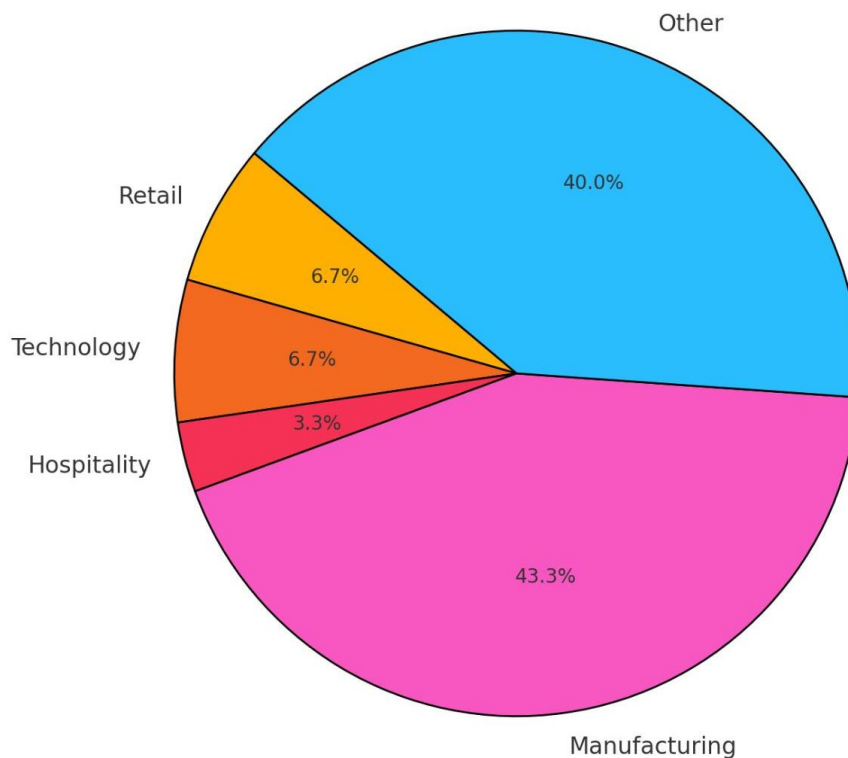


FIGURE 2. The industry of operation of responding businesses

Figure 3 shows how the respondents answered the question “How long has your business been operating?”. The vast majority of respondents' firms (80%) have been in operation for more than a decade, showing that they are well-established organizations. This longevity could indicate that these businesses have sophisticated marketing strategies, but they might also have trouble adjusting to more recent digital techniques. 0% of the responding firms have been in business for less than a year.

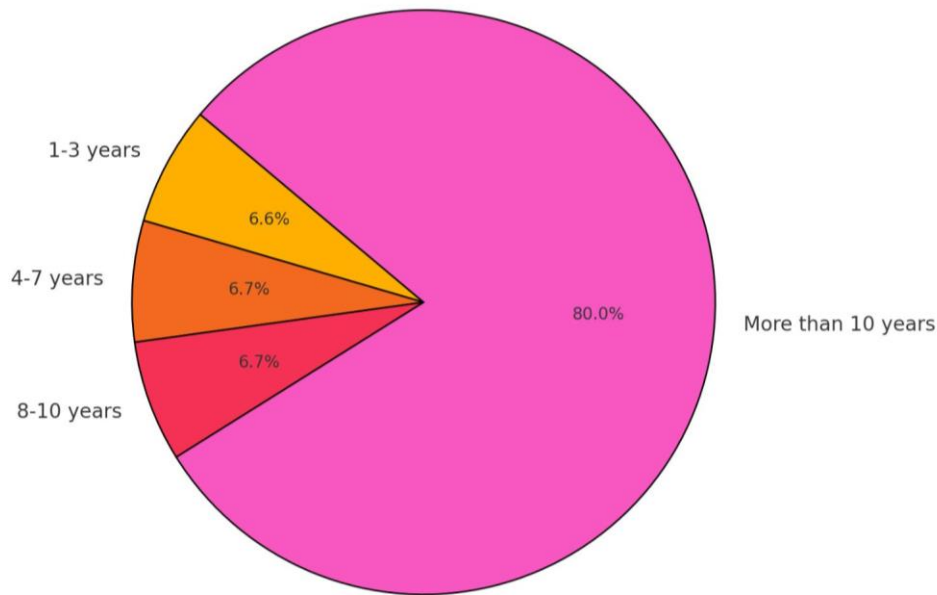


FIGURE 3. Business operating time

The fourth question presented to the respondents was a multi-selection question. The 30 respondents gave a total of 97 answers, which indicates that on average, the businesses have a profile on three of the mentioned platforms. Facebook (90%) and Instagram (93.3%) are the most commonly used platforms among respondents, showing their dominance in business digital presence. LinkedIn is also popular, reflecting its professional network appeal, especially for B2B marketing. YouTube is the fourth most popular platform among our respondents. No respondents reported that they use Snapchat.

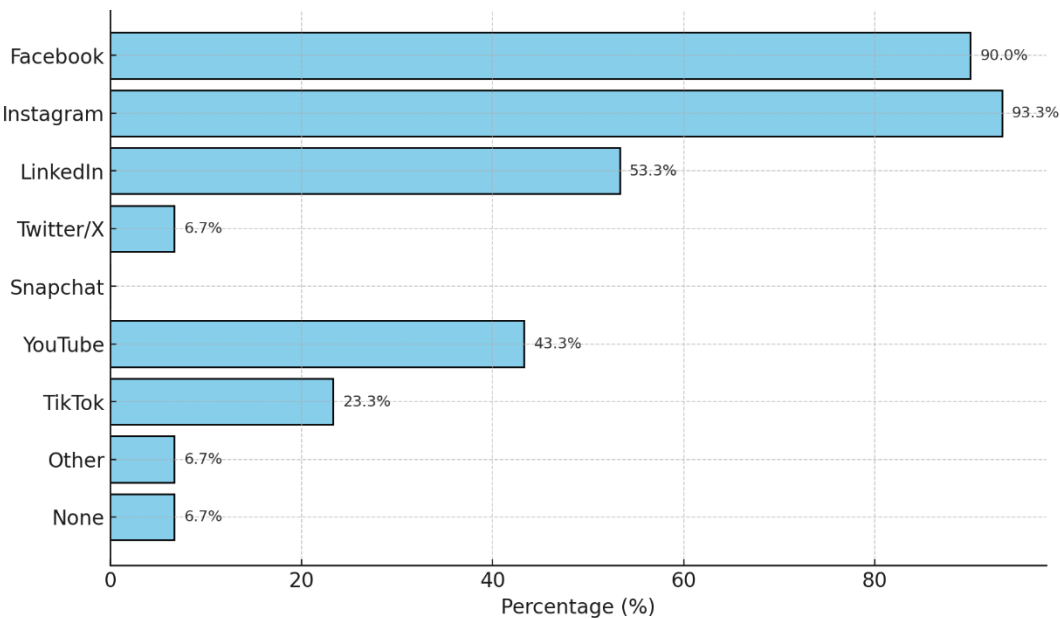


FIGURE 4. Social media platform usage by businesses

“How often do you upload content to your most frequently used platforms?” is the fifth question in the survey. The results show that most businesses (63.3%) upload content weekly, indicating a commitment to maintaining a consistent presence online. Weekly posting may suggest stability between keeping audiences engaged and managing content creation resources. A smaller segment posts daily, which suggests either a large business with a high level of resource investment or a strategy that focuses on high-frequency engagement. The variety in posting frequency—from daily to rarely—reflects different content strategies based on goals, industry, and audience behavior. Businesses posting monthly or less frequently may focus on quality over quantity, targeting audiences with in-depth content. The responses show the diverse approaches businesses use to stay relevant and connect with their target audiences.

