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A Data-Driven Digital Marketing Strategy for a Cold Room Business

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This thesis is a culmination of my academic journey in the MBA Business Informatics Programme at Metropolia University of Applied Sciences. I extend my deepest gratitude to my thesis supervisor for the unwavering support and for providing constructive feedback throughout the journey of this research. I am equally thankful to the faculty and staff of the Business Informatics, especially to the head of the master's programme, for all the invaluable learnings, collectively providing me with the wisdom throughout this process.

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Finally, I am dedicating this work to my family, friends, and loved ones, whose boundless understanding has been my greatest source of strength. Their unwavering faith and support, even when I had to be far from home to achieve my academic aspirations, meant everything to me.

Completing this thesis reflects everyone's immense belief and support. It has been instrumental in achieving this academic milestone.

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to create a data-driven digital marketing strategy for the case company in the cold room construction business. The study was commissioned by the case company, a small Finnish startup with two employees that was established in 2024. They construct cold rooms for hotels, restaurants, catering, supermarkets, food production, and logistics facilities. The company believes that by combining the traditional marketing style with digital marketing, the new marketing strategy will help in harnessing the opportunities available in the digital space. Digital marketing, supported by data, will be a new avenue to create a professional brand with a wider market reach, supporting its aspirations to grow the business through customer acquisition.

The applied action research approach and qualitative research methods were utilized in this study. The current state analysis and the interviews conducted revealed that there are existing digital assets in the case company. However, their utilization is not maximized due to the absence of a digital marketing strategy. The theoretical framework was established by exploring best practices in digital marketing solutions available in the market. The analysis of the available data and co-creation conducted with the case company stakeholders and suppliers guided the development of the development of the strategy proposal.

The outcome of the thesis is a digital marketing strategy. The thesis also recommends that the case company starts with setting a clear definition of its objectives for marketing, and then guide the execution of the data-driven digital marketing strategy from implementation to performance measurement. If implemented, the proposed digital marketing strategy will support competitiveness and growth by building a solid brand and leveraging data for an optimized marketing effort.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Action Research, B2B, Cold Room, Construction, Customer Acquisition, Marketing Data

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1 Introduction

As of 2023, construction companies in the European Union and the United States see digital infrastructure as one of the long-term barriers to investment activities (EIB. 2023). More than what it can contribute, it is seen to be an additional expense and time-consuming investment because of the lack of skills in operating the tools. However, with the increase in awareness in corporate social responsibility and the policies driven by the European Union, companies aim to direct all of business activities to carbon neutrality. Digital transformation is seen to be one of the many things that can assist a business towards this path to zero carbon operations. Today, the growing role of digital transformation in all sectors is seen vital. Digital transformation goes beyond digitalisation (Manny, L., Duygan, M., Fischer, M. and Rieckermann, J., 2021). The transformative capacity of digital tools to enhance the way people work is no longer considered an Information Technology business. Embracing digitalisation today means a strategic shift, it is a catalyst to dynamic business models, consumer engagement, and value creation. Evolution in technology especially in the field of data and analytics brings the greatest potential in solving complex issues and identifying trends that provide the bigger picture for entrepreneurs, a holistic approach for easier forecasting, and avoiding assumptions which may lead to errors or failures.

Today is the generation of converting everything to smart tools, enabling human to have sophisticated instruments to reduce rigorous steps, changing ways of work to make everyday life as efficient and simple.

Conforming with the European Union's strategic initiative to advance Europe's digital transformation by 2030, one of the four main cardinal points within its Digital Decade Policy Programme (DDPP) is that 75% of European companies should adopt advanced digital technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and cloud computing (European Commission 2024). Implementation of digital technologies goes beyond the public sector, in line with the initiatives cascaded by the European Union, organizations and institutional changes beyond conformity should also understand that as technologies can increase performance, they also can reduce environmental impacts (Manny, L., Duygan, M., Fischer, M. and Rieckermann, J., 2021).

On average, the EU is competitive with the best-in-class countries in global digitalization and consistent across different policy areas (European Commission, 2024). However, it is still facing barriers, and going down the chain, businesses and organizations are no different. Embracing systems and technologies means allocating a chunk of the budget because the cost of developing and adopting advanced digital systems can be costly. In a survey conducted for the level of business digitalisation in small and medium-sized enterprises in Finland in 2019, only 6% of companies with employees accounted for digitalisation as systematic and wanted to be forerunners in the field while 19% accounted for self-employed without employees (Elisa Oyj, Suomen Yrittäjät., 2019).

With the speed of technology and as we evolve to be a digital economy, the integration of digital tools and strategies is indispensable. Even if it is a small enterprise trying to carve a niche, digitalization, especially in the field of marketing will create a path for market dominance and operational efficiency. In an industry dominated by traditional practices like the construction industry, adopting digital marketing can be transformational. As it bridges the gap between business processes and changing market dynamics. It offers unparalleled opportunities and competitive edge to improve customer engagement and market dominance in this accelerating world of the global economy.

This study aims to highlight the opportunities that lies in digital assets and the contribution that data can bring to startups especially in the field of construction, an industry that is known to be conservative yet needed digital tools and strategies to be competitive and sustainable. This is not only to stand out but in order to send an important message how a small organisation can contribute for businesses to thrive and how it can stand to be one of the pillars of change to drive the vision of European Union towards carbon neutrality.

1.1 Business Context

In today's competitive market, the construction industry is no different in transformation driven by technological advancements, meticulous environmental regulations and reporting, and changing customer expectations and preferences. The case company of this thesis study, a cold room construction business is a niche within the broader construction ecosystem. Though projects are considerably smaller than the usual building construction, it plays a key role in supporting industries such as hotels,

restaurants, catering, food processing, healthcare, retail supermarkets, and logistic operations where preserving a balanced and precise temperature is required for the safety of the products. In addition, the case company is in the re-entry phase. Led by a business owner who has established his record in the industry and has grown a successful business in the same field, the owner sold the previous company to an international brand. After a strategic break to adhere to the terms of a non-competition agreement, the business owner, who is now the case company CEO of this thesis study is now re-entering the market. With same line of business and same target customers, the case company is now a direct competition of its business predecessor.

1.2 Business Challenge, Objective, and Outcome

For the case company, that is doing its re-entry into the market, it is a bigger challenge to compete with a brand that has made its mark with its clients within the region. More than attracting new clients and potential new customers, it is essential to create targeted marketing efforts not only to engage with previous clients but also to connect with new leads and potential buyers. The case company should be enabled with reliable and innovative ways to create a compelling value proposition to differentiate its offerings from its predecessor. Behind it is the need to acquire data to create a precise and impactful strategy.

To address the challenge of the case company in customer acquisition, this thesis study aims to provide a proposal for a data-driven marketing strategy to help with equipping the case company with appropriate tools tailored to its immediate needs and to gather data being a cornerstone of digital marketing. Data is a tool, and it will help in making an informed decision and tailor its marketing strategies to achieve the best possible outcome. In an industry where digitalisation in marketing comes to the bottom of their priorities due to its complexity and costly implementation, this thesis study intends to provide a strong justification for an overlooked potential of digital marketing for long-term efficiency, better project outcomes, client experience, and competitiveness in the digital economy.

1.3 Thesis Outline

The thesis will cover the proposal for a data-driven digital marketing strategy of a cold room construction company startup established in Finland in 2024.

The thesis study was initiated by research on the current market practices in digital marketing and the best available tools to execute the strategy. Following this research was an analysis of internal data and an evaluation of the company's digital maturity. This part of the thesis study aimed to understand the current state of the case company. It is also aimed at discovering the discrepancies and gaps between the current practices and marketing processes of the case company and current market trends. Both sets of data sets were synthesized to create a conceptual framework that will address the identified gaps in processes and missed opportunities. With the speed of technological advancements, the thesis study presented different tools, tactics, and actions designed to improve the digital marketing strategy of the case company. Depending on the need and prioritization, the co-created proposal with the stakeholders was a structured approach from short-term to long-term planning. The completion of data gathering and evaluation was refined to arrive at the most suitable solution.

2 Method and Material

This section describes the research approach and explains its suitability for this thesis study. The research design is the layout of the details of stakeholder engagements, discussions, and finally, the data collection and analysis, an important part that will accentuate the role of the applied action research approach and qualitative observations in the formation of the strategy proposal for the case company.

2.1 Research Approach

We humans are curious birds; we like to understand stuff (Giordano, S., 2020). In operations management, it is often heard in any organization that it is necessary to improve the process continuously. Methods and tools help organizations improve historic productivity levels with data-driven, systemic elimination of waste and improvement of flow (Motwani, J. and Ptacek, R.,2013). In this age of artificial intelligence, we are confronted with diverse ways and practices that make people's lives better. In the space of business operations, where humans and existing tools collaborate to perform the daily duties of running the business, there is still a need to search for better ways of working. Business process improvements help to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and adaptability of the business process to continually deliver the value of the business (Page, S.,2010).

Two phrases are considered important in the context of research: "systematic way" and "to find out things" (Saunders, 2009). It always starts with a case or a problem, and what follows is the setting of the objective. This is the start of driving research systematically to find out the things to satisfy the curiosity or resolve an identified issue or problem by arriving at an answer or a solution. In business, the research can be done in different ways. In the case of this thesis study, where the intention is to solve a practical business challenge in a scientific context and assist the case company in the decision-making process, the applied action research method will be used as an approach. The following will provide key pointers on the applicability of an action-oriented research method.

The relevance and validity of an action-oriented research method for this thesis do not discount the scientific management principles of Frederick Taylor. Being the Father of Scientific Management, his principles, and practices had an impact on responding to

organizational problems and inefficiencies. However, his philosophies and theories were based on the scientific approach to management and managerial decision-making. The thoughts and principles were conceptualized through experimentation using scientific methods in controlled environments (Taneja, 2011). This type of research became central to the linear model of innovation and economic growth. It became popular during the post-1945 era when basic research had traditionally been fundamental to university missions and public funding and saw that it was the primary contributor to innovation and economic growth (Bentley, 2015).

As this thesis study is conducted within the University of Applied Science, the thesis study revolves around finding a solution for a specific business problem as its primary objective. This is research in action, rather than research about action. It is participative because the methodology is practical. It requires a strong collaboration with industry partners and stakeholders to co-create practical solutions for the business (Coughlan, 2022). It will facilitate detailed inquiry into the unique situation of the case company and rely on the interpretation of the qualitative data. Without excluding the theoretical background and practices in management, this study will bridge the gap between practice and theory.

2.2 Research Design

This sub-section contains the research design and the overall framework of the thesis study. This is a presentation of the research activities and how the thesis study progressed through a systematic process of data collection and interviews. Figure 1 below shows the research design for this study.

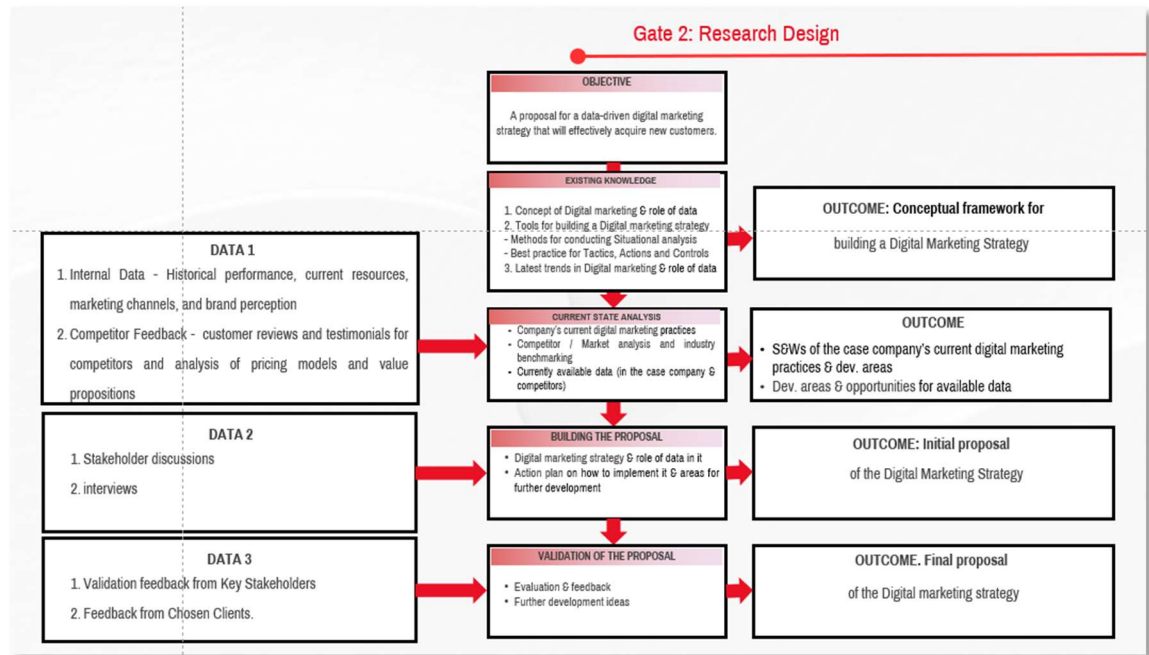


Figure 1. The Research Design of the Thesis

As shown in Figure 1, the research design started with an objective setting. This was followed by these research activities in exact order: research on existing knowledge, current state analysis, building the proposal, and lastly, validation of the proposal.

After identifying the objective for this thesis study, the next stage was the collection of existing knowledge and best practices in digital marketing with a strong focus on customer acquisition. The materials relevant to this thesis study include: the concept and the tools for building a digital marketing strategy. Part of the research was to understand the methods for conducting situational analysis and going through the latest articles and digital marketing resources to know the latest trends and best practices for tactics, actions, and control. Lastly, the latest trends in digital marketing and the role of data were sourced to gain a theoretical basis for its importance and relevance to the thesis study.

The third stage as displayed in the figure is the current state analysis. As illustrated, the target was to understand the current digital marketing strategy and practices of the case company and to do a deep dive into information about the competitor by doing a market analysis and industry benchmarking. Data required to support this stage will be internal data as well as interviews with stakeholders and partners.

A stakeholder discussion was conducted for the fourth stage of the thesis study. This is the most essential part of this research design. Collaboration with the case company stakeholder is an ingredient to co-creation of the initial strategy proposal. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the case company together with the partner who is closely involved with the sales operations openly discussed the available digital marketing tools within the case company and the ideas in mind about what exists in the market. The details of this discussion on this area will be part of the succeeding section.

The last part is data collection three (3). This is the compilation of information gathered from the feedback session with the case company CEO and business partner. This stage helped build the final proposal for the data-driven digital marketing strategy for the case company.

2.3 Data Collection and Analysis

The data was collected from different sources to complete the situational analysis of the case company. There were three (3) rounds of data collection from internal documents to field notes and interview transcripts and recordings. Table 1 presents the data collection process utilized for this thesis.

Table 1. Details of the Data Collection Plan

Gate 2: Data Collection Plan					
	DATA TYPE	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS	TIMING	DOCUMENTATION & OUTCOME
DATA 1 Current State Analysis	1. Internal documents 2. MS Teams interviews with case company supplier and CEO	1. Historical performance & marketing analytics, current resources, marketing channels, and brand perception. 2. Role of data 3. Customer reviews and testimonials for competitors, and pricing models and value proposition	Case company supplier Case company CEO	17 February 2025 21 February 2025	Current digital marketing practices, its SBWs & dev. areas (esp. for data) Benchmarking
DATA 2 Building the Proposal	1. MS Teams discussion with case company CEO and salesperson	1. Co-creation of the proposal	• Case company CEO • Case company salesperson	March 2025	Draft of the initial proposal for the digital marketing strategy & role of data
DATA 3 Validation of the Proposal	MS Teams discussions and recording with the key stakeholders & chosen clients	1. Validation of the proposal & further steps	• Case company CEO • Case company salesperson • Case company client	March - April 2025	Final proposal and sign-off from the case company CEO

As seen in Table 1, the first set of data collected were internal documents such as Google Analytics for the case company website traffic and behavior insights, SEO analytics measuring the SEO performance of the case company and the top competitors within the Finnish market, and LinkedIn Analytics to check the current statistics of the content created and posted by the case company. As a startup with only 2 employees running the business. Internal data was limited at the time the thesis study was conducted. Hence, internal data was derived from the current social media affiliation paid membership, and outsourced software that provided analytics for the areas of focus in digital marketing specifically website traffic, and SEO analysis.

After securing these key data sets, two interviews were conducted to strengthen the analysis of the case company's current situation. The first interview was with one of the key suppliers. The interview happened on the 17th of February 2025. The first respondent will be referred to as Respondent 1 for this thesis study. We completed the interview via online meeting. It was beneficial for this thesis to have an interview with this supplier because their company works with different businesses that act as their main suppliers in the region. They are a reliable partner of construction businesses especially in the cold room sector. This company has been in business for 40 years and is a market leader in Europe. They are known for the continuous innovation of their products and reliability. They do not only produce top-notch products but also trustworthy and solid partnerships as embodied in their mission statement. The huge contribution of this interview to this thesis study is that the information provided a picture of the current practices in the cold room construction business and how strategies are adjusted considering the increasing variety of technologies entering the market. As a company that is constantly in touch with businesses around the European market, Respondent 1 provided information about the status of digitalization in the construction industry, and that the market is slowly transitioning to becoming digital, the same for the customers in the market. As a supplement to this interview, the supplier company answered the same questions in written format which was completed by the supplier company's corporate communication and is also assigned in digital marketing. The questions for this interview can be found in Appendix 1.

The case company CEO participated in the second round of interviews. It took place on the 23rd of February 2025. Completed via online videoconference. Valuable information was collected during this interview. Points of discussion provided the history of the case company and its current operations and practices, particularly in acquiring leads and how

marketing is currently handled. The case company CEO emphasized that although the business had just started, his technical skills and client base, especially in the refrigeration sector, started in 2009. His expertise and technical knowledge were the key to the success of the previous company he founded, and being back in the business after roughly 2 years of career break, the determination to move forward is at its optimum. He believes that digital marketing can add value to this new endeavor. In the later part of the interview, he cited that the construction industry is conservative, and most decision-makers believe that the old-fashioned way is still the most effective way to market construction products and services. In his opinion, business should evolve, and he finds this an opportunity to reach out to customers of different demographics.

The following section will touch on topics and related literature that will provide the existing knowledge and the best practices for building a digital marketing strategy. It will also include the importance of data in current marketing practices.

3 Existing Knowledge & Best Practices for Building a Digital Marketing Strategy

This section will delve into literature and best practices on topics around data-driven marketing strategy. To effectively acquire new customers, the first topic will focus on the key concepts of digital marketing and the tools for building a digital marketing strategy. In each of these topics, a collection of knowledge will be incorporated to understand the role of data in each focus area. These topics are aimed to point out the relevance of digital marketing strategy in creating a solid foundation for the conceptual framework of this thesis study. It will support the primary objective of creating a strategy proposal for the case company's digital marketing that will provide solution for customer acquisition.

3.1 Concept of Digital Marketing

This section will discuss the definition of digital marketing and to provide a profound understanding of this topic, perspectives will be presented to help expound on the idea of digital marketing and how important it is in today's business strategy to acquire new clients.

"Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably" (CIM, 2023). This is the classic definition of marketing, which is in its essence, still applicable today. It is often associated with sales and advertisements including the promotion of products and services. Ultimately, a business should be profitable, and the only way to ensure its financial health is to have a product or service that is attractive enough for the customers to purchase or consume. With the intense competition today, marketing is becoming more complex, it is no longer a department or a division in an organization that facilitates campaigns or ads, this is now a business philosophy that should be integrated into all business activities at any area of the business at all levels.

With rapid technological change, marketing follows, continuously blending its processes and techniques to capture attention. Consumer preferences have driven the changes in marketing. The way technology penetrated humanity and the phenomenal change it brought into society had a tremendous impact on people's lives. The availability of the Internet created dependencies on the use of technology. Today, everything must be digital. More and more people are automatically turning to mobile devices to seek

information for just about anything. That is what makes marketing today. It is information sharing in any digital platform. Information is now overflowing and limitless. More than attracting consumers, achieving marketing objectives by applying digital media, data, and technology, is what defines digital marketing (Chaffey, 2025).

The first thing that comes to mind when the word digital marketing is mentioned is “being online”. However, online presence alone does not guarantee success. Figure 2 below shows the six pillars of effective digital marketing. These are essential parts that should be done consistently to get positive returns on marketing efforts.

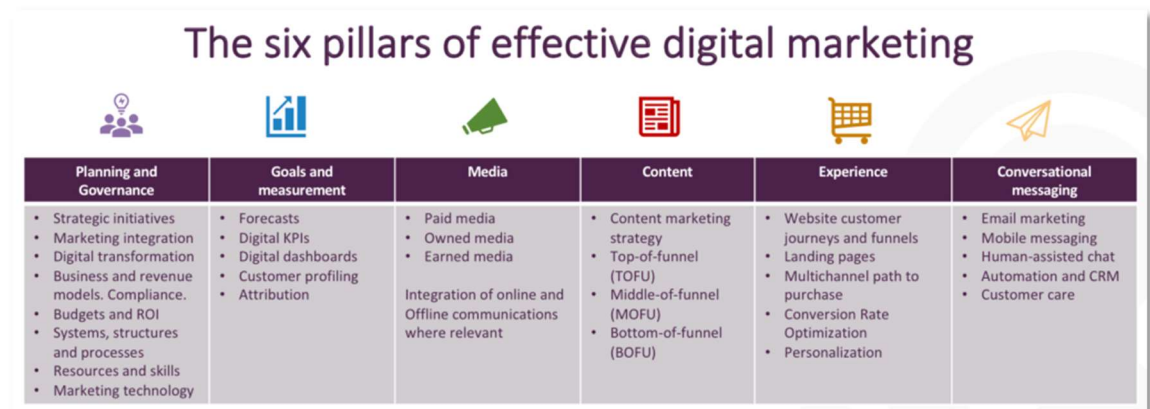


Figure 2. The six pillars of effective digital marketing (Chaffey, 2023)

As shown in Figure 2, digital marketing involves planning and governance. Essentially, a business should be able to identify initiatives and create an intensive plan from processes, tools, and resources. This is a primary step to creating an effective digital marketing strategy. The measure comes next, being a basis of success in any strategy, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or quantitative indicators should always be present. It should be well-chosen and actionable at the same time. This ensures that digital marketing efforts are aligned with the broader business goals. Related to the focus of this study, digital marketing is data-driven, the numbers produced by digital marketing activities can be converted into a dashboard, an excellent tool for continuously monitoring performance. It provides an overview of the business and a clear picture of what is working and what is not.

Media and content are the forms of communication in digital marketing. As previously mentioned, marketing today is a form of information dissemination. Media and content are by far the most attractive and catchy tools. Depending on the audience and its

interests, this form of communication can work with the right type and rhythm. Different types of media can be utilized depending on the priorities of the campaign. Content is not just pictures, or videos posted online. There should be strategies behind it. Content planning is crucial to ensure the right timing and success in campaigns. Another pillar that should not be taken aside is customer experience. In digital marketing, customer service is equated to how well the customer journey went. A factor that contributes to this is the company website, particularly the landing page. The ease of navigation and how well-suited the website or digital channel is built can impact the customer's experience. Depending on the type of business and type of visitors, the landing page should be designed based on these considerations.

The last item is conversational messaging. This pillar is simply creating digital non-digital. This means online marketing should not be robotic. Incorporating personalization in digital communication such as email marketing and chatbots creates an impression of the brand. Although most email marketing is released using automation, a strategy includes finding the correct form of communication suited for the recipient. The channels may contribute to the type of communication released to its target audience. *Digital marketing involves applying the technologies which form online channels to market: web, social, media, e-mail, databases, plus mobile and digital TV to support marketing activities aimed at achieving profitable acquisition and retention of customers within a multichannel buying process and customer lifecycle (Chaffey, 2019)*. Customers have channel preferences. Digital marketing allows every customer a platform of choice for digital interactions. Figure 3 illustrates the strategy processes and elements to create an online company presence integrating with different online tools and techniques to build a structure, strategic, and data-driven approach to digital marketing that creates impact and gets the most leads or potential customers possible.

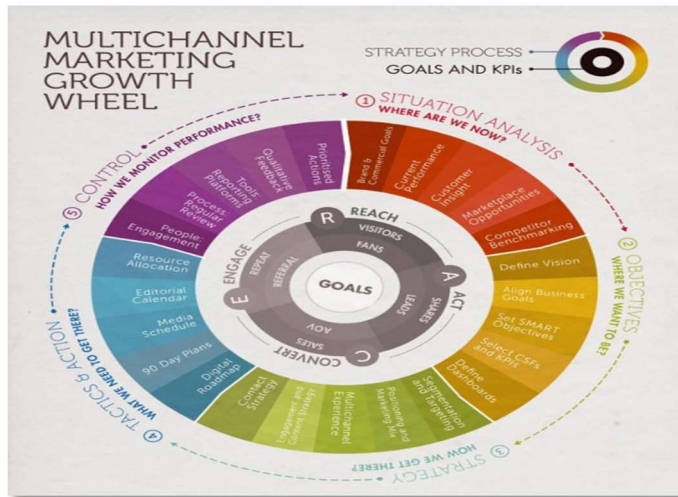


Figure 3. Multichannel Marketing Growth Wheel (SmartInsights, 2024)

Figure 3 provides a framework that describes digital marketing activities from a business perspective. The wheel includes strategies and the corresponding KPIs and goals of the business in each stage. This framework illustrates how a multi-channel marketing plan can drive business growth.

The framework illustrates that a business goal is central to a strategy. Before any action should be taken, this must be defined by the business. Goals will set the direction of the organization. It creates alignment of all business activities. Therefore, the presence of digital marketing goals in all customer lifecycle stages is necessary. The continuity of this framework is an illustration of how each step in the growth wheel contributes to the next. Hence, it shows that marketing activities can be dynamic. There will always be new things that will form part of this cycle. In each period, the business may make these changes and by doing so, it will direct the strategy based on data inputs, saving the business time, energy, and resources.

The outer circle of the framework is the standard SOSTAC approach in planning which stands for situation analysis, objectives, strategy, tactics and actions, and control. This is an evaluation of the overall situation of the business that can magnify results, efficiency, and effectiveness (Chaffey, 2023). This is a high-level approach to business assessment which provides a boost of confidence in every business decision-making process. This approach is a tool for answering critical questions about the business and its environment, making it essential during the process of strategic decision-making. It follows the action-oriented way of planning which is commonly known as SMART

(specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound), this makes the approach clearer and more focused, eliminating ambiguity which makes it easier for the business to concentrate on what truly matters and that time and energy are spent on impactful tasks creating an efficient and organized environment.

Following the plan is to identify the tactics and actions. Its effectiveness is based on how well the business understands its customers. There is no one-size-fits-all all for tactics and actions. Customers are different and this is when a marketing mix should be considered. Listening to customers is the new way of marketing. A business willing to serve its customers and aims to provide impressive customer experience is flexible and willing to adjust to satisfy customer needs.

The last item in the cycle is control. It points to going back to the first stage, situation analysis. This is where success is measured. Data in digital marketing can be collected in real time, but it does not mean analysis should be done daily or often. As mentioned previously, this framework is a cycle, and control leads back to situational analysis. It simply means that there should be ample period for the business to collect meaningful data to understand the environment and the impact of the marketing activities implemented throughout the period.

Digital channels today give consumers power and control in the buying process. Informed customers will turn to their preferred channel to gather relevant information before deciding on a product or service. This is what every business does not want to miss. Business presence whether offline or online is important to immediately answer the needs of every customer. Being ahead is an edge over existing competition in the market.

The exponential growth of digital channels and platforms today gives more reason for marketers to strategically create an online presence across digital channels and platforms. Multichannel marketing is a strategic way to develop a brand, and it helps improve customer knowledge about the business. With tons of digital channel options available, it can be overwhelming. However, the emphasis on creating a plan is necessary for its execution. Bringing the right mix together will contribute to the success of the marketing activities and the overall success of the business.

A relatable digital marketing tool that cannot be ignored in multichannel marketing is social media. It changed the game for businesses worldwide. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X (formerly known as Twitter) offer unparalleled opportunities to reach, engage, and convert the audience (Abbas, 2025). With billions of active users, this is a goldmine of potential leads, brand visibility, and revenue. The increase in popularity of these platforms worldwide was followed by the advancement of sophisticated tools and technology creating an inviting place and hard-to-ignore space in marketing for both large-scale and small-scale.

Social media converted the daily staple of social connection, personal networking, and building business brands. Gone are the days when people run for a new magazine to see what is trending in the market, infomercials, and flyers. Although not obsolete, they are now starting to lose radiance. Digital marketing has changed how brands are amplified, integrating call-to-action tools to create a magnet to the audience and convert them into leads, targeting has never been so precise with the amount of data a website traffic can collect and how seamless it is to lead customers directly to a business digital doorstep making it a more cost-effective option. With a handful of data collected, the valuable information a business gets allows a marketer to send its message to its target audience with a meaningful engagement post or an email fostering loyalty and building trust.

As a company, it is important to be present on these channels when customers are ready to engage. That is the reason why multichannel marketing should be done strategically. If executed poorly, it can result in irrelevant messaging, incoherent campaigns, and poor optimization. Knowing the customer segment and delivering the messages or campaign to the correct channel is important to deliver the best results. Each customer has its value, and it is important to have a single view of the data that will provide the preferred interaction and buying triggers. It is also important to note that there should be a focal point or platform that is suitable for businesses to combine traditional methods of marketing and adapt to emerging technologies to humanize the strategy. Improving knowledge about the customers can help simplify the campaigns and make them available to all channels. Leveraging the data can help in creating a cross-channel single campaign which can strengthen the brand and improve customer experience, one of the most powerful differentiators for brands.

Through digital marketing, it is much easier to know the problems or issues of the customers. The online channels currently used in digital marketing can create valuable and relevant content to address these needs, making it easier to satisfy customers.