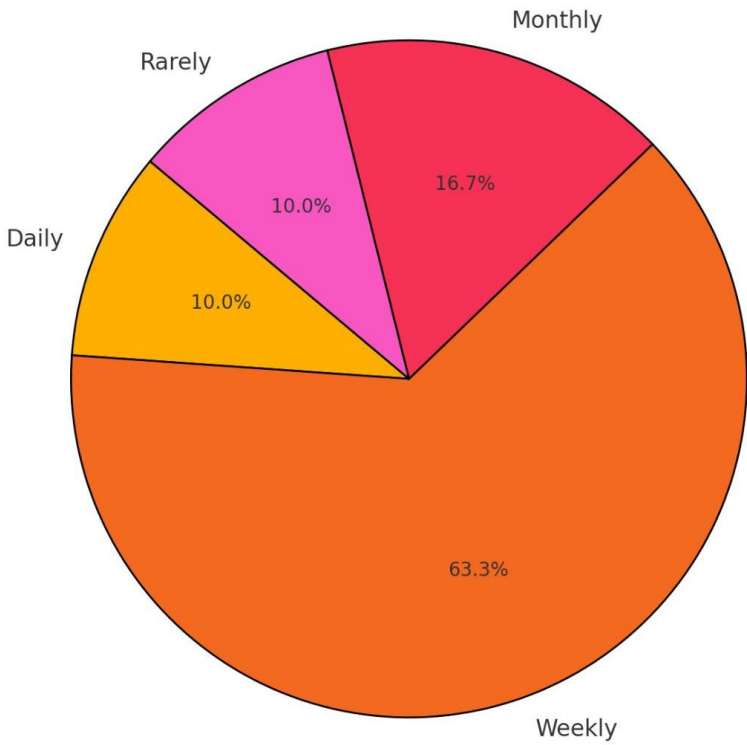


FIGURE 5. Content upload frequency

The sixth question in the survey is “Which of the following platforms does your business use for paid advertising?”. Respondents were allowed to select all options that apply. The question generated 110 answers from the 30 respondents.

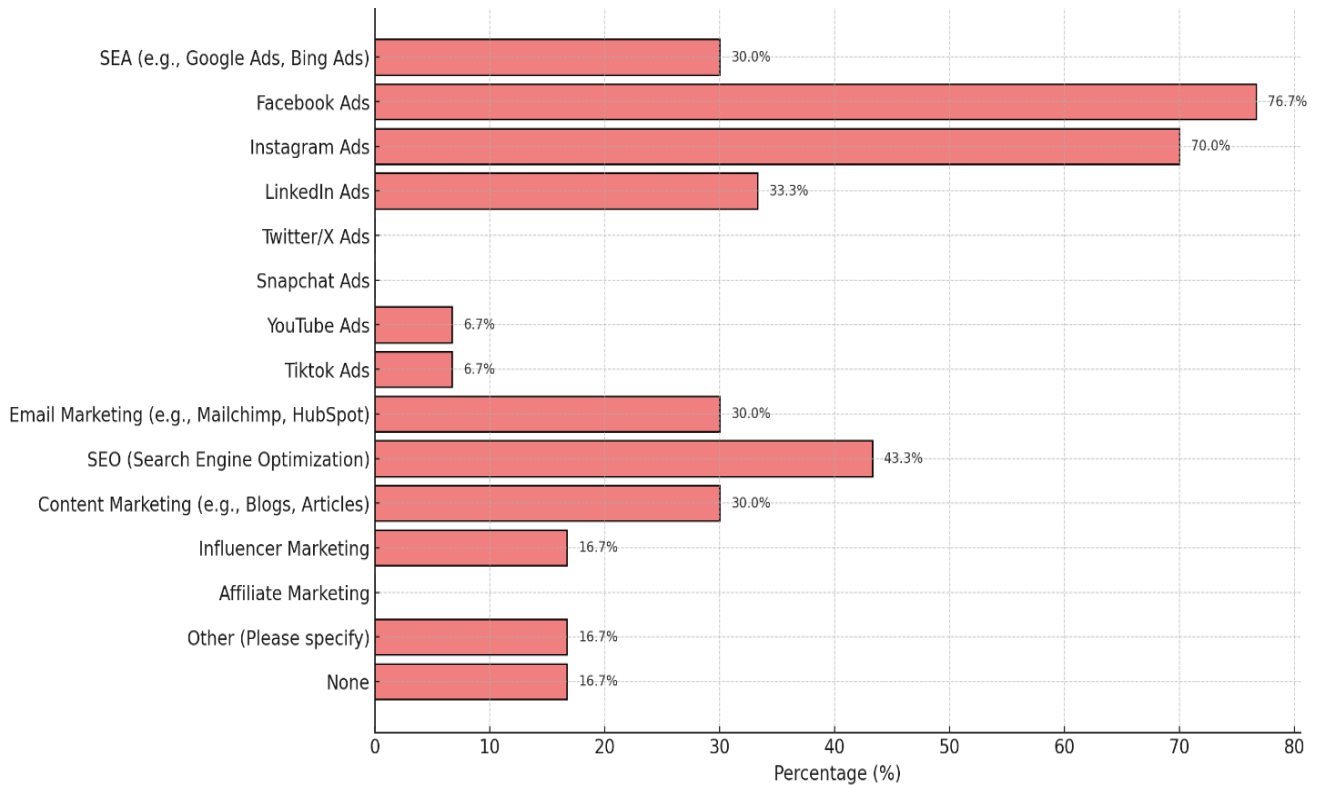


FIGURE 6. Platforms used for paid advertising

Facebook Ads (76.7%) and Instagram Ads (70%) are the leading platforms for paid advertising among respondents, indicating that businesses value these platforms for their reach and targeted ad capabilities. Both platforms offer good targeting options and wide audience appeal, making them attractive for businesses looking to enhance their visibility. 43.3% of respondents use SEO. This highlights that nearly half of the responding businesses consider organic search visibility as part of their advertising strategy. SEA platforms, such as Google Ads, are used by 30%, suggesting that search-based advertising is less of a priority than social ads. This is possibly due to its complexity or cost. LinkedIn Ads (33.3%) are also utilized, particularly for B2B marketing, where reaching professionals is key. Interestingly, newer platforms like TikTok (6.7%) and YouTube (6.7%) are underused, potentially due to a lack of familiarity or uncertainty about ROI. The strong reliance on Facebook and Instagram reflects comfort with these platforms' ad tools, while other platforms remain underexplored.

The respondents were then asked to respond to the question “Which digital marketing platform do you consider the most effective for your business?”. This is a multi-selection question that generated 66 answers from the 30 respondents.