Table 2. Daily time spent on social networking by internet users worldwide from 2012 to 2024((Dixon, 2024)

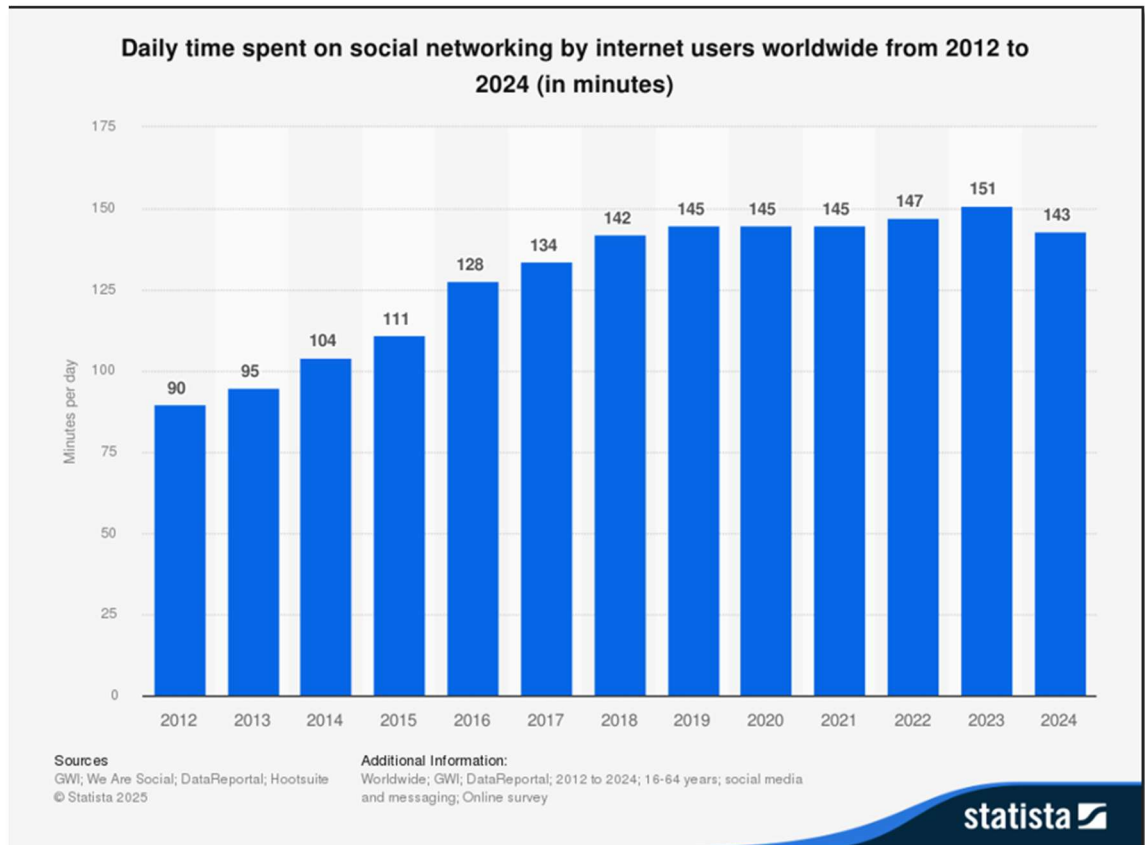


Table 2 above shows that in 2024, a user of the internet spent an average of one hundred forty-three (143) minutes daily on social media. This is a global measure done by GWI and DataReportal in 2024. A clear indicator of how wide is the audience is for social networking. According to the report, a significant share of respondents stated that social media increased access to information, ease of communication, and freedom of expression ((Dixon, 2024).

A content creation plan is key for the business to hit digital marketing goals. There are two situations in which content can be planned. First is when a business has previously done content. The evaluation of past content can benefit the business by giving an idea of where the focus should be. Measuring which platforms resulted in higher traffic and

an increase in leads will allow the business to check on which channel is more suitable for the business. Bringing these all together will give a solid vision and elements required for the next digital marketing activity involving social media and content creation. The second planning is when it is the first time for the business. This planning does not have the basis of previous campaigns. However, content can be created by building the strategy around the demographic of an ideal customer. That's when a buyer persona comes in which is a profile that represents an ideal customer (O'Brien, 2024). Creating a buyer persona helps a business identify the best possible interests, behaviours, and attitudes of an ideal customer. Related to content creation, the role of a buyer persona will improve targeting, a strategic way to understand the communication focus and style. In this manner, marketing communication can be tailored to a particular customer type making each communication more human and personable, creating a better experience for the customer. A buyer persona can also impact qualifying contacts, converting them to leads or a highly probable customer. Understanding a customer's interests creates an opportunity for a business to make a suitable digital environment that promotes engagement and loyalty.

As social media creates big potential in digital marketing, the next illustration, Figure 4 provides different types of social media platforms. This is another tool that can be used to acquire customers online. Because many choices are available, the purpose of this illustration is to reduce the overwhelming effect of being presented with these choices. Because this is an improved version of the previous Marketing Bullseye Framework that was developed by Dave Chaffey in 2015, it shows the importance of prioritizing the sites and partnerships, considering the time and money spent to gain online visibility.

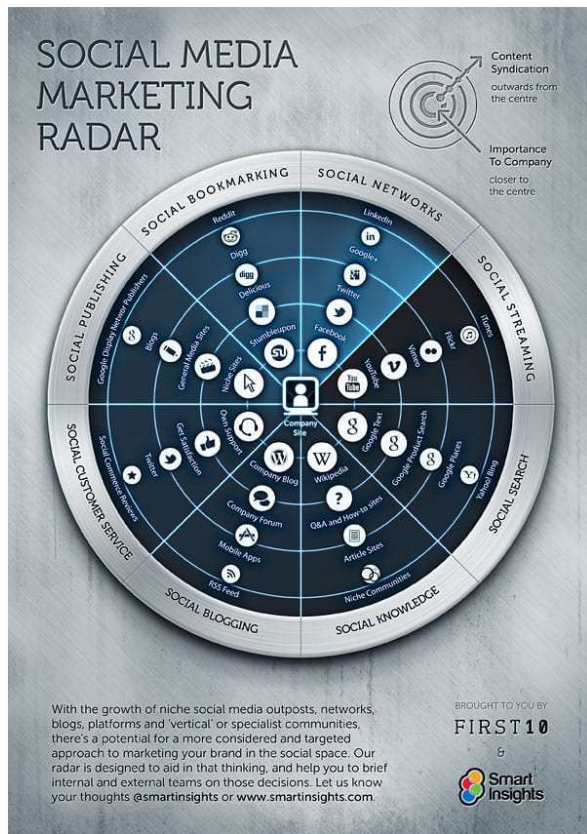


Figure 4. Social Media Marketing Radar (Bosomworth, 2015)

Social media and online communities that continuously grow across different platforms present great opportunities for reaching and targeting the right audience for a business. It is a continuously growing industry, and it has been a part of the broader work on digital marketing for decades.

Figure 4, developed by Smart Insights in 2015 provides eight (8) types of social platforms: social networks, social streaming, social search, social knowledge, social blogging, social customer service, social publishing, and social bookmarking. The framework is designed to provide a visualization and prioritization of businesses across social media platforms. The radar suggests that the platforms closer to the business, shown at the center of this figure, are generally more crucial for a business and its objectives. Right around the core are those that are considered the biggest based on the type of social network. These major platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube are essential. However, this is not a limitation, it encourages exploring beyond the dominant platforms currently known today. By strategically mapping the available social media, this radar helps in determining where time and effort should be allocated

effectively. Depending on the business and its objectives, these platforms have the potential to be a powerhouse because they offer opportunities for deeper connections and meaningful interactions. This radar is a guide for businesses to assess and strategize their social media presence ensuring that the decisions made in choosing which platforms warrant more attention are based on the relevance and potential impact. The framework offers strategic coverage, audience targeting, and resource planning. It ensures that a business can tap into all relevant online spaces where the right audience is usually present. More importantly, guidance in the decision-making process, to know where to invest time and effort to achieve digital marketing goals.

Social media marketing is becoming a lot more lucrative but at a reasonable rate in terms of expenditure. The beauty of this type of marketing is the availability of different platforms where products or services can be advertised and where the audience is highly targeted. Apart from the population and exponential growth of social media, users can increase awareness of the products or services as one of its major advantages, the increase in customer engagement with the inclusion of marketplace insights helps a business to better understand the preferences of the customers.

Digital marketing is an ever-changing, dynamic process (American Marketing Association, no date). As technology advances, its promise to change people's lives is now coming true. Business processes are streamlined, and data are getting bigger. Organizations are embedding technology into the core of their business and the way people work. The efficiency and speed in making complex decisions have never been easier as the majority seized the opportunity of what modern tools can add to the value of the business. Especially in the field of marketing, where a creative mind can create a strategy to attach the needs of customers to their emotions and innovate to crack that perfect message to convert a lead to sales in perfect timing. The pool of opportunities brought about by the data to create more personalized content or a chatbot that gives human-like answers to customer queries cannot be underestimated. Through generative AI (Artificial Intelligence), a phenomenal innovation that challenges the human-like chain of thoughts, marketing opportunities in the digital space can be strengthened as it continuously adapts to the changing environment. The next illustration, Figure 4 shows how artificial intelligence is gaining ground in marketing in the United States as of 2023.

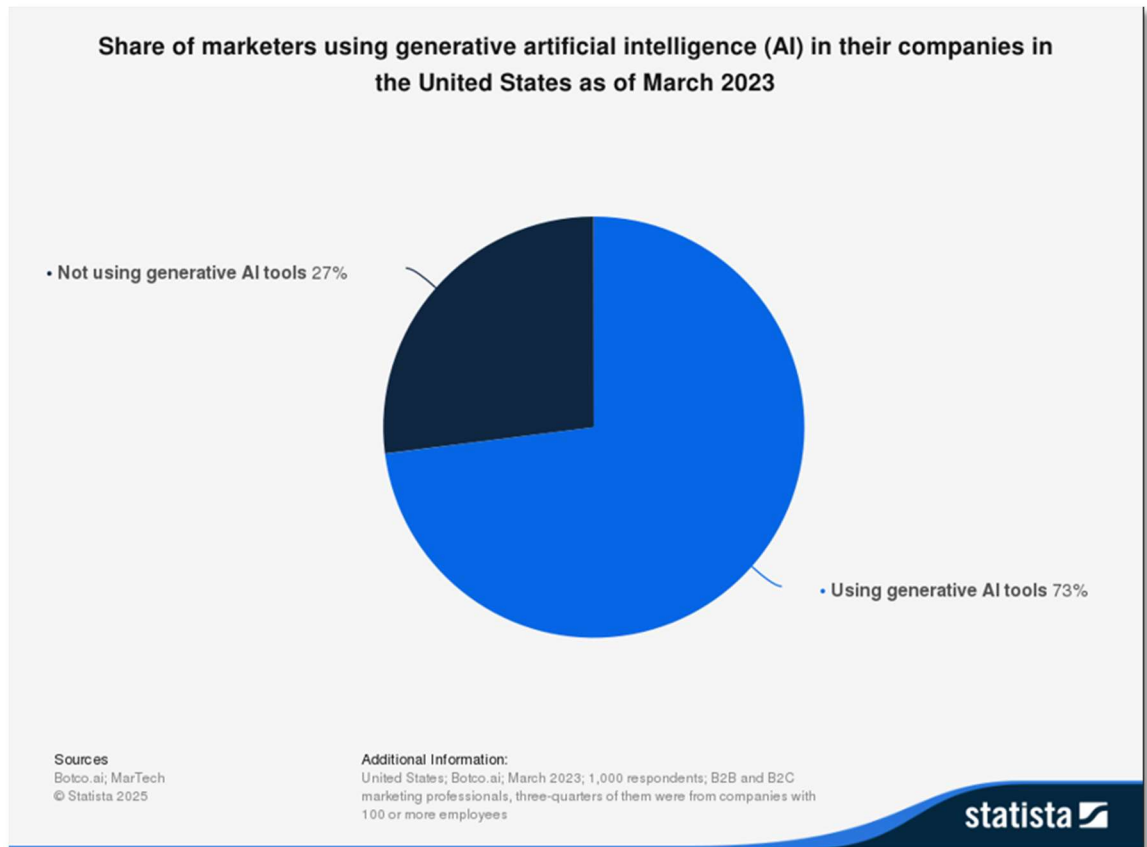


Figure 5. Share of marketers using generative artificial intelligence (AI) in their companies in the United States as of March 2023

As shown in the illustration, 73% who responded to this survey have used generative artificial intelligence as part of the work process. The global AI market, valued at 142.3 billion US dollars as of 2023, is rapidly growing and it is expected to expand from billions to trillions of US dollars in market size in the coming years. (Stanford University, 2023). Machine learning with its capacity to predict customer behavior using data analytics and see the trends, is a marketing tool to improve marketing efforts. It saves time and can help take a marketing strategy to the next level and scale the business. Data-driven marketing insights can improve marketing efforts and enable a business to make better choices to turn potential leads into buyers. The information it creates can enable a business to decide on what marketing activity works best for the business for the products or services it carries. Machine learning looks at big amounts of data to find trends and create predictions. Information such as browsing history and social media activity helps in figuring out what products or services will be the most appealing. It therefore enhances digital marketing efforts such as creating a targeted advertisement or email campaigns. Its predictive capabilities can completely change the game of a

marketing strategy. This technology can capture the demographics of a potential customer through website tracking and social media interactions. This information can put customers in one group, commonly known as customer segmentation which can help optimize the content and make targeted ads for each segment with common preferences and demographics making the marketing effort more effective.

Digital marketing is the application of the Internet and related digital technologies in conjunction with traditional communications to achieve marketing objectives (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2012). Two of the most important principles in digital marketing are outbound and inbound marketing (Digital Marketing Institute, 2025). According to DMI, outbound marketing begins with the brand advertiser pushing out a message to a specified target audience to drive awareness of a product or service. This is also associated with traditional marketing (Patruti-Baltes, 2016). Inbound marketing on the other hand is the exact opposite. It involves trying to pull your audience towards your content, brand, or service. But between these two, inbound marketing is the most important aspect of digital marketing. Strategically, the main focus of this strategy is to attract, engage, and delight customers through valuable and relevant content ('HubSpot', 2025a). This strategy allows the business to build trust and credibility by establishing valuable content or being a thought leader in the industry. This can be a great avenue to build brand awareness that enhances the credibility of the products and services or the business as a whole. Implementation of strategic Inbound Marketing can be cost-effective and can produce long-term results. Because of the many ways available in the market to get the attention of the audience, creating content for a specifically targeted audience can produce organic leads which is less expensive than a traditional marketing initiative. The inbound marketing effort such as the creation of blog posts, videos, and social media content will continuously generate traffic and leads as long as they are accessible.

3.2 Tools for Building a Digital Marketing Strategy

To create a digital marketing strategy, it is necessary to have the tools to enhance the strategy, improve efficiency, and achieve business objectives. Primarily, a business would like to be closer to the customers and send messages across, and in the present situation where we can discover and see new things. It is also a race to create, if not better, the best tactics to capture the attention of the clients or customers.

Businesses need to generate income and to do this, sales should increase. In today's competitive age, it is a challenge for every business to get the attention of the customers. Two of the most important principles in digital marketing are outbound and inbound marketing (Digital Marketing Institute, 2025).

Inbound Marketing involves trying to pull your audience towards your content, brand, or service. But between these two, inbound marketing is the most important aspect of digital marketing. Strategically, the main focus of this strategy is to attract, engage, and delight customers through valuable and relevant content ('HubSpot', 2025a). **Outbound marketing on the other hand** begins with the brand advertiser pushing out a message to a specified target audience to drive awareness of a product or service. This is also associated with traditional marketing (Patruti-Baltes, 2016). These two digital marketing principles have opposite approaches. Inbound is pull marketing while outbound is push marketing.

Inbound and outbound marketing approaches can be directly compared using elements such as approach or execution, communication, and cost.

As a pull marketing approach, Inbound marketing is customer-centric. Marketing efforts are focused on attracting visitors to the company website or any third-party sites typically used by the target audience such as social networking channels. Building online traffic is vital in achieving the marketing objective whether the purpose is to sell, serve, speak, save, or sizzle (Chaffey and Smith, 2022). With the use of the best mix of communication, this marketing approach can easily move potential clients between various stages of the customer journey.

Inbound marketing is a strategic approach to building customer relationships. It can be a self-sustaining loop as customers impart their success to others. This creates loyalty to the brand, and it can get contagious. Figure 6 shows how an inbound marketing strategy can effectively grow the inbound target audience.



Figure 6. Inbound marketing flywheel (HubSpot, 2025)

As illustrated in Figure 6 of this inbound marketing flywheel by HubSpot, growth is the center of the strategy. Surrounding the core are the elements that make up the actions required to attract the target audience in every stage of this flywheel. The outermost part is the target audience for each stage of strategy. Keeping this flywheel continuously moving will help cultivate customer connections build loyalty to the brand and ultimately help the business to grow.

Outbound marketing focuses on advertising where efforts are directed to the audience who have not thought about buying the product or service but once seen, this may potentially create a need and later build that intention to want the products or services and eventually proceed with the actual purchase. This approach is business-centric. Outbound marketing involves reaching out to potential customers directly, rather than waiting for them (Shopify Staff, 2024). This is a one-way communication approach because most strategies are in the form of promotion. Although there is no real-time interaction, advantages include an increase in brand awareness, quick results and it facilitates targeting and personalization. One disadvantage of this approach is the cost, because this is more of a promotion, the marketing spending is allocated to people who are yet to express interest in the product or service, or worse, they are not interested at all in purchasing the product. The techniques in outbound marketing are: cold calling and cold emailing, in-person outreach, print ads, digital ads, and TV and radio ads.

Discussing the two approaches in digital marketing, inbound and outbound marketing is not about creating a conclusion of the best marketing approach. Both of them exist because both serve different purposes. Advertising in digital channels whether the objective is to attract and interact with a group of audiences or to create informative content to promote, it is the visibility that matters. Marketing communication is not a one-size-fits-all technique that will automatically convert a potential customer into sales. There is reliance on other elements of marketing.

It is pressing to discuss these two approaches because the objective of this study is to create a data-driven marketing strategy for a business in a traditional and conservative industry that are considerably late bloomers in adapting digital marketing technologies. While other industries are currently battling for the latest technologies to facilitate innovative ways of attracting and engaging customers, the construction industry especially SMEs (Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) is in the development stage. The marketing habits of the past still linger, which fails the exploration of new possibilities in marketing, especially in the digital marketing space.

This next section of the thesis will provide information on methods for conducting situational analysis, and the best practices for tactics, actions, and controls. It will provide details of the strategy and ensure focus on the business goal. The third will cover the role of data in digital marketing. Finally, this section will discuss the conceptual framework for this thesis, which is the backbone of the data-driven digital marketing strategy for the case company.

3.2.1 Conducting Situational Analysis

This section will cover how to effectively conduct a situational analysis using the SOSTAC Framework and Digital Marketing Maturity Model (Chaffey, 2024). Understanding where the business stands is essential to ensure that digital planning is effective. This is a snapshot of the current technological infrastructure and digital capabilities of the business. The value of reviewing digital maturity is that it can quickly give a “line in the sand” benchmark for the organization’s digital marketing activities to improve upon (Chaffey, 2024). Often, a business perceives that digital transformation is overwhelming. Different areas should be focused on, by using thorough analysis and using the latest digital transformation frameworks and models, the scope can be narrowed.

Situational analysis is required before formulating a marketing strategy. It is a strong understanding of internal and external marketing environments in which a business is operating (Steenburgh and Avery, 2010). This is an important step in measuring the critical information about the current state of the business and the strategy in place. This is an essential activity before drafting a strategy. Conducting a situational analysis will point out the areas that need improvements and will help identify actions required to take advantage of opportunities.

This section of the thesis study contains two methods of situational analysis. This will provide a strong understanding of how to synthesize the information and move forward in creating a digital marketing strategy tailored to the needs of the business.

In planning the digital marketing strategy, Section 3.2 of this thesis mentioned the **SOSTAC Planning Model**. Developed by PR Smith in the 1990s and was voted as the third most popular model in the CIM Poll on marketing models (Chaffey, 2023). Figure 7 below guides in developing a digital marketing strategy. It is known to help evaluate the impact of current and future activities on businesses, specifically targeting the core aspects of digital marketing.

PR Smith's SOSTAC® Planning System



Figure 7. PR Smith's SOSTAC Planning System (Chaffey, 2023)

As illustrated in Figure 7, SOSTAC stands for situation analysis, objectives, strategy, tactics, actions, and control. Its clear structure makes it easier for businesses to use this planning model. The first element of the model is *situational analysis*. This is the foundation of the digital marketing plan. A step that is necessary to assess the current

state of a business. There are several tools to conduct a situational analysis, such as SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats), customer insights, market trends, and competitor analysis, to name a few. This element aims to have a better understanding of what is working, what is not working, and where to target the improvements. The next element is the *objective*, which answers the question “Where do we want to be?”, this is where the measure comes in because it involves defining goals, objectives, and key performance indicators necessary to check if marketing activities are effective and it helps move a business to its desired direction. *Strategy*, the third element provides a big picture of the plan to be able for a business to achieve goals and objectives. *Tactics*, the next element focuses on the specific tools and techniques to execute the strategy. It is the translation of the strategy by providing details and concise content of the plan. *Action* pertains to implementation, and it identifies the resource and timing. *Control* is the measure of performance and tracking the progress of the strategy.

To apply the SOSTAC Planning Framework in data-driven digital marketing strategy development. This section intends to focus on the situational analysis, to review the current process. According to Chaffey (2023), the OSA approach in Figure 8 will help to build concise, focused plans.



Figure 8. The Smart Insights RACE OSA Marketing Growth Process (Chaffey, 2023)

From Figure 8, OSA stands for opportunities, strategy, and action. The first action for this process is to use the available data for a company and review the opportunities in the

marketplace. In addition, this process includes setting objectives which will be used to identify options for strategy and priorities. This will eventually lead to the required actions for strategy execution. This process offers balance, providing a bigger picture of the business situation.

The second power tool that will be discussed in this section is **Porter's Five Forces** coined by Harvard Business School Professor, Michael Porter in 1979 in an article published by the Harvard Business Review and it remains a fundamental tool for strategic analysts plotting the competitive landscape of an industry (Gratton, 2024). The practical application of this framework is to examine the competitive factors and the analysis of the competition of the business in the industry. Figure 8 illustrates the Five Forces Model created by M. Porter in 1979.

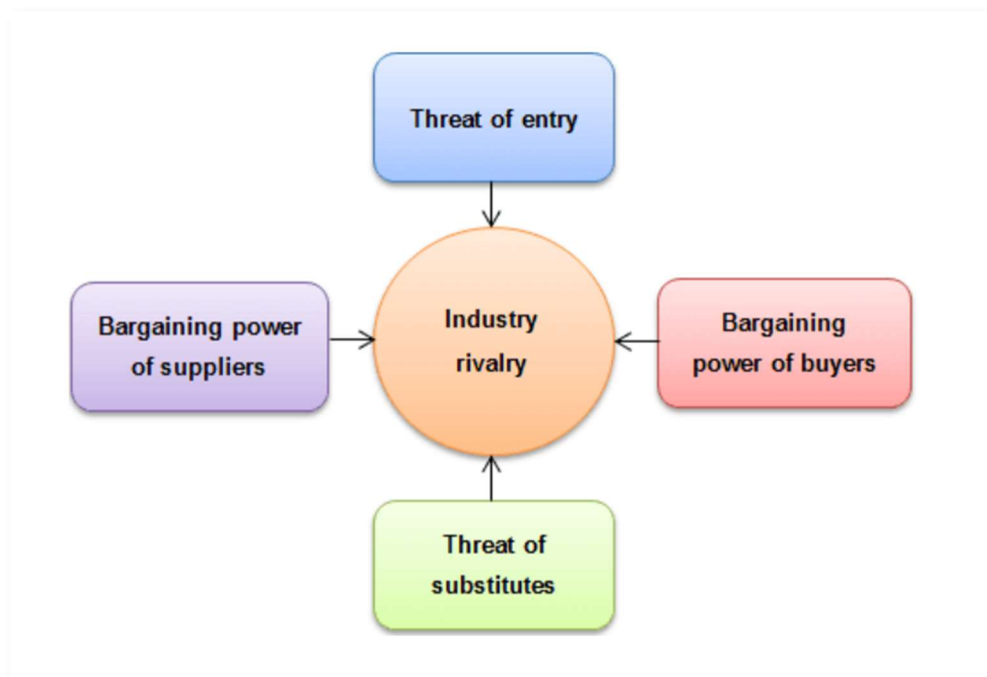


Figure 9. Porter's Five Forces (Jurevicius, 2021)

In a highly competitive world of digital marketing, Porter's five forces model is another way to determine the tenacity of the competition within the industry. It complements the situational analysis from PR Smith's SOSTAC model. Figure 9 provides the different external factors at the industry level and the factors that can impact profitability. As shown in the figure, forces are the threat of new competitors, the bargaining power of suppliers and buyers, the threat to substitute products, and industry rivalry.

This tool helps in breaking down the level of competition in an industry making it useful for strategic planning. Incorporating this into situational analysis provides a holistic view of both internal and external environments. Combining an analysis of these forces in a situational analysis provides a deep dive into external factors and opportunities, enabling a business to quickly respond to the environmental changes around it.

Situational analysis as an initial activity in the creation of a data-driven digital marketing strategy is a necessary process for making an informed decision. This will drive the next steps such as creating objectives or redefining objectives to make them more suitable to the current needs and requirements of a business. This will future-proof the organization by having tangible data on the internal and external factors that impact the business today and beyond. There will be a better understanding of the business and its current position in the market which will identify the critical areas for improvement that will help define the strategy and drive business growth. Actionable steps can be broken down into pieces making it easier to allocate resources and budget. All this information is necessary during a periodic check-in to track the progress and if there is a need for adjustments or an overhaul in the entire strategy making sure that the business is aligned with the current situation and ready to manage the complexity of competition in the market.

The following scope of this section is the evaluation of the digital maturity of the business. Figure 10 is a framework developed by Dr. Dave Chaffey to help organizations assess and improve digital marketing maturity.

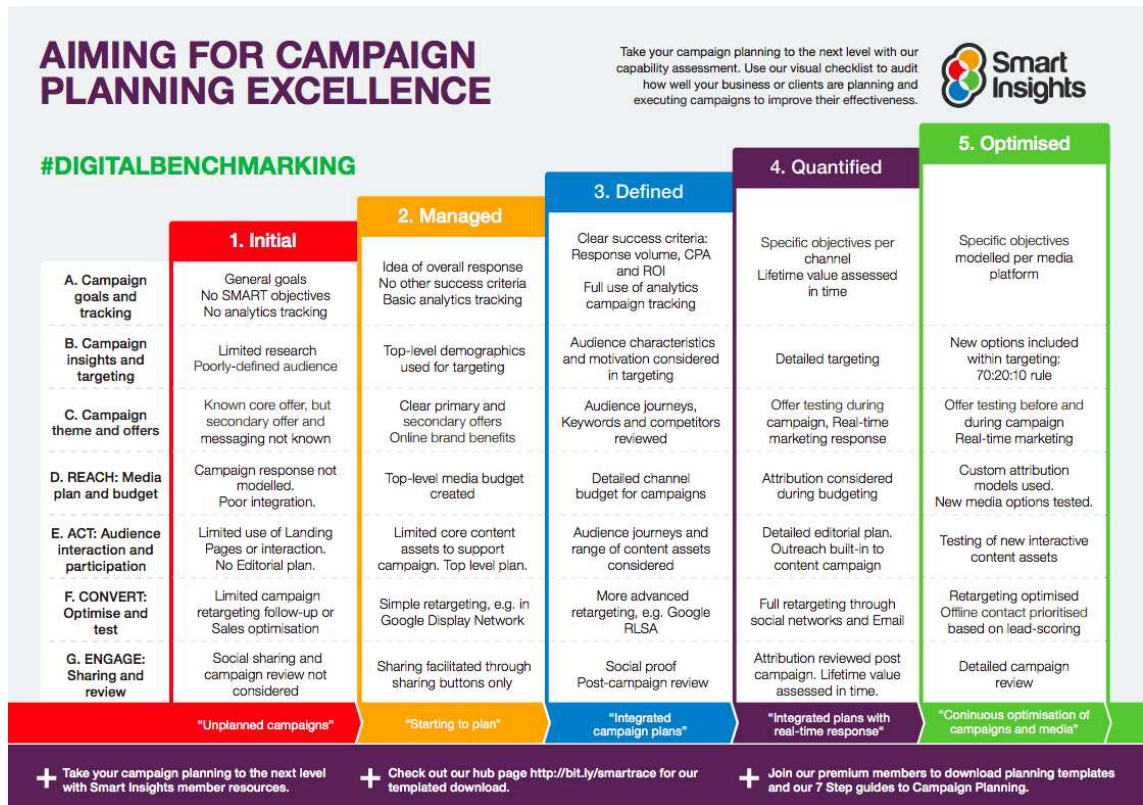


Figure 10. Smart Insight Digital Marketing Maturity Model (Chaffey, 2024)

The model provides five (5) stages to enable a business to identify its current standing and the corresponding need that will help in the integration and optimization of digital strategy. The five stages of the model provide diagnostics for the business to identify digital capability gaps. At the same time, this model can also be used as a planning tool because it helps in identifying the improvements that should be prioritized. Hence, it can provide a framework for the next stage of planning, setting realistic goals using the SMART framework which will be discussed further in the next section of this thesis study.

3.2.2 Setting Digital Marketing Objectives and Key Performance Indicators

Effective digital marketing objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are largely dependent on comprehending the customer journey. To define the customer journey, it is the sequence of events from discovering a product or a service to purchasing and becoming an advocate or repeat customer.

Digital marketing objectives should be structured as SMART, which stands for specific, measurable, actionable, relevant, and time-bound. The framework matches the

customer journey model because it involves several stages of the RACE Framework (Chaffey, 2025) which typically involves these phases: awareness, consideration, conversion, retention, and promotion. Following the customer journey ensures that strategy supports customers effectively throughout its decision-making process.

Focusing on the customer journey can assist in establishing achievable and compatible digital marketing goals. KPIs will also be consistent with user behavior at each phase of the customer journey. This enables a business to continuously monitor and if necessary, adjust the strategy. In setting digital marketing objectives, it is essential to understand the difference between objectives and goals. These two can mean the same, but they are two different things. According to a blog from HubSpot, a goal is an achievable outcome that is typically broad and long-term. On the other hand, an objective is defined as the specific, measurable actions that must be taken to achieve the overall goals (Coleman, B., 2024).

To better understand the relationship between digital marketing objectives and the customer journey, provided below is Figure 11, an illustration of the customer journey from a business standpoint.

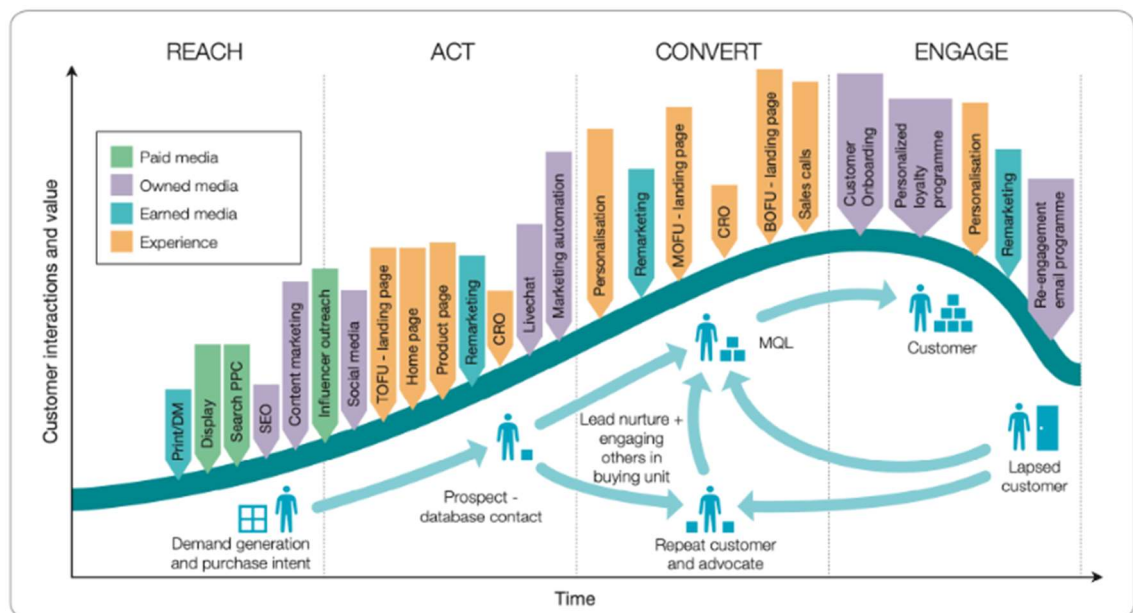


Figure 11. The Customer lifecycle marketing touchpoint summary for B2B (Chaffey, 2025)

As illustrated in Figure 11, the RACE Framework is incorporated into the entire customer journey. Each phase also provides the appropriate tactics and actions that will support

the customer's journey in the process. Relating this to objectives and KPIs helps a business in choosing appropriate tactics and tools, making it easier to identify how it can support objectives and what measures are required to check performance and success. In addition, the figure provides the point of customer interaction. This illustrates how to address the gaps in the processes, at every customer touchpoint. This ensures that communication is relevant to the needs and demands of the customer at every stage, creating a tailored roadmap for the business to follow, and providing an overall positive customer experience.