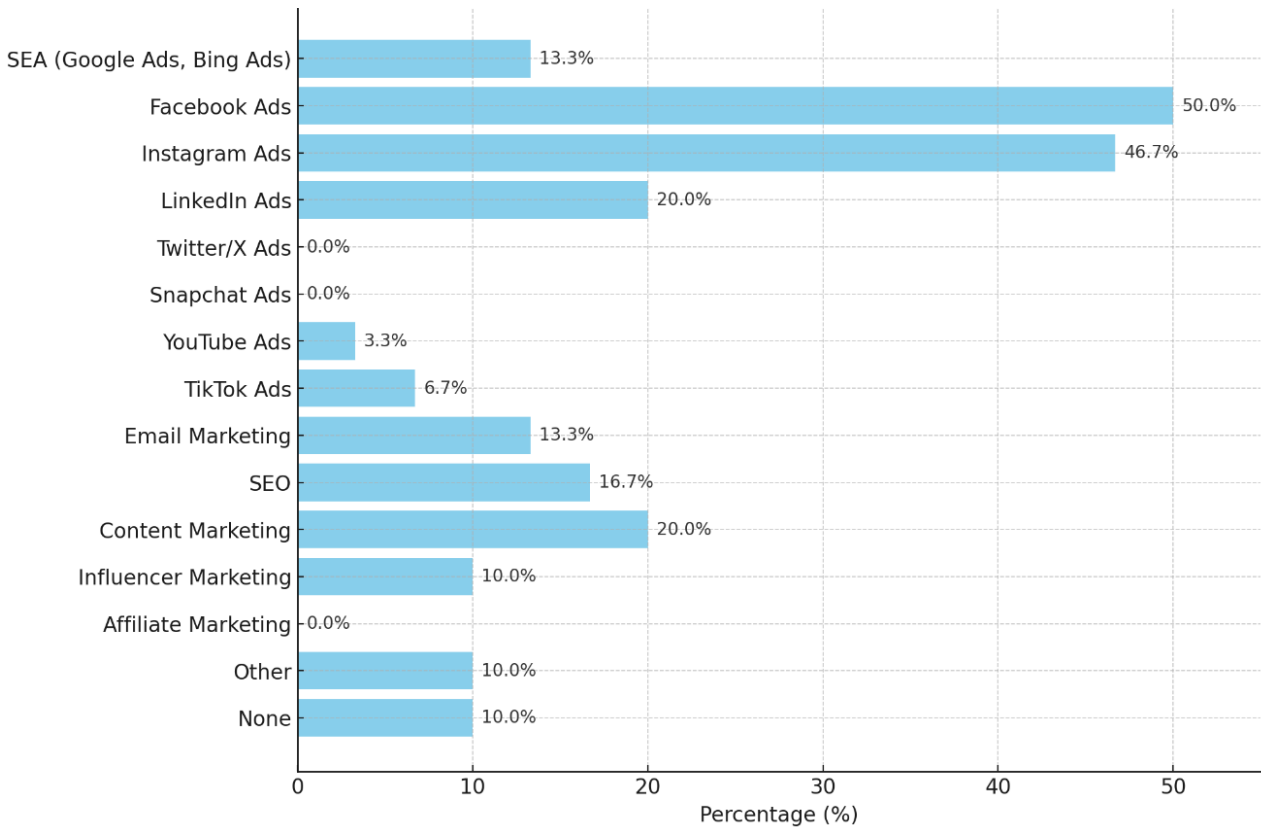


FIGURE 7. The platforms considered most effective by businesses

According to 50% of respondents, Facebook and Instagram are the most effective digital marketing platforms, with their ability to reach large, active audiences. Additionally, SEO is highly valued by 17% of respondents, indicating that some organizations place a high value on organic search presence. LinkedIn's perceived effectiveness (20%) points to its importance for businesses targeting professional networks and B2B clients. The focus on these platforms indicates a combination of professional reach, organic exposure, and audience interaction. The results suggest that companies give preference to channels with a track record of success, while Twitter/X, Snapchat, and affiliate marketing do not interest the responding businesses. Marketing goals, audience demographics, and industry may all have an impact on these choices.

In question eight, the correspondents were asked "What percentage of your overall marketing budget is allocated to digital marketing?". The majority of the respondents (33.3%) spent less than 10% of their total marketing budget on digital marketing. This limited budget spent on digital marketing may hinder the extent of the reach of their digital campaigns, particularly for small to medium-sized businesses. Around 23.3% allocated between 10-25%, showing a modest commitment to digital marketing, without integrating it fully into their overall marketing strategy. A smaller portion, 16.7%, allocates 26-

50%, suggesting a more balanced strategy. Budget constraints may make it challenging to achieve visibility and reach especially on platforms where increased advertising expenditure is necessary to have an impactful result. These restrictions highlighted a cautious approach to investing in digital marketing due to either uncertainty in ROI or perceived risks.

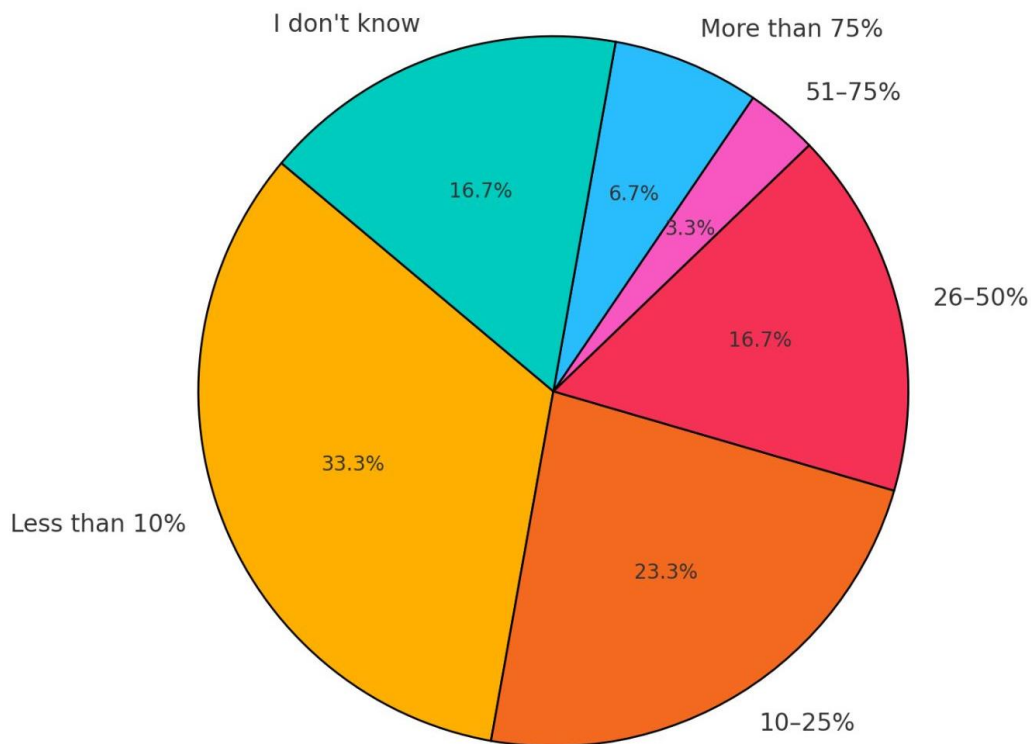


FIGURE 8. Percentage of budget allocated to digital marketing

The ninth question of the survey is “How many employees are dedicated to managing your digital marketing efforts?”. This is a multi-selection question since there is a possibility that some companies will choose to outsource a part of their digital marketing, while still managing some platforms in-house. This appears to be the case among a couple of the respondents, since the question generated 32 answers among the 30 respondents.

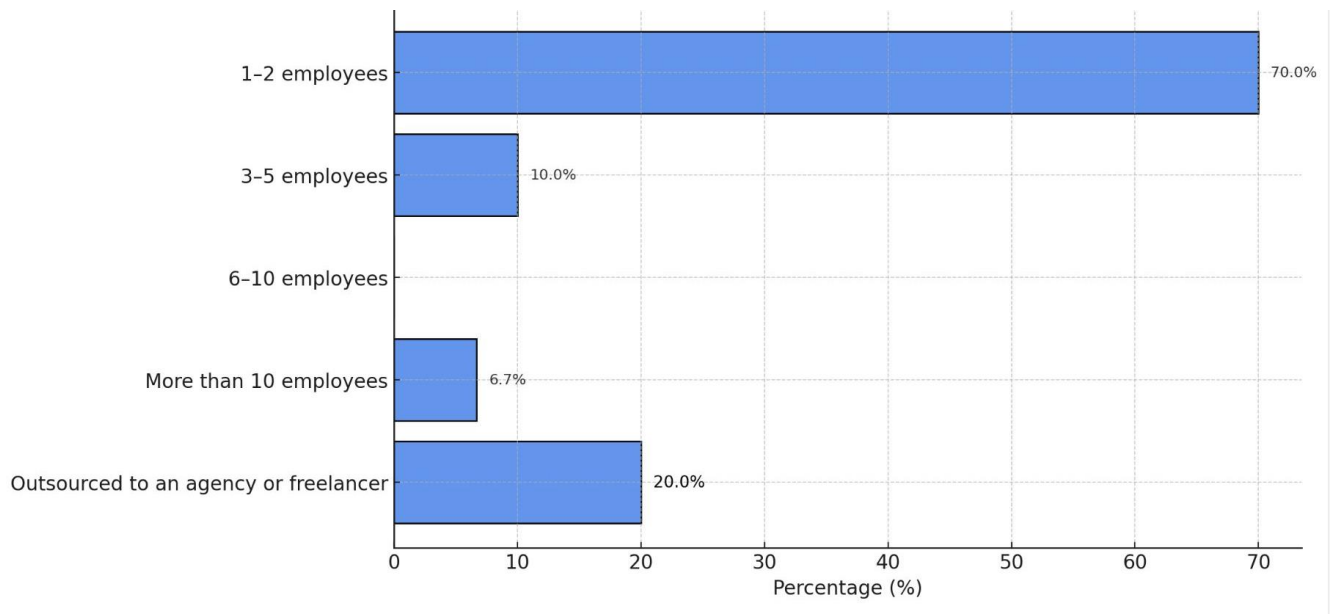


FIGURE 9. Number of employees dedicated to digital marketing

The majority of respondents (70%) only have one or two people specifically focused on digital marketing, indicating that small teams with limited resources frequently manage this task. This could make running complicated advertising and maintaining several platforms more difficult. About 20% of businesses choose to hire marketing agencies or freelancers to handle their digital marketing. This is a good way to get specialized knowledge at an affordable cost. Small in-house teams could concentrate on crucial duties like social media management and content production, but including paid advertising campaigns, SEO, and in-depth analytics can quickly become complicated. The decision to outsource indicates a need for outside knowledge, especially for companies with a shortage of in-house experience of digital marketing. Overall, the small staff dedicated to digital marketing reflects the resource limitations that many companies encounter while growing their online presence.

The following question is “On average, how much time does your business spend on digital marketing per week?”. The fact that more than half of the respondents (56.7%) say they spend fewer than five hours a week on digital marketing suggests that some of them have outsourced their digital marketing, and some respondents do not allocate much time to managing it, perhaps focusing on the most basic parts of social media presence. The businesses’ capacity to develop a thorough digital marketing strategy, monitor analytics, and successfully interact with audiences may be impacted by this.

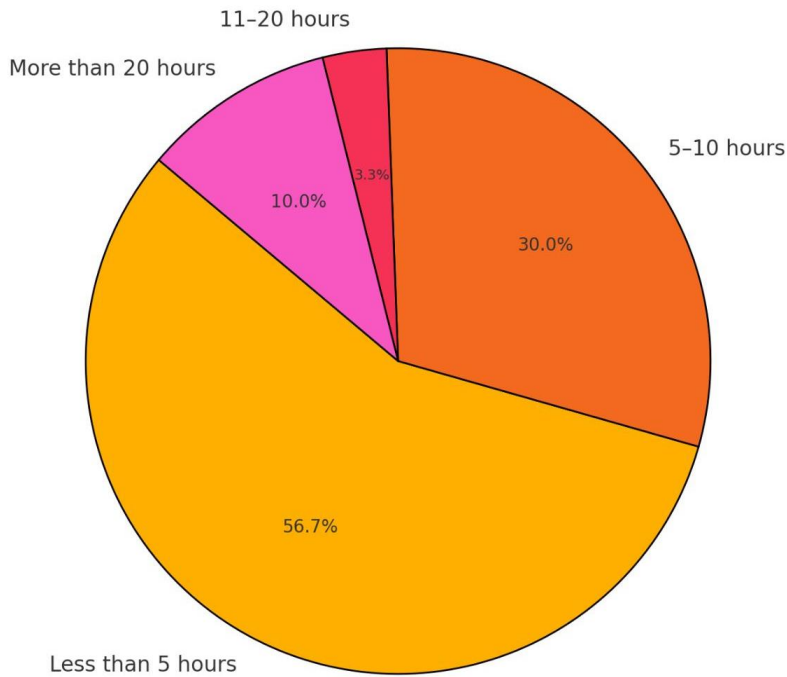


FIGURE 10. Time spent on digital marketing per week

Businesses spending 5-10 hours (30%) are more likely to engage in regular content updates and customer interactions, though they may be limited in handling multiple channels. Only a few businesses dedicate more than 20 hours, likely indicating a higher commitment to digital marketing and possibly more developed strategies. The limited time investment indicates that businesses prioritize key channels and basic strategies, potentially limiting their digital reach. This variation in time spent points to different levels of engagement with digital marketing and available resources.

The eleventh question posed to the respondents is “What tools or software do you use to manage your digital marketing?”. This is a multiple-selection question, with a text field where respondents can specify their answer if the option “Other” is selected. The question generated a total of 41 answers among the 30 respondents. 4 answers were given into the text field including the tools “Pardot” and “Meltwater”, one respondent said “I do not know, we have a team for this”, another respondent said “This is outsourced”, also indicating they do not know what tools are used.

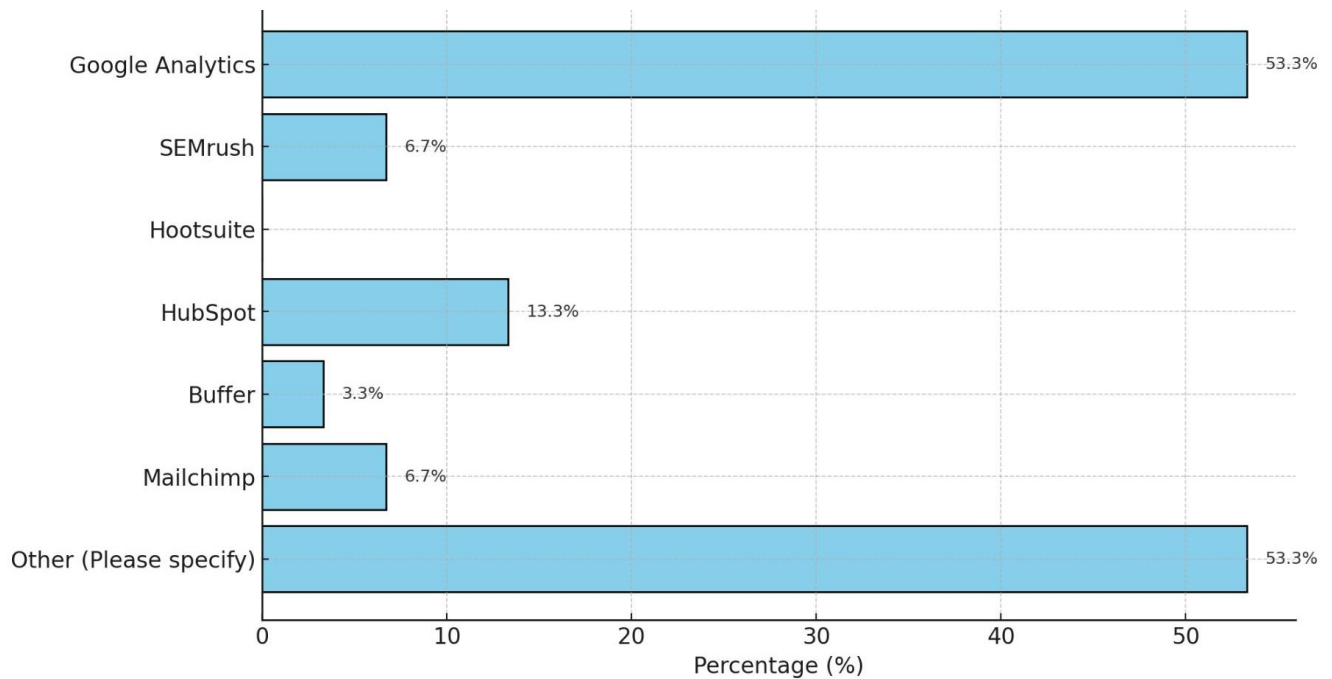


FIGURE 11. Tools used to manage digital marketing

The single most popular tool, Google Analytics, is utilized by 53.3% of users. This suggests that monitoring website performance is highly valued. Semrush (6.7%) and HubSpot (13.3%) have fewer users, perhaps because they require more knowledge or are more expensive. Google Analytics is widely used, which indicates usefulness for understanding user activity. The low usage of other tools, such as Buffer and Mailchimp, suggests that respondents may not find that these tools for email marketing and content management hold much value for them. Google Analytics aside, the relatively restricted use of other tools suggests that many companies are still underutilizing the technology available for analyzing digital marketing.