It was mentioned earlier that a digital marketing objective should be SMART. The SMART method was first introduced by George T. Doran in 1981 for writing effective management goals (Bjerke and Renger, 2017). It has become a common management method that can also be applied in digital marketing practice.

The characteristics of effective digital marketing should be clear and well-defined. There should be quantifiable measures or KPIs (Key Performance Indicators). Objectives should be realistic and relevant and lastly, they should be set within a timeframe.

Key Performance Indicators are measurable values that are essential in creating objectives. With the current dynamics of digital marketing, evaluating KPIs will guide a business to flip strategies when the needs arise.

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs is one of the best-known theories of motivation. It was first introduced in his 1943 paper, titled "A Theory of Human Motivation," and again in his subsequent book, "Motivation and Personality." This hierarchy suggests that people are motivated to fulfill basic needs before moving on to other, more advanced needs (Cherry, 2024). This theory inspired the concept of the KPI Pyramid for online marketing. Figure 12 illustrates what are the essential considerations in creating KPIs relating to the theory of Maslow.

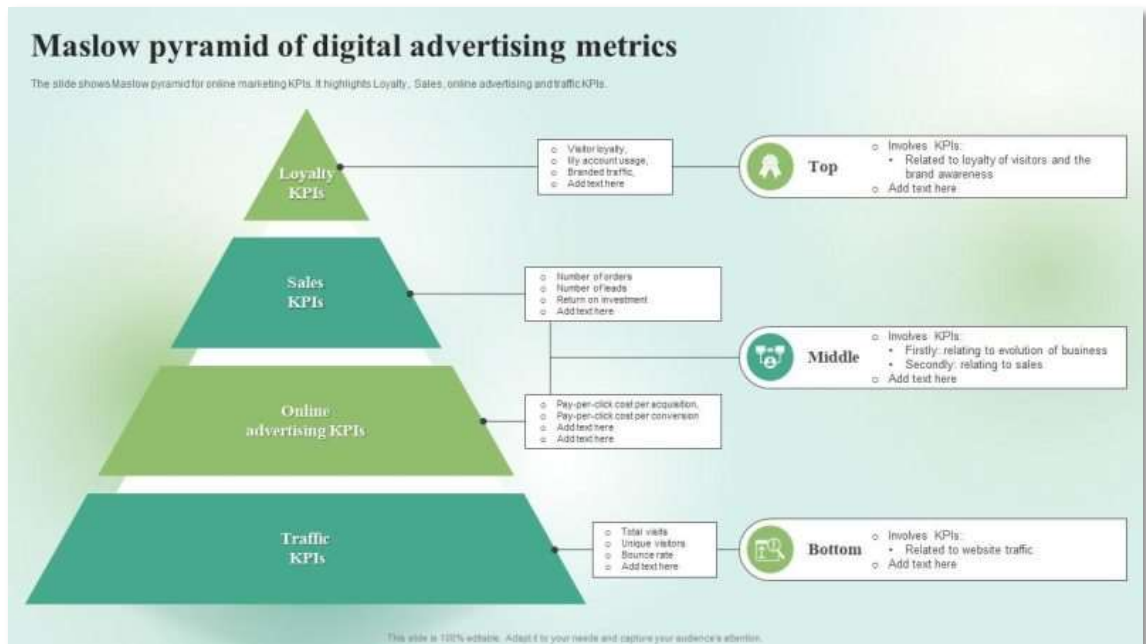


Figure 12. Maslow pyramid of digital advertising metrics (Radu, 2023)

Understanding consumer behaviors and their motivations is what every business should decipher. The human mind is complex. However, Figure 12 provides insight into the design of Maslow's theory and how it is adopted in digital marketing. At the bottom of the pyramid is the Traffic KPI, generating the number of visitors to a website and can be used to measure lead generation and conversion rates. It is the bloodline of digital marketing strategy because it quantifies online engagement and how effective the tools and tactics are used to create an online presence. Traffic KPI, found at the bottom of the pyramid, is considered the foundation for digital marketing success.

The middle of the pyramid is composed of the Online Advertising KPIs and Sales KPIs. These KPIs are created to serve the needs of the visitors we have generated. When an online presence has been created, a business can use the data or information from the website visitors to create a unique online advertising strategy. KPIs that fall under Online Advertising such as the number of engagements received from a social media post. Sales KPIs on the other hand are the monetization factor where there is a tangible indicator that the online strategy is creating profit for the business. Sample measures are the number of online orders and conversion rate just to name a few.

The top of the pyramid is equivalent to Maslow's self-actualization. In the digital marketing setting, this can equate to Loyalty KPIs which can indicate the maturity level

of the marketing strategy. An example is a reward redemption rate or a repeat purchase rate. This stage is when a brand starts to create an online community that advocates the brand. The top tier of the Maslow pyramid embodies the culmination of online marketing excellence—a realm where businesses transcend transactional relationships to forge enduring bonds of loyalty and brand affinity (Radu, 2023).

3.2.3 Best Practices for Tactics and Actions

This section will focus on tactics, actions, and control. It intends to give more information on the details of the strategy. Tactics are the smaller actions of the strategy while actions are the details of the tactics.

According to Will Francis during his interview with Joe Wilde of MacDigital who delivered digital marketing, CX, eCommerce, and brand development campaigns for small to medium-sized businesses, educational institutions, and major brands including Diageo, Heineken, GlaxoSmithKline, Red Bull, and the Irish Department of Business Enterprise and Innovation – “the Customer Experience (CX) means putting the customer first and relentlessly improving their experience of your business” (Wilde, 2021). Figure 13 below shows that central to tactics is digital experience.

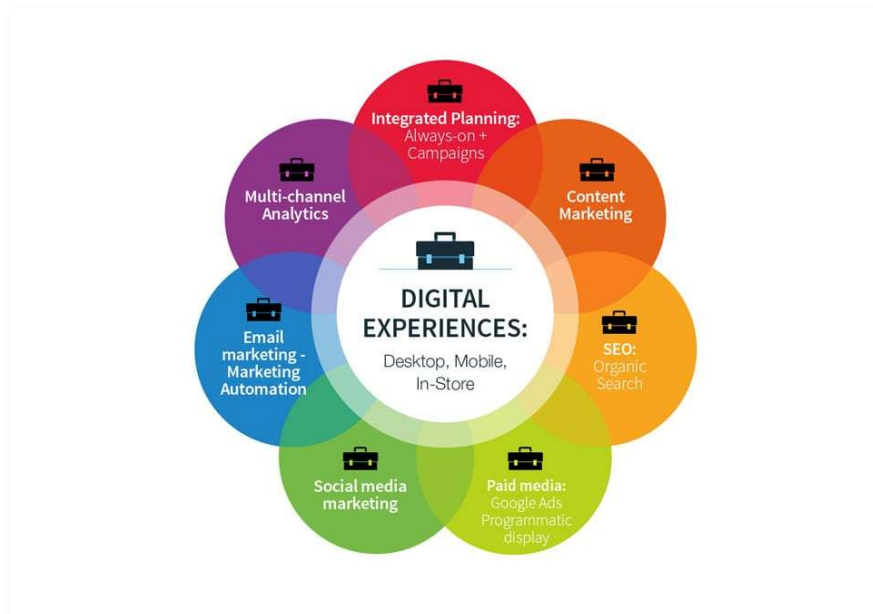


Figure 13. Eight key digital marketing activities to manage in all organizations (Chaffey, 2019)

As illustrated in Figure 12, digital experience is the central focus for all digital marketing activities of the business. Surrounding this are the details of the mix such as integrated planning, content marketing, SEO, paid media, social media marketing, email marketing/marketing automation, and multi-channel analytics. In this illustration, all marketing activities should provide the best digital experience to capture the customers' attention across devices.

Chaffey mentioned on his website in 2024, that the future is “always-on marketing”. Always-on marketing means a planned approach to scheduling and optimizing continuous marketing activities that support customer acquisition and retention throughout the customer lifecycle (Chaffey, 2024).

The market never sleeps, and this applies to the internet. For a strategy to work, a product or service should always be available. In digital marketing strategy, what is initially consumed by potential customers is digital media. Figure 14 below provides the six categories of digital media channels and their relationship to paid, owned, and earned media.

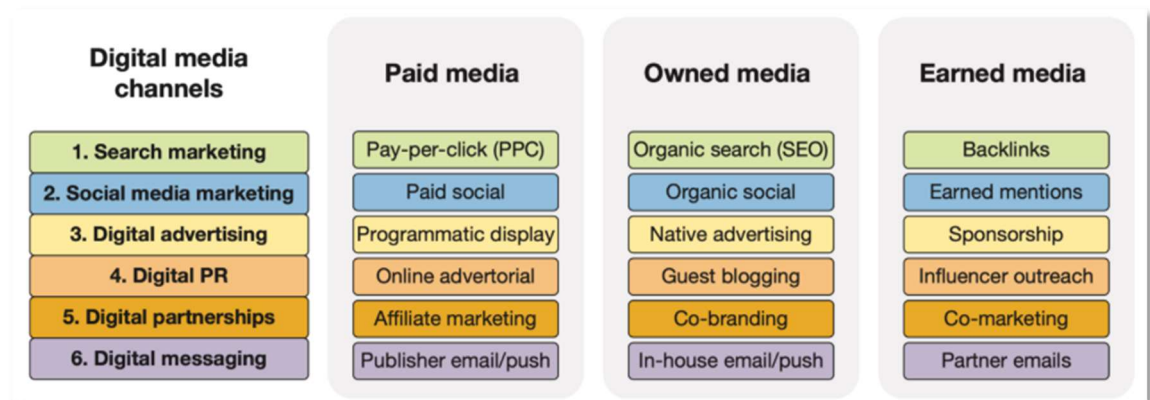


Figure 14. The six categories of digital media channels and their relationship to paid, owned, and earned media (Chaffey, 2023)

As shown in Figure 14, digital media channels are, search marketing, social media marketing, digital advertising, digital PR, digital partnerships, and digital messaging. In each digital media channel, there are types of media that can be used to grow business digitally. The next illustration, Figure 15 will provide the difference among the three digital marketing media types.

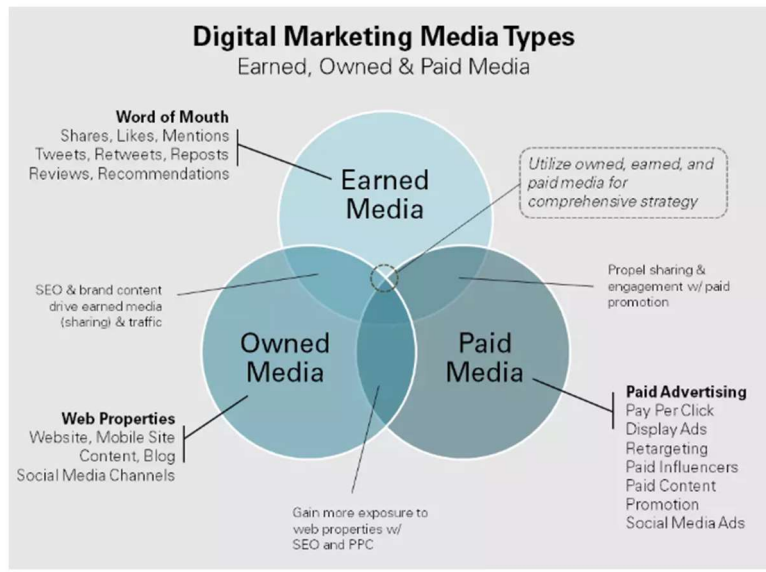


Figure 15. Digital Marketing Media Types (Oneupweb, 2025)

In Figure 15, earned media includes all types of exposure that a brand receives for free. This is a valuable type of media because it is based on loyalty and trust to the brand. Paid media is like traditional marketing. The advertisements or promotions are paid except that the content is displayed across social media platforms, search engines, or websites. The last is owned media, the type of media that can be controlled. These are the digital assets of the business that can be used as tools for brand awareness which will later help drive financial returns to business.

Among these three types of digital media, owned media is used by businesses to communicate because of the control and flexibility a business has over its content. This is cost-effective because the consistent messaging and branding created through the content created does not have to be paid. Another advantage of owned media is the interaction with customers which can positively contribute to building long-term relationships.

The number of tools available on the market can be overwhelming. They are all important and they all have a purpose. However, all marketing tools are not necessarily needed. What is required for a well-executed strategy is to have the right marketing mix. Digital marketing activities should be focused on the current situation of the business and using the objectives to create a roadmap for success.

The digital marketing funnel is a modern, online strategy for gaining and retaining clients for business (InMotion Hosting, 2024). Figure 16 below provides the steps to the digital marketing funnel and the required digital marketing tools and tactics at every level.

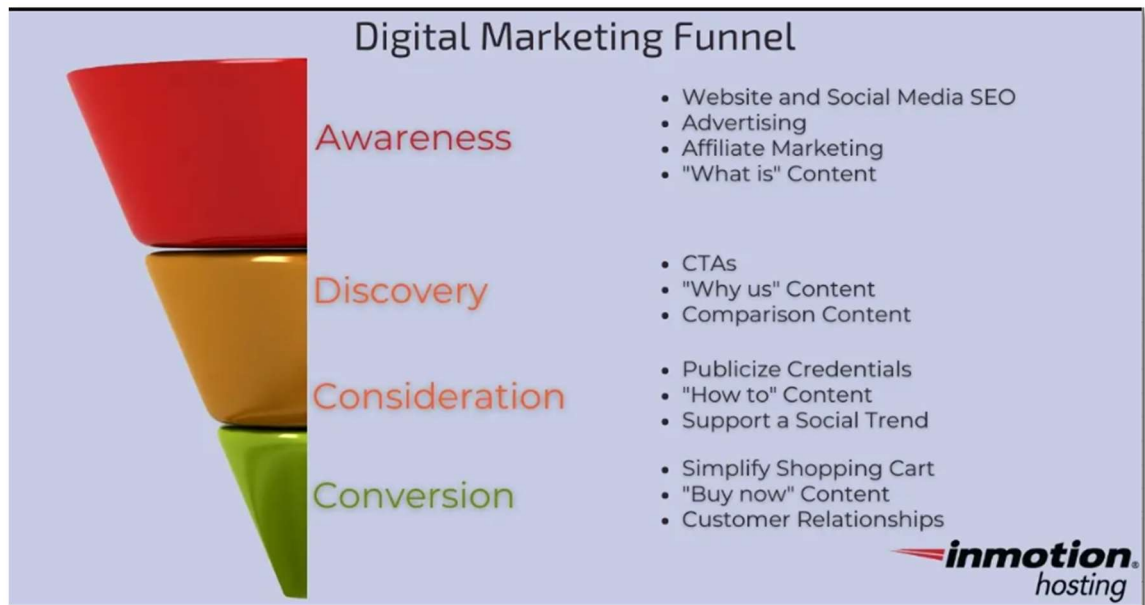


Figure 16. Digital Marketing Funnel (InMotion Hosting, 2024)

The above illustration is like the RACE growth system that was illustrated in the previous section. Figure 16 above provides a customer journey from a digital marketing customer standpoint. TOFU, an abbreviation for Top of Funnel refers to actions of the business for the potential customers. Marketing efforts are focused on driving traffic to the business. As indicated above, digital tools such as the company website, social media channels, and SEO are tools used to execute the digital marketing strategy to reach people and improve the chances of being found. MOFU, the middle of the funnel is divided into two, discovery and consideration. This is where the focus is lead generation. Consideration is when a customer is starting to inquire about a product or service. This is crucial because the information from digital sources will make or break the decision to purchase. Call-to-actions and content are the common tools for these stages of the customer journey. BOFU, the bottom of the funnel is conversion. Timing is important in this stage as well as the ease of navigating the digital tools. The decision has been made, and the only focus at this stage is to remove any challenges or hurdles that the customer might face to finish the transaction.