The twelfth question is “Does your business have a documented digital marketing strategy?”. Only one-third (33.3%) of companies answered that they have a written digital marketing strategy. Half of the respondents said they do not have any documented digital marketing plan, which suggests that many companies may take a reactive rather than a planned approach to digital marketing. This may affect their capacity to successfully plan, execute, and evaluate digital marketing campaigns.

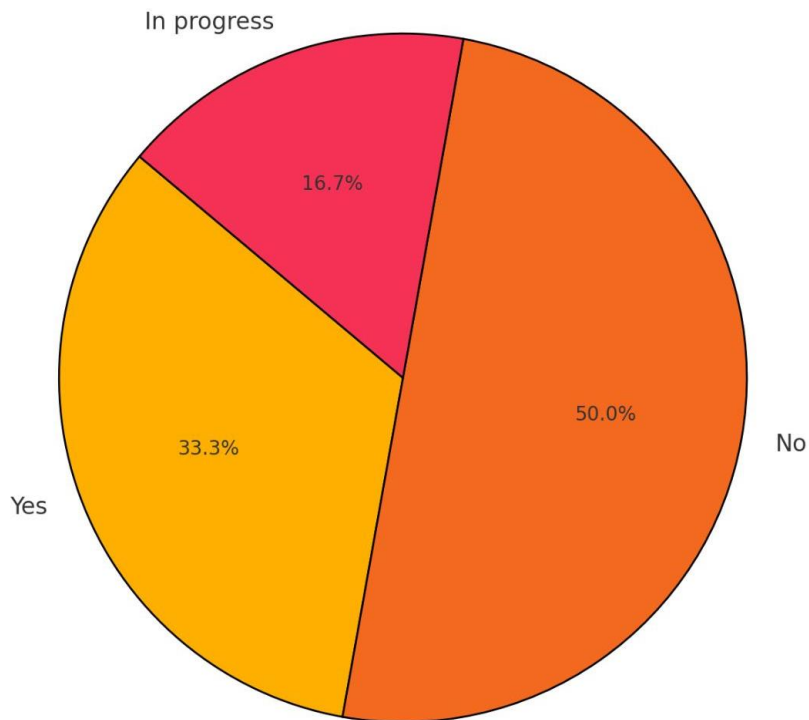


FIGURE 12. Occurrence of documented digital marketing plans among respondents

Long-term success requires consistency, goal setting, and progress tracking, all of which are made possible by having a defined plan. Without a plan, businesses can find it difficult to scale their digital initiatives or make necessary adjustments in light of performance information. 16.7% of companies say they are actively developing a strategy. The current lack of documentation could make their ability to make data-driven decisions more difficult, which can impact overall results.

The following question in the survey is “Which of the following strategies does your business use?”. This is a multi-selection question that generated 88 responses from the 30 respondents. The respondents were asked to specify their answer if the option “Other” was chosen, two of the respondents said, “I don’t know, we have a team for this”, and another respondent said “Webpage”.

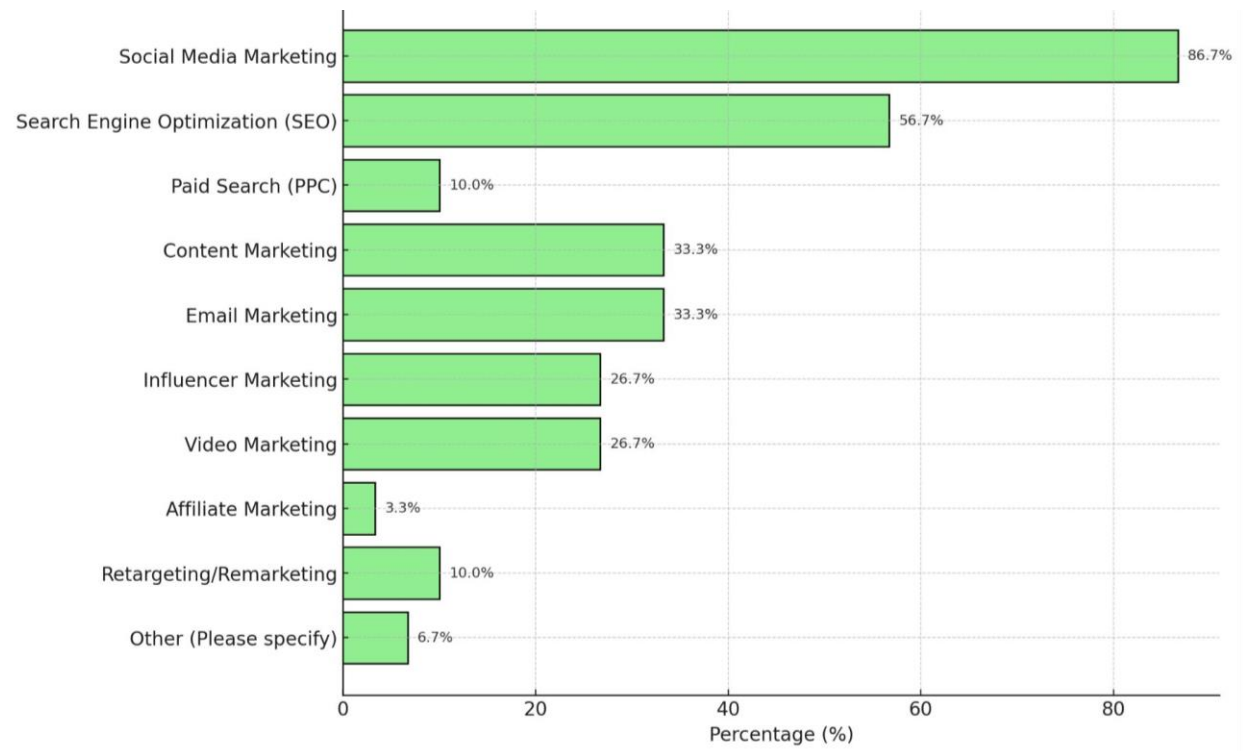


FIGURE 13. Strategies used by responding businesses

The responses show that social media marketing is the most popular of the options, with 87% of businesses utilizing it as part of their strategy. This suggests that most businesses agree on the importance of social media for brand awareness, engagement, and customer outreach. 57% of respondents said they utilize SEO (Search Engine Optimization) to increase their organic search presence and draw in visitors over time. The 33% adoption rates of email and content marketing suggest that many companies value clear communication and educational content when building and maintaining customer relationships. 27% of respondents use influencer and video marketing, indicating a will to use more contemporary and captivating forms of marketing strategies. The lesser adoption of paid search (PPC) and retargeting/remarketing can indicate a limited budget for digital marketing or a focus on organic rather than paid approaches.

Question number 14 in the survey is “How often do you evaluate the success of your digital marketing efforts?”. The majority of companies (36.6%) report that they evaluate their digital marketing efforts once a month. They should be able to make quick modifications thanks to this frequent follow-up, at the same time it also gives them enough data to spot patterns. Annual and quarterly assessments, both at 20%, indicate that a sizable percentage of companies prefer a longer-term strategy. This could be because of limited resources or because some results show at a slower pace.