Leading the customer to the bottom of the channel is hard work. It requires a deep analysis of the situation to identify the right mix of tools to make the strategy effective for the business. Figure 17 is derived from the 7Ps Marketing Mix. It helps companies to review and define key issues that affect the marketing of their products and services.

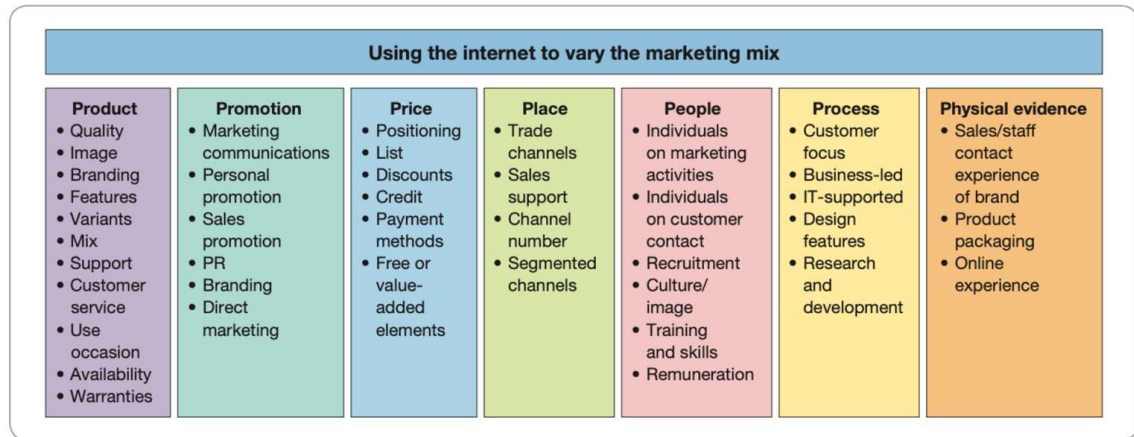


Figure 17. The seven Elements of the marketing mix (Hanlon, 2023)

Figure 17 is a marketing strategy tool together with the RACE Framework mentioned in the previous section of this thesis, is one of the top three (3) classic marketing models according to a poll on Smart Insight and was originally devised by E. Jerome McCarthy and published in 1960 in his book *Basic Marketing. A Managerial Approach* (Hanlon, 2023).

The seven elements in the figure are product, promotion, price, people, processes, and physical evidence. Like situational analysis, this marketing tool helps evaluate the marketing mix elements of a business and take actions where it is more beneficial and advantageous.

In the earlier sections of this thesis, understanding the environment can equip the business with powerful information. Since data is available in just one click, insights, statistics, and metrics can be used to the advantage of a business. This will not only help with decision-making. This will help accelerate the success of each campaign created. The importance of data in this area is to identify the target audience across different platforms or digital channels. A well-executed marketing campaign aims to communicate the message to the right people in the right venue. This is when identifying the persona comes in. According to HubSpot Academy, a buyer persona is a semi-fictional

representation of an ideal buyer based on data, interviews, and some educated guesses (HubSpot Academy, 2025). Developing a unified buyer persona will help create seamless customer experience because it provides characteristics that are valuable not only for the marketing team but also across business processes like sales and services teams. Apart from creating an end-to-end positive customer experience, internal teams will be aligned, and it will resonate with the entire team as positive working experience.

The second key element is **content marketing**. Forbes defined content marketing as a marketing technique of creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and acquire a clearly defined audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action (Steimle, J., 2014). This is the modern way of advertising. It comes in many forms. It can be an infographic, a webpage, a podcast, a video, or even a book or to better fit the subject, a digital book.

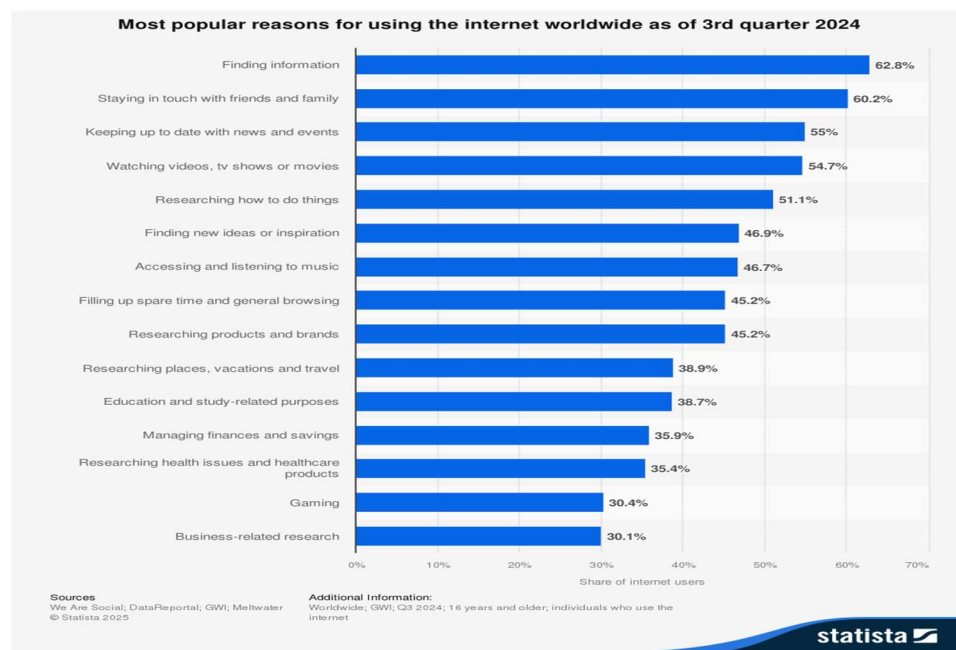
The increase in popularity of content marketing is a direct connection to revenue. If the opportunity is seized, it can dramatically increase revenue, giving a push for executives to buy the idea. Content marketing supports digital platforms or other digital channels which allows applying the marketing mix. Because customer conversion and revenue are the desired outcomes of the digital marketing strategy, content marketing can be a great tactic to generate organic leads by attracting, engaging, and delighting customers. After attracting the audience, the next task is to find the elements that will take the audience to the content and receive the information relevant to them.

Customer interactions have their complexities, and this was emphasized in the previous section. For communication to effectively work, it should match every touchpoint of the customer journey. The first level is when a customer's awareness is at zero level. This stage is when a customer is neither aware nor finds the value of products or services. At this stage, content marketing is one of the solutions available in the market. Content intended to provide information will start to increase awareness and create a need. This makes the first phase of the model: Reach. Content Marketing lands in this first phase because it is where awareness is created. Once a message reaches a customer, it is a form of self-education about a product or service offering. Information provided by content will assist the business to make or break the deal. It is valuable information, from customer point of view, it can be satisfying in a sense that it answers a need or a want and from a business stand point, it means success that the information reached the right target that could possibly return as sales.

There are additional activities that a business can manage that will get them closer to customers. In the same figure, **SEO (Search Engine Optimization)** is one of the many ways a business can gain organic leads. According to the Digital Marketing Institute, SEO is a process of getting traffic from free, organic, editorial, or natural search results in search engines. It aims to improve a website's position in search results pages (SERPs). (Melinn, 2024). The first thing that a business does to be a part of the digital community is to create a company website. In digital marketing, a website is not only for branding or a digital showroom for the products. There is more to being a part of that space and one of the reasons is that a business would like to be found by customers who make an informative decision to purchase. As a marketing strategy, SEO can take into account the algorithms and learn what customers are searching for. At present, information seekers will immediately turn to their mobile devices and start to type in the keywords to find the information. Search engines are the way to find the information.

The following table shows statistics of popular reasons for using the Internet.

Table 3. Most popular reasons for using the Internet worldwide as of the 3rd quarter of 2024 (Petrosyan, 2025)

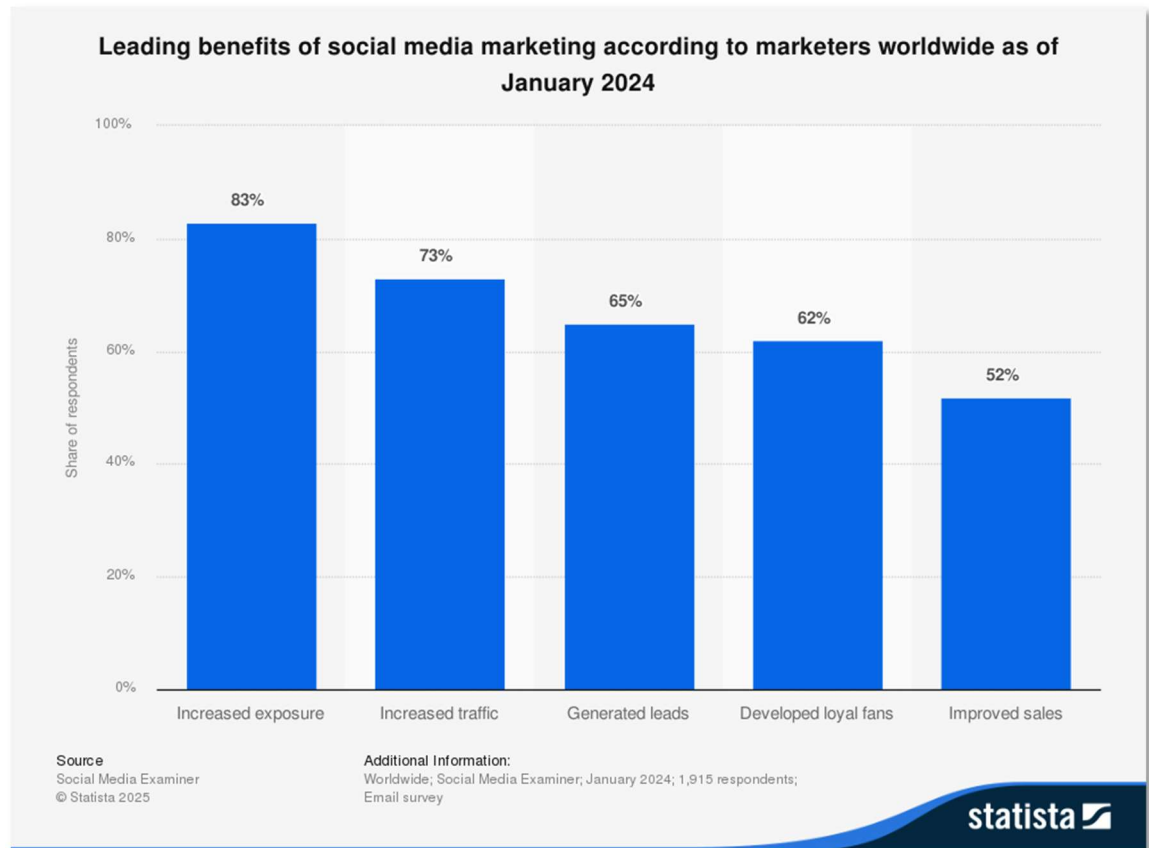


Finding information as the top reason for using the Internet, the table illustrates how the Web presents a very significant and attractive opportunity in digital marketing. That is why it is necessary to have a strategy for SEO to optimize the content and get the highest

rank possible on search engines. A strategic SEO can create quality-based content based on performance and the intent of the Internet users. By typing a keyword in the search page of a search engine, a business can easily be found, making search engines a primary source for new leads and customers. This is why, a great landing page for the company website with a good SEO strategy in place can generate traffic, this is a great way to be discovered and to build authority in search rankings. SEO is arguably the most important digital marketing channel for customer acquisition (Chaffey and Smith, 2022). If this is done well, it will greatly impact the visibility, making it easier for prospective customers to find the company and the products and services. Leveraging SEO can generate more opportunities to convert leads which means an increase in sales and market share.

Marketing did evolve over time, and so did the way people connect and interact. Humans are fueled by emotions and naturally, this should be communicated. Through the advances in technology, establishing personal connections leveled up and it converted to electronic communication giving rise to social networking and microblogging. The social media environment over time was converted, from a business point of view, it is now known as **social media marketing**, one of the best marketing tools available in the market today. Social media is a phenomenon that has transformed the interaction and communication of individuals throughout the world (Rugova and Prenaj, 2016). There is no wonder why social networking sites reached popularity. Today, it is not only a place where friends and families connect, this transformed into a marketplace where brands meet and interact with customers. With 5.17 billion social network users as of 2024 worldwide, according to a published report by Statista Research Department in 2024, social influence has led marketing strategies to align with platforms and promote video content. And in 2024, TikTok and social media ranked among the top three leading consumer trends according to marketers surveyed around the globe (Statista Research Department, 2024). The following is a table showing the leading benefits of social media marketing according to marketers worldwide as published by Statista Research Department in 2024.

Table 4. Leading benefits of social media marketing according to marketers worldwide as of January 2024



Looking at Table 4, it cites the 5 major benefits of social media marketing. Increasing the exposure of the brand ranks the highest creating a huge appeal to every marketer. There is a huge opportunity for the brand to be out there and discovered. Social media tools and the number of users are not the only basis of success, this is a platform where communication strategy should also be applied. It is necessary to keep in mind that there will be an audience that will react in just a second after a post is created. Participation of the audience in the form of likes or other reactions to a post, adding a comment, and most importantly sharing the content. Social media engagement is an opportunity to influence a consumer or a group of consumers. This is a tech-savvy generation where authentic branding is applauded. By developing a consistent visual brand on all social media platforms, using the right tone, and creating a marketing persona based on the data provided by the social media users themselves during a sign-up before being an active user of a platform, allows the platform to create an exact picture of the user making it easier for the platform to target the user to a specific ad or content. Social media marketing comes with great potential to increase traffic, generate leads, develop loyal

fans, and most of all, improve sales. Social media marketing is also a mix of marketing activities. A company can use different combinations depending on what suits the business, using the correct strategy and managing this activity, a company can make the most of the advantages of social media marketing. It can be a rewarding journey, both for the company and for the consumer.

As mentioned above, there are more than 5 billion social media users worldwide. Using a social media platform will require a sign-up, and having an e-mail address is the first requirement to be a qualified user of the social media platform of choice. Electronic mail is an integral part of life whether it is personal or business. Currently, there are over 4 billion e-mail users globally (Ceci, 2024) and the same for the social media marketing tool, the growth in users makes it an attractive marketing tool. Although e-mail is one of the oldest digital communication channels, it is considered the most effective marketing channel with an ROI (Return on Investment) of \$36 for every dollar spent (American Marketing Association, 2023). **Email marketing** can be an effective tool to attract, engage, and communicate with both potential and existing customers. Managing an email marketing activity can bring benefits to the business because of the personalization and control. There are different ways email marketing can be executed. Depending on the objective of the marketing campaign. It is also important to take into account that the backbone of any email marketing campaign is the email list, a database of email addresses that consented to receive an email from the business. Strategically, it is not necessary to build up a list of emails. At one point in the email marketing management, the email addresses gathered should be qualified as potential leads for the business. Note that the recipients should provide their consent to receive the marketing emails in their inbox. Getting the recipient's permission means they volunteer to be marketed. Asking permission from the customer is a part of the GDPR directive from the European Commission.

Email marketing strategy cannot be successful without contact management. Data management matters in this activity and there should be a central storage of the data and other relevant information about the customer. It is a time-consuming activity if not properly managed. It is important to note that these contacts are the core of email marketing. The database of contacts is a goldmine because these contacts can potentially add value to the business by helping grow the business. To properly manage these contacts, a strategy that includes a software program that can handle sourcing and storing the information of the contact is necessary to ensure productivity and efficiency

in digital marketing strategy. A CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system can help streamline operations and help drive business to success. It helps a business track customer information and interaction. In digital marketing strategy, it is helpful to implement marketing automation in the strategy. In a report published by Datanyze, marketing automation entails adopting technology, mainly software, to organize repetitive activities in multiple channels, especially online and it tends to make campaigns more effective (Navarro, 2024a). Incorporating automation in the digital marketing strategy like a CRM system, it can add value to the company by improving customer service, efficient use of time and resources, support in decision-making, and improve lead generation, nurturing, and conversion.

Last on the list of marketing activities is multi-channel analytics. **Multi-channel Analytics** or multichannel reporting is a business process that combines data from multiple sources or channels in a single location (Andrea, 2020).

Digital marketing strategy deals with data, and it can be overwhelming when information is dumped in a central location without any filtering or proper indexing. Multi-channel analytics is the key to an organized data that will provide insightful data points that can provide more than the texts. The necessity to process the data will help the business find the different segments of the customers and understand the needs and purchasing signals. Having said that, the business can grow because developing a strategy based on the available information can make it more efficient and effective.

3.2.3.1 The RACE Framework

In the previous section, the RACE Framework was discussed as an acronym that stands for Reach, Act, Convert, and Engage which is a systematic approach to plan, execute, and track the performance of marketing efforts. These four (4) steps framework provides an actionable data model that works in managing the customer journey and improving the performance of digital marketing. An integration of this framework into digital marketing contributes to the overall strategy of the business.

The RACE Framework is divided into four (4) key stages: The first is Reach. This involves building awareness and building traffic. Tactics involved in this stage to increase brand visibility and drive traffic online are SEO (Search Engine Optimization) strategies or

social media campaigns. The next is Act. It focuses on interactions and leads to the digital platform of the business. This second stage of the framework focuses on creating opportunities for online engagement using content, newsletter signups, and brand following. The Convert stage is focused on lead conversion, which means a qualified lead turns into a paying customer. Common tactics include retargeting, email nurturing, and conversion rate. The last stage is Engage, which emphasizes building long-term relationships and loyalty. This can be done by exceptional customer service, personalized communication, and other ongoing interactions.

To support the application of the framework, an infographic illustrating the RACE planning framework is shown in Figure 18. It highlights each stage and its alignment with the customer lifecycle and marketing tactics. Using this ensures the business the digital marketing strategy comprehensively covers each stage while keeping it aligned with measurable KPIs.

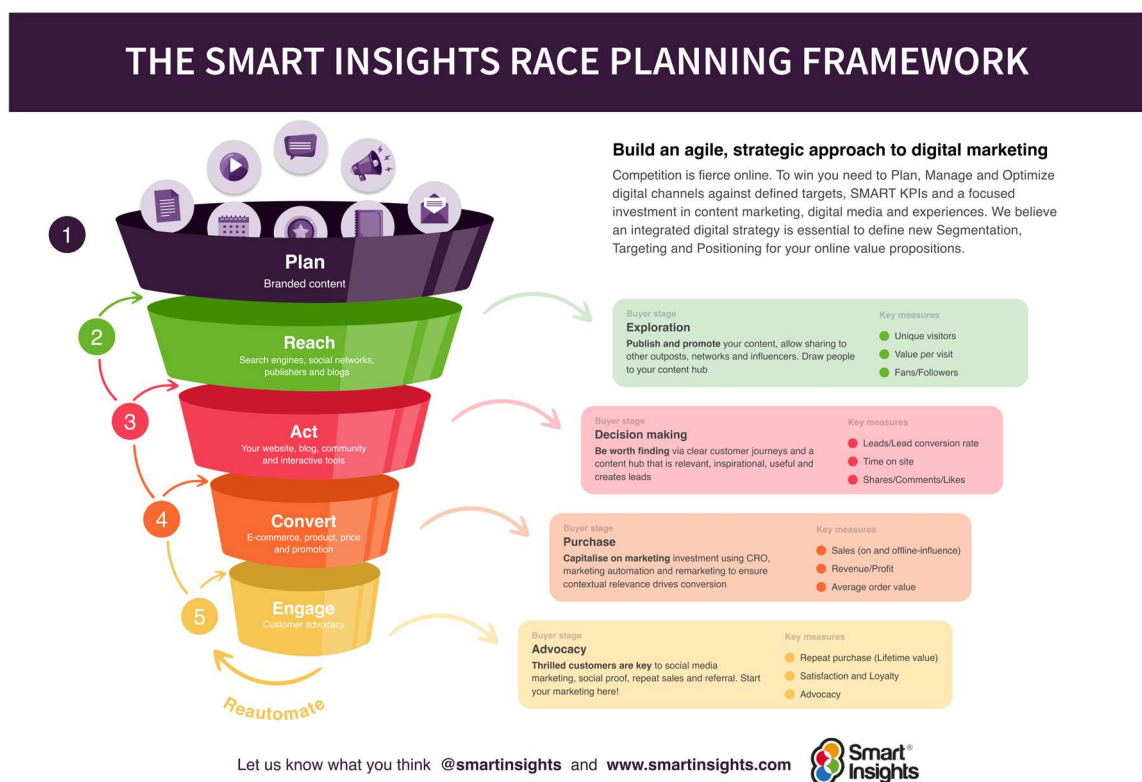


Figure 18. The Smart Insights RACE Planning Framework (Chaffey, 2024)

The illustration in Figure 18 is what customer engagement usually looks like. Each division of the RACE Framework is marked with colored markers and arrows that lead

viewers from Reach to Engage. The sections contain information on digital channels, tools, and KPIs such as website traffic, lead generation, sales conversion, and customer satisfaction. By utilizing a continuous design, the cycle starts over with new or returning customers and becomes progressively more dynamic as it facilitates the ongoing development of digital marketing strategies and performance improvement.

3.2.3.2 Resource Allocation and Upskilling

More than technology, one of the most important assets of organizations is the resources or the manpower. An evolving and growing business should not leave its manpower behind. Allocation and upskilling initiatives can both impact the business and align its business operations with the wider organizational goals.

It always starts with a thorough assessment of the current skill sets as the base point then identifying the gaps and point specific areas where training is most needed. In talent management, it is best to anticipate the future skills requirement (Humansmart Editorial Team, 2024), a proactive approach that can help address potential skill gaps based on employee performance data and industry trends. Adapting to changing technology and skill demands does not only pertain to the tools and technology adapted to the business process, for sustained success and competitiveness, manpower should also follow. The competitive environment provides an opportunity for organizations to motivate employees by offering training and development programs that will enhance learning agility, transferability of skills, and opportunities to explore adjacent, in-demand skills (Baker, 2022).

There are benefits to training and development. Employees can experience career enrichment when employers support development through training and development. It results in a more engaged and motivated employee, creating a forward-looking perspective (Baker, 2022).

For organizations that face financial challenges and the need to upskill employees, particularly in startups, moving forward is heavily reliant on innovative thinking and resourcefulness. Creating a culture of continuous learning for the growth of employees and at the same time growth of business.

3.3 The Role of Data in Control and Performance Measure

Business is changing because of the rapid evolution in technology and central to these changes is the role of data in achieving control and enhancing performance. The marketing technology also known as MarTech, expanded over 14,000 products in 2024, representing a 27.8% increase from the previous year. This growth is influenced by the escalating demand for data-driven tools that enable organizations to optimize operations and make informed decision (Brinker, 2024).

Simultaneously, the European Union and its initiative to transform businesses in the region critically highlights the importance of data governance and digital transformation. Promoting the policies related to data drives every business and entity within the European Union to ensure that data accessibility, security, and usage will be utilized to foster innovation and efficiency (European Commission, 2020).

This section aims to provide the significant role of data as a tool for controlling and enhancing business performance. The material covered will help in recognizing how data collection, analysis, and application can strategically and competitively position a business in the digital era.

3.3.1 The CRM and Data Monitoring

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system is a vital tool for businesses. Apart from strengthening customer relationships through data, it provides organized interaction within departments or teams in an organization. In the context of the digital economy, CRM is more than a database for contacts. It evolved into a dynamic ecosystem that collects, processes, and provides real-time information about customers and the overall picture of the business. It is now transformed into a tool that drives personalized customer engagement that can predict behaviours and enhance overall business performance.

CRM is a term that refers to practices, strategies, and technologies that companies use to manage and analyze customer interactions and data throughout the customer lifecycle

(Lewis, 2018). This is a must-have tool for creating accurate and consistent customer data across digital marketing channels. Benefits of this tool include streamlining marketing operations such as lead management and email automation. CRM is an analytical tool that provides real-time insights that help in the decision-making process. It is a collaborative tool that allows business units to be informed of business tasks and activities necessary to perform their functions.

In the previous section of this thesis study, the word “target” was constantly used. Digital marketing aims to be precise in understanding customer behavior to analyze the trends in web browsing, social media interactions, and buying trigger patterns. Every digital channel generates a large amount of data that should be processed. The different measures of digital channels provide an opportunity to explore strategies. More than the numbers, the data in the form of insights can bring financial benefit to the business. Data can give information on what content performed well and what channel produced the highest number of interactions. Therefore, it provides an opportunity to get more out of digital marketing activities for a fraction of the price including the time spent in making decisions and realizing the true meaning of an effective and efficient strategy.

Data-driven marketing uses data to inform all marketing decisions, from creative assets to campaigns. It places customer data front and center to ensure all marketing efforts are relevant to customer interests and behaviors (Decker, 2023),

The data that is captured by the digital marketing platforms or channels are not just numbers. These are facts and metrics that provide a picture of the business, and the strategies implemented across platforms. The importance of these data is that they serve as a guide in creating a strategic marketing decision for the future. Because it is backed up by quantitative proof, the shift from an intuition-based approach to decision-making has now shifted to a data-driven approach because of its consistency and precision, decisions can be made fast and quickly. This way, businesses can save time and effort and remove the redundancies in the process resulting in operational savings and an increase in ROI.

The potential of the data and the positive impact it can bring to the business is endless when it is properly transformed into market insights. Data is getting bigger and the demand for data management to reduce the complexity of creating a sound marketing decision is also increasing. Data management can be a powerhouse not only for a

consistent and fast decision-making process. It can support and produce phenomenal support to business processes such as digital marketing processes and strategies.

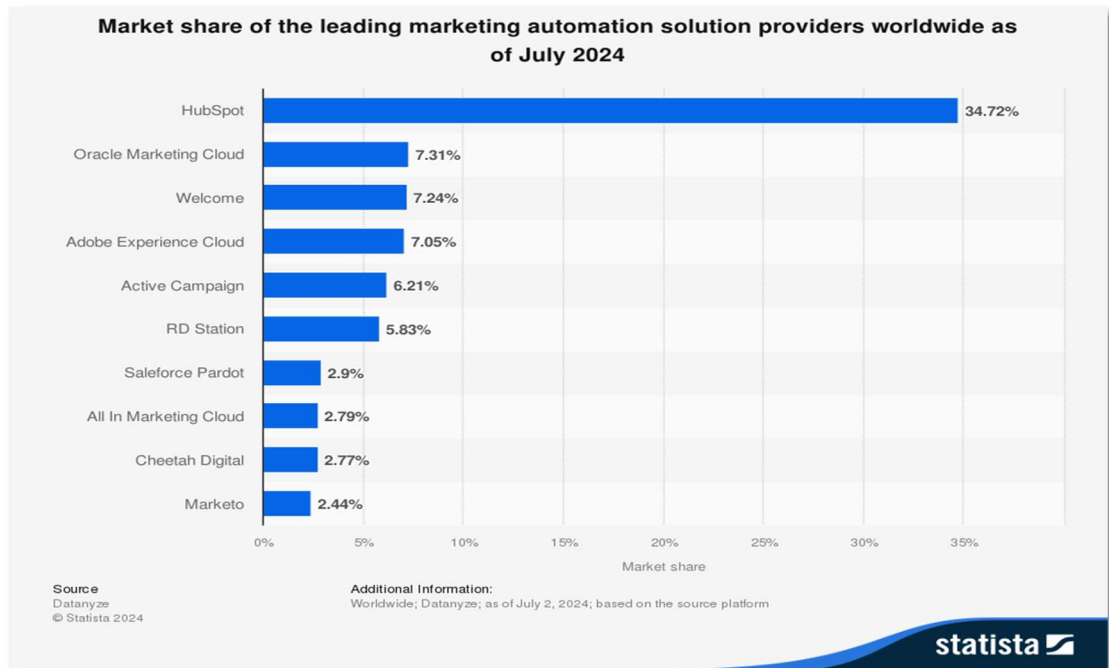
The empowerment of buyers or customers transformed digital marketing by aligning the digital tools and channels that match the preferences of the buyers. Digital marketing is now more customer-centric. The modern marketplace is driven by a culture of customer-centric strategies and every stage of the customer journey is focused around the purpose of satisfying the customer. As mentioned previously, the amount of information should be synthesized for the business to have central storage of the data and manage it optimally to ensure that this will be converted to meaningful information that can be utilized to form a strategic marketing activity.

Data plays a vital role in digital marketing strategy from planning to execution until the review of the key metrics to check the effectiveness of the strategy. Data is still necessary to decide with precision and speed whether a company should be retained or changed to be applicable for a given moment and opportunity. Data despite its benefits, comes with bigger obligations and responsibilities

3.3.2 Marketing Technology (MarTech)

Streamlining marketing processes is important in digital marketing because of the huge data management required. Repetitive tasks can be handled by marketing automation at different points of the customer journey. Table 5 below provides the leading marketing automation provider as of July 2024.

Table 5. Market share of the leading marketing automation solution providers worldwide as of July 2024 (Navarro, 2024b)



As displayed in Table 5, HubSpot took the spot of the leading marketing automation software with 34.72% of the market share worldwide. Adopting this technology can contribute to the effectiveness of the campaigns. By organizing repetitive tasks across digital channels, businesses can benefit from improving customer experience, an important strength of marketing automation.

MarTech (Marketing Technology) includes the marketing software applications and marketing platforms used by marketing and marketing operations professionals to create, execute, manage, orchestrate, and measure the performance of online and offline marketing efforts, including content, campaign, and experiences (MarTech, 2025).