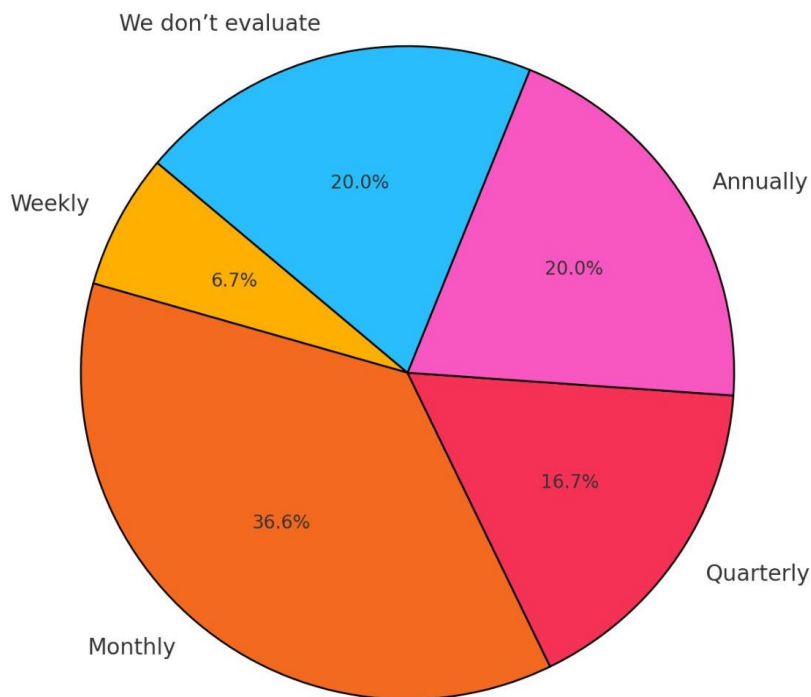


FIGURE 14. Time frames for evaluation of digital marketing efforts

It is interesting to see that 20% of respondents say they never assess their work, which may result in lost chances for improvement and expansion. Weekly evaluators (6.7%) may be looking for quick input on certain campaigns or strategies. All things considered, the answers show a broad variety of evaluation frequencies, which reflects different business goals and data analysis strategies.

The fifteenth question of the survey is “What metrics do you use to measure the success of your digital marketing campaigns?”. This is a multi-selection question, and the 30 respondents gave a total of 79 answers. Two respondents that selected the option “Other”, specified their answer with “pleased customers” and “depends on goals” respectively. Overall, website traffic is the most commonly used metric, reported by 67% of businesses. This suggests that businesses focus on generating visibility and drawing users to their sites. Engagement metrics such as likes, shares, and comments are also important to 47% of respondents, which means that businesses value customer interaction as a way to measure success.

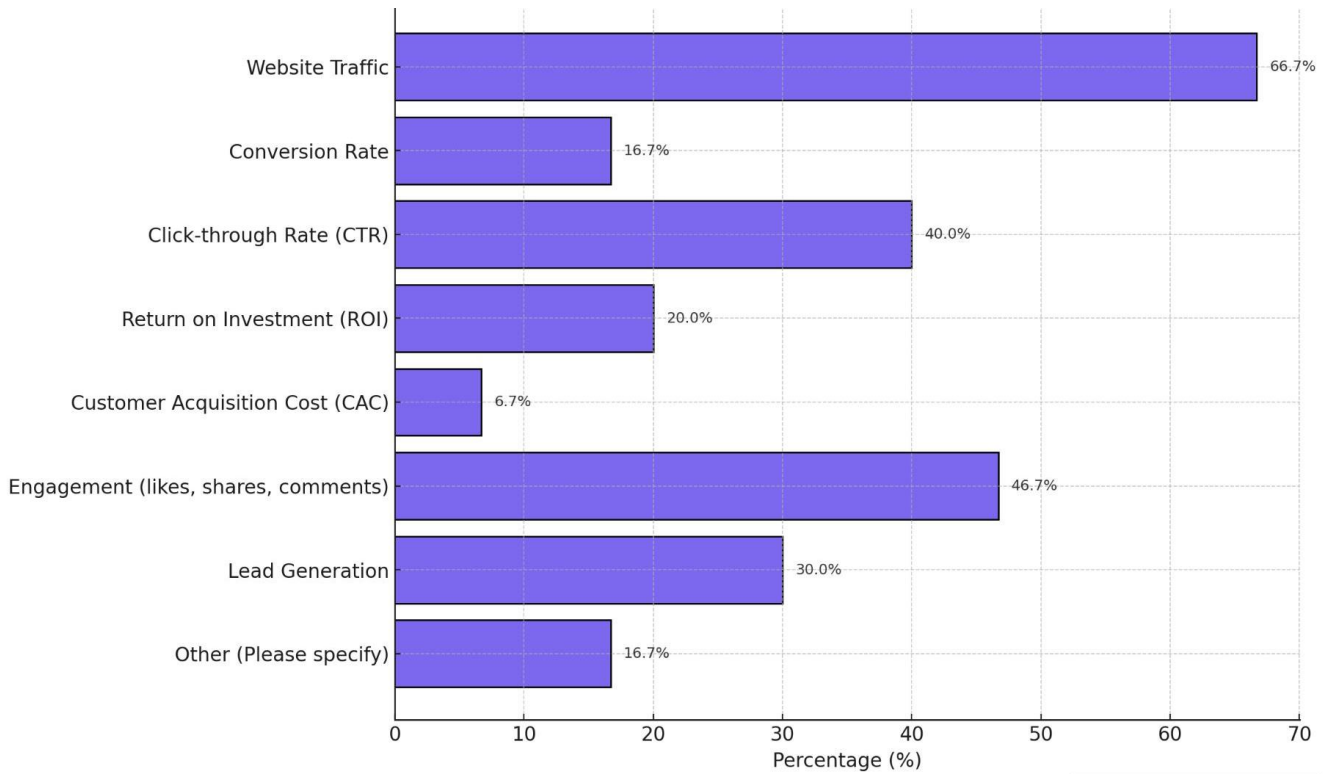


FIGURE 15. Metrics used to measure success of digital marketing campaigns

Click-through rate (CTR) and lead generation, used by 40% and 30% respectively, suggest that businesses focus on converting interest into actual results, such as sales inquiries or sign-ups. Return on Investment (ROI) and conversion rate are used by 20% and 17% of businesses respectively to measure their marketing success. This suggests that some businesses are closely watching how much profit they are making from their marketing efforts (ROI), while others are more focused on how many people take action, like purchasing a product or signing up e.g. for a newsletter (conversion rate). The lower use of customer acquisition cost (CAC) at 7% indicates less tracking of long-term customer value. Overall, answers suggest a balance between traffic generation, engagement, and conversion metrics, depending on the respondents' business goals.

Question number 16 in the survey is “Which are your primary goals for the digital marketing efforts?”, and the respondents were allowed to select up to three options. The question generated 79 answers. According to 87% of respondents, increasing sales is the major objective, indicating that generating more income for the business is the main reason for digital marketing efforts. Building brand awareness is a primary goal for 70% of businesses, which means that businesses see the importance of creating a recognized brand. Finding new customers is also a major goal for 67% of respondents, and hints that businesses focus on growth in the market.

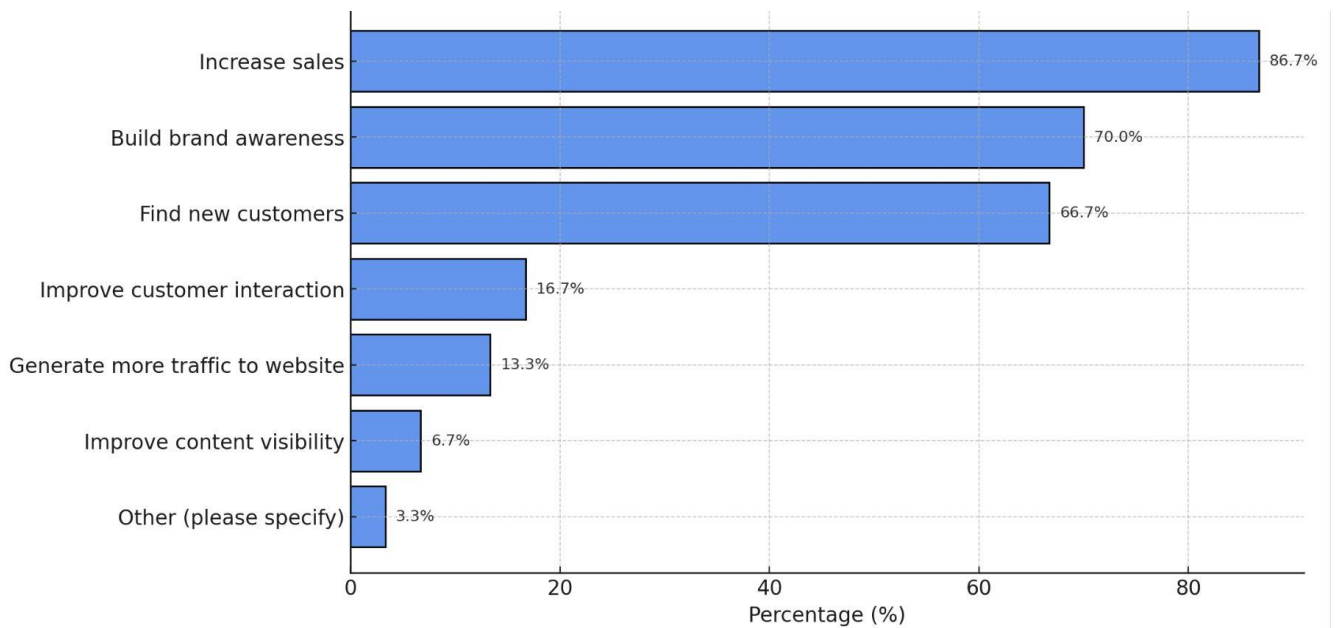


FIGURE 16. Primary goals for digital marketing efforts

The less popular goals among respondents, such as improving customer interaction (17%) and generating more website traffic (13%), suggest that while customer engagement is valued, it is often seen as secondary to direct sales and growing brand awareness. One respondent who chose the option “Other” responded: “mainly recruitment marketing”, showing that some businesses have unique goals depending on their needs.

The seventeenth question is “What are the biggest challenges your business faces with digital marketing?”. Respondents were allowed to select all options that apply, and the question generated 62 answers. According to 43% of respondents, creating content is a key problem, meaning that it takes a lot of work and knowledge to produce high-quality content. According to 37% of respondents, managing multiple platforms and limited budgets are the biggest challenges. This underlines how difficult it is to allocate resources and manage different digital channels efficiently.

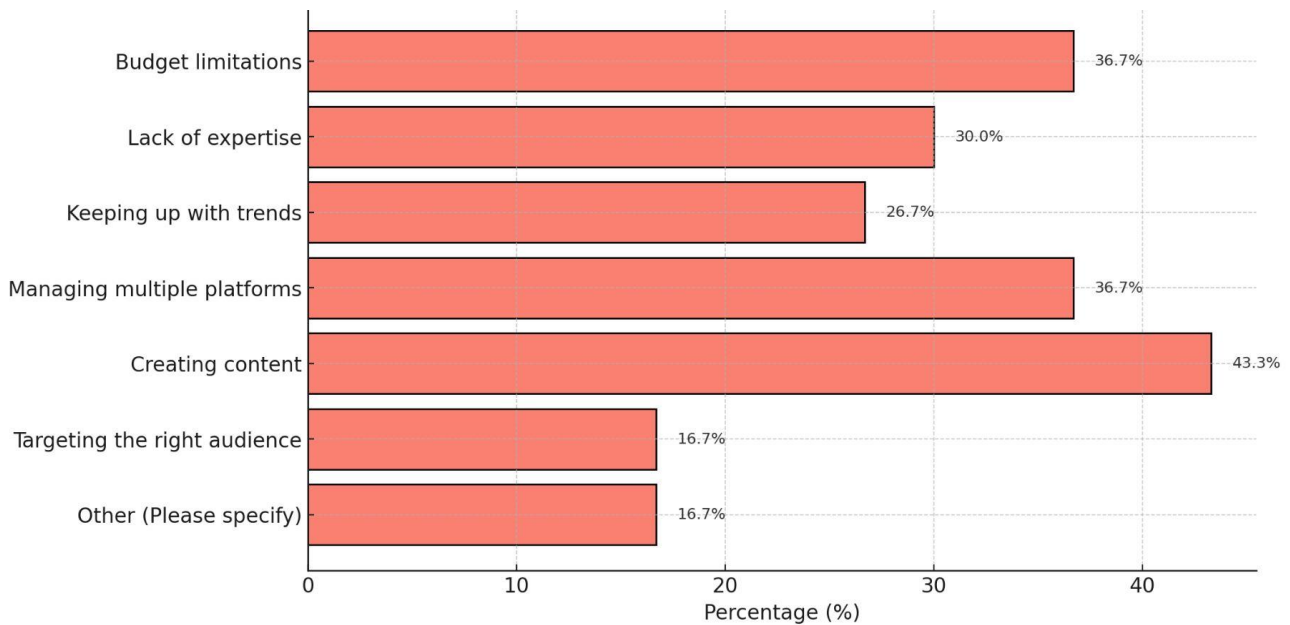


FIGURE 17. The biggest challenges in digital marketing

Lack of expertise and keeping up with trends are also significant issues for 30% and 27% of businesses, respectively. There is a need for continuous learning and adaptation in the digital marketing environment. Targeting the right audience and other custom challenges are challenges for 17% of respondents. One respondent specified: “Very niche customer group and sometimes difficult to reach exactly the right customer group without having to market to a wider customer group. The niche customer group is also found in different locations in Europe/the world, which makes the whole thing more complicated. Existing contacts and word of mouth are more relevant/important but digital marketing is an important addition as well as verification for new leads.”

The eighteenth question of the survey is “In the next 12 months, do you plan to increase, decrease, or maintain your current digital marketing budget?”. 73% of respondents say they want to keep their current digital marketing budget for the upcoming year, indicating either that they are pleased with the results or that they are cautious to invest more because of limited resources or economic uncertainty. 23.3% of respondents say they plan on increasing the budget, suggesting that some companies see growth potential in digital marketing and are prepared to make larger investments to meet their goals. Only 3.4% of respondents plan on decreasing the budget, which can be the result of changing marketing goals or financial difficulties.

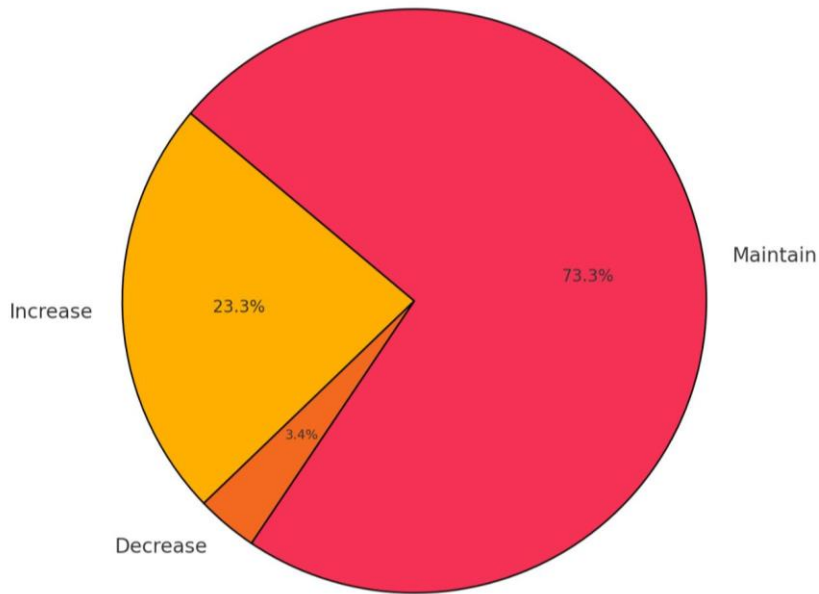


FIGURE 18. Plans to adjust digital marketing budget in the next 12 months

The final question of the survey is “Are you considering adopting any new digital marketing platforms or strategies in the near future?”. If respondents say yes, they are asked to specify their answer. Two-thirds of businesses (66.7%) are not considering adopting new platforms or strategies, suggesting that they may be satisfied with their current approach, or they do not have resources to take on new strategies or platforms. 33.3% of respondents consider trying new platforms or strategies, reflecting an interest in exploring additional channels or innovative approaches to enhance their marketing.

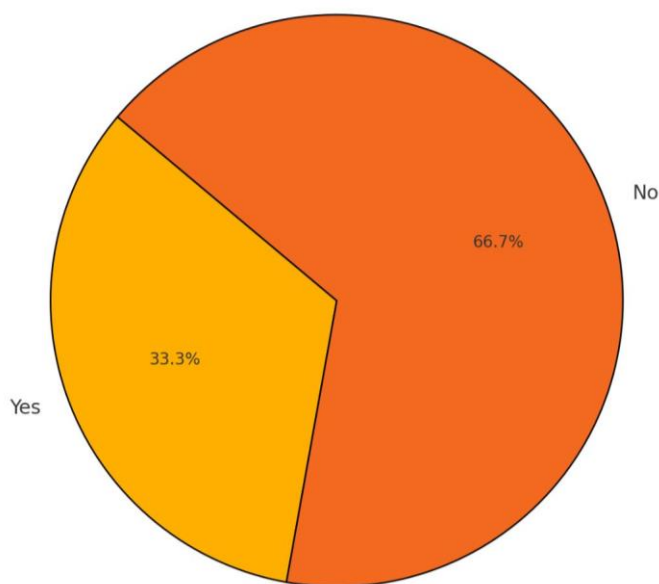


FIGURE 19. Considerations to adopt new digital marketing platforms or strategies in the near future

Four of the respondents who said yes specified their answers accordingly: “Sponsored posts (content) in industry media. Also evaluating possible B2B/industry influencers for some of our key markets”, “TikTok”, “If necessary”, and “I don’t know we have a team for this”. The fact that a significant number of the respondents considers adopting new strategies signals a willingness to diversify their digital presence and explore new platforms that could work for their target audience. Overall, the results show that while most businesses are conservative, a segment remains adaptable and curious about new opportunities in digital marketing.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

This thesis investigated the implementation and efficacy of digital marketing strategies, concentrating on how businesses engage with and perceive various platforms and techniques. The primary objective was to present an overview of digital marketing and offer insights into trends and useful tools for digital marketing that could be the foundation of future strategies. The research goals were effectively met through a blend of theoretical analysis and quantitative data evaluation.

The theoretical framework provided a solid foundation by explaining the principles of digital marketing, distinguishing between multichannel and omnichannel approaches, and highlighting the significance of tools such as social listening in strategic development. The empirical study gave insights into how businesses approach digital marketing, including their utilization of paid platforms, assessment of success indicators, and the obstacles they encounter. The results underscored the necessity of customer-focused strategies and the increasing importance of quantifiable outcomes, such as return on investment and engagement metrics.

Most respondents from the survey represented micro to small-sized businesses in various industries, manufacturing being among the most common sector. A good number of companies have been in business for more than 10 years, indicating a level of stability and experience in their respective markets. Nearly all businesses have a strong social media presence, by using sites like Facebook and Instagram, however, YouTube and TikTok are not widely used by the respondents.

A large portion of businesses are actively taking part in digital marketing strategies, with social media marketing, SEO, and content marketing being the most prevalent strategies used. Monthly evaluations of digital marketing campaigns are common, demonstrating that companies aim to monitor their performance while having a limited budget. Website traffic and engagement rates are key performance metrics that companies look for, however, some companies also track conversion rates and ROI to gauge the campaign's financial effect. The three most significant objectives for companies are increasing revenue, building brand awareness, and acquiring new customers, which highlights a growth-driven plan.

The biggest obstacles facing businesses are budgetary constraints and the intricacies of managing multiple platforms, along with content creation and staying current with trends also cited as significant

challenges. While the majority of businesses plan to keep their digital marketing budget unchanged over the next year, a small percentage of the respondents are prepared to raise it, which suggests a cautious but optimistic approach to investing in digital marketing. Interestingly, two-thirds of businesses are not considering implementing new strategies or new platforms. This may be because they are satisfied with their current strategy or limited resources play a role in the decision.

In conclusion, this survey reveals that respondents have a cautious but committed attitude to digital marketing. Established platforms and strategies are the main focus of business the aim being to increase sales and raise brand awareness. Many companies still see value in maintaining or somewhat increasing their digital marketing efforts, despite the challenges of constraints of businesses' budgets and resources. As companies look to the future their ambition for growth is sensible while exploring new opportunities to enter. This reflects a balanced approach to understanding the value of digital marketing and the importance of efficient resource management.

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## Digital Marketing Platforms and Strategies Survey

Mandatory questions are marked with a star (\*)

### 1. What is the size of the business you represent? \*

- Micro (1-10 employees)
- Small (11-50 employees)
- Medium (51-250 employees)
- Large (250+ employees)

### 2. What industry does your business operate in? \*

- Retail
  - E-commerce
  - Technology
  - Healthcare
  - Finance
  - Hospitality
  - Manufacturing
  - Education
  - Other
- 

### 3. How long has your business been operating? \*

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-7 years
- 8-10 years
- More than 10 years

**4. On which of the following platforms does your business have a profile? \***

- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Twitter/X
- Snapchat
- Youtube
- Tiktok
- Other (Please specify:) \_\_\_\_\_
- None

**5. How often do you upload content to your most frequently used platforms? \***

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Rarely

**6. Which of the following platforms does your business use for paid advertising?****(Select all that apply) \***

- SEA (e.g. Google Ads, Bing Ads)
- Facebook Ads
- Instagram Ads
- LinkedIn Ads
- Twitter/X Ads
- Snapchat Ads
- YouTube Ads
- Tiktok Ads
- Email Marketing (e.g. Mailchimp, HubSpot)
- SEO (Search Engine Optimization)
- Content Marketing (e.g. Blogs, Articles)

- Influencer Marketing
- Affiliate Marketing
- Other (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- None

**7. Which digital marketing platform do you consider the most effective for your business? Select max 3 platforms \***

- SEA (e.g. Google Ads, Bing Ads)
- Facebook Ads
- Instagram Ads
- LinkedIn Ads
- Twitter/X Ads
- Snapchat Ads
- YouTube Ads
- Tiktok Ads
- Email Marketing (e.g. Mailchimp, Hubspot)
- SEO (Search Engine Optimization)
- Content Marketing (e.g. Blogs, Articles)
- Influencer Marketing
- Affiliate Marketing
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- None

**8. What percentage of your overall marketing budget is allocated to digital marketing? \***

- Less than 10%
- 10–25%
- 26–50%
- 51–75%
- More than 75%
- I don't know

**9. How many employees are dedicated to managing your digital marketing efforts? \***

- 1-2
- 3-5
- 6-10
- More than 10
- Outsourced to an agency or freelancer

**10. On average, how much time does your business spend on digital marketing per week? \***

- Less than 5 hours
- 5-10 hours
- 11-20 hours
- More than 20 hours

**11. What tools or software do you use to manage your digital marketing? (Select all that apply) \***

- Google Analytics
- SEMrush
- Hootsuite
- HubSpot
- Buffer
- Mailchimp
- Other (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Does your business have a documented digital marketing strategy? \***

- Yes
- No
- In progress

**13. Which of the following strategies does your business use? (Select all that apply) \***

- Social Media Marketing
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- Paid Search (PPC)
- Content Marketing
- Email Marketing
- Influencer Marketing
- Video Marketing
- Affiliate Marketing
- Retargeting/Remarketing
- Other (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**14. How often do you evaluate the success of your digital marketing efforts? \***

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Annually
- We don't evaluate

**15. What metrics do you use to measure the success of your digital marketing campaigns? (Select all that apply) \***

- Website Traffic
- Conversion Rate
- Click-through Rate (CTR)
- Return on Investment (ROI)
- Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC)
- Engagement (likes, shares, comments)
- Lead Generation
- Other (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**16. Which are your primary goals for the digital marketing efforts? Select 1-3 options \***

- Increase sales
- Build brand awareness
- Find new customers
- Improve customer interaction
- Generate more traffic to website
- Improve content visibility
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**17. What are the biggest challenges your business faces with digital marketing? (Select all that apply) \***

- Budget limitations
- Lack of expertise
- Keeping up with trends
- Managing multiple platforms
- Creating content
- Targeting the right audience
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**18. In the next 12 months, do you plan to increase, decrease, or maintain your current digital marketing budget? \***

- Increase
- Decrease
- Maintain

**19. Are you considering adopting any new digital marketing platforms or strategies in the near future? \***

- Yes (Please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- No