One of the core components of MarTech is marketing automation. This technology is designed for repetitive marketing tasks and workflows for efficiency in targeting and data processing. Key functions of marketing automation include lead nurturing and scoring. The email follow-ups or messaging workflows can be assigned with a trigger to start the next function or action. Email marketing campaigns are another function that sends personalized and scheduled emails which is also based on triggers. Customer journey mapping is a visualization of the customer journey and automates the process across channels. It can also be integrated with CRM systems, enhancing segmentation and

real-time targeting with the use of customer data. For social media, marketing automation helps in scheduling and posting content across platforms, and at the same time, it monitors the engagement and responses automatically providing easier tracking and reporting for future marketing strategies.

3.3.3 . Data Analytic Tools

One essential tool within the customer relationship management system is the CRM Dashboard. It offers real-time information on sales activities and key performance indicators (KPIs). This can be customized which makes it more focused on the information that matters most in an organization (Freedman, 2024).

The operational visibility and performance monitoring of dashboards support strategic decision-making and it empowers a business by providing immediate access to relevant and actionable data.

The sales pipeline is one feature that provides the status and progression of deals across stages of the customer journey. This is helpful for sales managers and executives because it identifies bottlenecks. Hence, it can easily spot the weakness of the process and foster data-driven sales strategies.

Another important function is lead and deal tracking. This function typically starts with contact and segmentation. Dashboard can display metrics related to each segment of the contacts and how it progresses in the customer journey. For sales effectiveness, insights provided can help in the evaluation of the lead generation efforts and improvement in resource allocation.

All other activities such as task management can also be integrated. The scheduling and workflow tools which can be manually assigned or automatically generated by the system effectively manage assignments to maintain accountability and reducing missed opportunities.

Identification of purchasing behaviors and patterns and knowing which factors can influence and lead a customer to choose a product or service can only be provided by marketing analytics and digitalization. Data-driven marketing optimizes customer information to develop a marketing strategy. It involves using online and offline channels

to collect complex data that is then analyzed to understand customers' psyche and purchasing patterns, enabling a marketing team to develop and implement a highly personalized marketing strategy (Rosário and Dias, 2023). The key benefit of data in the digital marketing space is its decision-making benefit. It gives a competitive advantage by enabling businesses or organizations to make an informed market decision resulting in a more effective strategy or campaign. The importance of data in deploying a digital marketing strategy. Despite the known benefits and importance of integrating data into the digital marketing strategy, there are various concerns with the dangers of data traces and data protection challenges. In today's digital age, where information is constantly shared, collected, and processed, there is a need for clear and strong data protection rules (European Commission, 2024). However, the European Union implemented rules for the protection of personal data inside and outside the EU. This growing concern is protected by the commission. Each individual has rights over their data. Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the European Union, the principles of personal data processing are lawfulness, fairness, transparency, purpose limitations, data minimization, storage limitation, accuracy, integrity and confidentiality, and accountability.

3.4 Conceptual Framework of this Thesis

The third section of this thesis covered the existing knowledge and best practices for building a digital marketing strategy. The theories, facts and statistics, digital marketing frameworks and models, tactics, and tools provided a foundation for the conceptual framework of this thesis. As illustrated in Figure 19 below, provides an overview of a conceptual framework for building a data-driven digital marketing strategy.



Figure 19. Conceptual Framework for Building a Data-driven Digital Marketing Strategy

Figure 19 provides an overview of the conceptual framework of the thesis. To build a data-driven digital marketing strategy, the proposal for building a data-driven digital marketing strategy is divided into 4 stages. Stage 0 is the baseline state, although this is not part of the actual strategy, it pays to have a digital footprint audit for the company because this is where the strategy will be rooted. The methods of conducting situational analysis (Chaffey, 2023) will be done for this stage to identify the current digital capabilities and performance of the case company, the current market brand, and its position in the online space. Lastly, the management of digital marketing will also be checked to know the resources, budget, and overall management of the digital marketing activities of the case company.

The next stage will be the **planning stage**. Using the customer journey as guidance, the focus is to define the SMART digital marketing objectives and set actionable KPIs.

The **execution stage** identifies the details of the strategy through specified tactics, tools, and actions based on the resources collected. This stage will provide the key activities necessary for the business to implement the digital marketing strategy (HubSpot Academy, 2025). Activities under this stage are focused on the RACE Framework (Chaffey, 2025) and the importance of resource allocation and upskilling (Baker, 2022).

The last stage is **control**. Focused on data and performance measures, it will provide opportunities offered by CRM systems and data monitoring (Lewis, 2018; European Commission, 2024). Implementation of tools for analytics (Brinker, 2024; Smart Insights, 2024; Freedman 2024) and marketing automation (Brinker, 2024; Smart Insights, 2024).

The conceptual framework presented above was formed using different sources that are cited. The theories and facts collected during the thesis study, specifically while gathering related pieces of literature in creating an effective digital marketing strategy proposal with an emphasis on the importance of data will be applied in building the proposal which will be covered in Section 5.

4 Current State Analysis of the Digital Marketing Strategy of the Case Company

The current state analysis aims to evaluate the digital marketing strategy of the case company. This thesis study aims to have a solid understanding of where the case company stands in terms of the current processes, tools, and resources. This will help to identify the focus area and in the end, arrive at a data-driven marketing strategy proposal that will help overcome identified challenges and help the case company to acquire new clients.

4.1 Overview of the Current State Analysis Stage

In creating a strategy proposal for a business within the construction industry, it is essential to understand the environment, especially its digital adaption. The case company is a cold room construction business that is a niche within the construction industry. It is also a part of the cold storage industry. Worldwide, the cold storage industry is expected to reach a projected revenue of US\$ 427,626.3 million by 2030. A compound annual growth rate of 18.1% is expected from 2025 to 2030 (Horizon Grand View Research, 2025). This growth is an opportunity for the digital transformation of the sector, a promising statistic. Table 6 provides an overview of how the Nordic countries estimate sales through digital channels. Room for Digital Sales Growth (Litium, 2024)

Table 6. Sales Through Digital Channels (Litium, 2024)

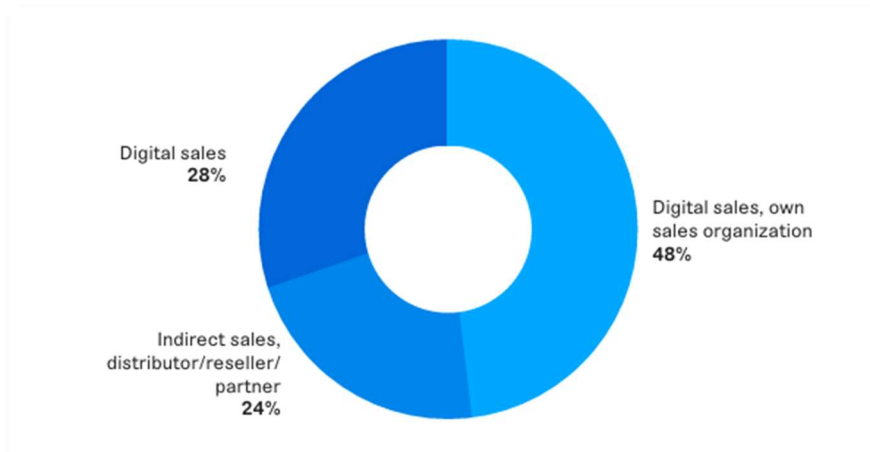


Table 6 is the result of the survey conducted in January 2024 in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland answering the question: “How much of the company’s total B2B sales do you estimate are made as follows?” (Litium, 2024). As shown in the table, 48% is represented by a digital marketing mix with the sales of the organization. Due to the varying differences in digital infrastructure, technology adoptions, and workforce capabilities, digital adoption for businesses faces different opportunities and challenges.

This current state analysis wishes to identify these opportunities and challenges to assist the case company in adopting digital marketing practices and understand the role of data in lead generation which will be the base for customer acquisition.

Current state analysis started by collecting internal documents such as social media analytics, website traffic analysis, and SEO analysis. MS Teams meeting was also conducted with the case company's main supplier and the case Company CEO. During the interview with the case company supplier, relevant information was gathered. It provided a bigger picture of the challenges in the implementation of digital marketing in a conservative and traditional industry like construction. Moreover, an overview of the objectives and the current practices in digital marketing was shared during the interview. The interview with the case company CEO was an insightful conversation. More than the history and the foundation of the case company, information such as current business practices, goals, and internal capacities were captured.

The second part of the current state analysis was conducted by doing a market analysis specifically examining the landing page of the top 3 competitors in the market.

Observations were done by going through the company websites, social media activities, news, and publicly available services to have an analysis of the case company and its competitors from the digital marketing standpoint. An analysis of the current sales process was also conducted to determine the service blueprint of the case company

4.2 The Case Company Overview and Key Offerings

The case company is a Finnish company in the cold room construction business. Founded in 2024 and registered as a private limited company with its official address in Hämeenlinna. The case company CEO works as a project manager, purchasing, and salesperson. In January 2025, a partner joined the company whose focus is to handle sales. This small startup, currently working as a two-man team does not have a history to tell because the operation practically started in January 2025. However, the case company CEO carries 30 years of expertise and technical knowledge in the field of cold room construction and temperature-controlled facilities. Proof of success was the foundation of the previous company. It also started as a cold room construction business and over the years, it has grown to add other lines of business such as sales of refrigeration systems and additional cold room and refrigeration elements and products including cabinets. This is now sold to an Italian international brand with an operation in Europe, the Americas, Asia, Australia, and Africa.

The case company, which is barely a quarter in the industry is now working on 4 projects and is projecting to complete 20 projects by the end of the year to reach the target of one (1) million-euro revenue.

The product offering of the case company is cold and freezer room elements that are needed in a temperature-controlled environment such as hotels, restaurants, catering services, retail grocery stores, logistics, and food processing industries. These elements are composed of cold and freezer room ceiling and wall panel elements, special cold room doors, smoke exhaust hatches, shelving systems, and distribution doors.

Cold and freezer room ceiling and wall elements are PIR and PUR elements. Available in smooth or textured steel sheet surfaces. These products are closed-cell structures with a vapor barrier, retaining their insulating properties. It also has fire protection ratings of EI30 and EI60, these are codes for the European fire resistance classification of

construction products (*EN 13501 - European fire classification of construction products | RISE*, no date).

Cold room doors and fire doors are considered top-notch products of the case company. They are a partner-distributor authorized to use and sell the products in Finland by a German manufacturer of specialty doors who have been in the business for 40 years. The entire product line is crafted with high-quality materials and finishing. It provides a versatile equipment option suitable for the needs of the client. In addition, the case company also offers *smoke exhaust hatches* from the same supplier, a great option for clients who need a specific fire safety solution in cold room construction.

The case company also offers *shelving systems*. From rustproof aluminum frames, polypropylene, plastic shelves, and stainless-steel shelves, there are several options and dimensions available. The shelves are tested to comply with the food hygiene standards EN AW-6060 and can handle -30 degrees Celsius temperatures.

Milk cabinets which are galvanized and powder-coated units that can have a front leg structure depending on the requirements, are another product offering of the case company. A modular universal shelving unit that can be adjusted depending on the client's measurements.

Terminal distribution doors are supplied by well-known European manufacturers. Retrofit doors can be supplied with either glass, acrylic, or PET doors with LED lighting.

On top of these products, the main expertise of the case company is to manage and install these elements. With years of experience and expertise, it can guarantee smooth execution of the construction that delivers on schedule and ensures high-quality products with excellent service from an industry expert.

4.3 The Case Company Business Brand, Market Potential, and Competitive Standing

This section will discuss the digital marketing state of the company. Using the method of conducting a situational analysis (Chaffey, 2021). This part intends to identify the challenges and needs of the case company. This part of the thesis aims to produce a data-driven marketing strategy that will help the business grow by acquiring new clients.

During this thesis study, the strengths and weaknesses of the case company were also identified. The key findings particularly the identified weaknesses of the case company guided in determining the areas for development. This is shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7. The Case Company's Strengths and Weaknesses of Digital Marketing Practices (Chaffey, 2023; Dayal, Landesberg, and Zeisser, 2000)



Using Chaffey's SOSTAC framework, Table 7 illustrates the situational analysis and important areas that need to be considered to effectively identify the strengths and weaknesses of the case company's digital marketing practices. The identified weaknesses were used to specifically point out the areas of development. In this manner, the study will be able to identify the immediate needs of the case company. These needs will be translated as areas of focus and key findings from existing knowledge and best practices will be used to address these areas.

Since the case company is a startup, it is in the stage where all business processes are still being established, and in the case of its digital marketing strategy, it is at ground zero. There are digital assets such as company websites, social media accounts, and CRM subscriptions but the features and marketing activities required for customer acquisition, specifically lead generation are yet to be explored. Branding and existing client relationships, particularly in the Finnish market, are the case company's key assets. Being known in the industry and carrying a significant client base, this appears to be an advantage of the case company. The below statement was an excerpt from the interview conducted with the case company CEO.

“What makes us different is the product reliability and durability. We do not offer substandard elements. The clients trust us because we are considered consultants and experts in what we do. Although price points, especially the doors are considerably more expensive, the services and longevity of these products are guaranteed.” (Case Company CEO, 2025)

One of the major suppliers of the case company is the market leader in the production of doors used in cold rooms or specialized buildings. They work with partners such as the case company to distribute their products exclusively, with a maximum of two partners depending on the country. This is considered an advantage and key differentiation of the brand from all other existing cold room construction businesses in the region. In the interview with the supplier, he said,

“Our competitors build doors, but they build their doors in their garage...We enter the market with a professional product and a complete system that does not exist in the whole country” (Supplier, 2025).

The first digital marketing activity that skyrocketed reactions, based on the percentage of reactions, was the case company CEO's announcement of the new business venture. This was warmly received by the connections and friends in the industry. Although the brand of the case company is still somehow tied to the previously founded company, the presence of the case company CEO followed by the announcement of the new partner who has also worked with him from the previous.

The case company's presence online is represented by the company website and social media channels. There is no solid marketing strategy layout. However, the case company applies SEO and Google Analytics to help increase online visibility. Content on social media platforms has been released as well. Digital marketing elements are technically absent in the case company's marketing process. Data are yet to be explored to ensure that there will be controls and measures in place for future review and analysis. It is currently flat on data analytics and metrics supporting analysis. The lack of objectives and goals from a digital marketing perspective cannot be taken as a gap but as an opportunity for the case company to develop the many aspects of digital marketing and leverage the available tools to create a path for success in creating new leads and measuring the success of every marketing activity.

Marketplace opportunities and competitor benchmarking. To better understand the market position of the case company, a competitor analysis of the landing pages was conducted. Due to data privacy, competitors are labeled Competitor 1, Competitor 2, and

Competitor 3. This was divided into four categories namely: design and user experience (UX), content messaging, conversion elements, and SEO and performance. Among the categories mentioned, conversion elements presented a big opportunity because the competitors including the case company are using less to none of the conversion elements in their landing pages. Another promising category is the improvement of SEO strategy and website performance. In summary, there are the identified areas of development for the case company should be addressed. Proper management can be an advantage. Figure 20 below provides a competitor analysis of the landing pages of the case company.





LANDING PAGES COMPETITOR ANALYSIS (FINLAND REGION)				
CATEGORIES	CASE COMPANY	COMPETITOR 1	COMPETITOR 2	COMPETITOR 3
DESIGN AND USER EXPERIENCE (UX)				
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual Appeal Accessible contact information App available in Android or IOS Supports other languages 	YES YES NO NO	YES YES YES NO	YES YES NO YES	YES YES NO YES
CONTENT AND MESSAGING				
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear headline and sub-headline Social media links Updated content Error-free content 	YES YES YES YES	YES YES NO NO	YES NO YES YES	YES YES YES YES
CONVERSION ELEMENTS				
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prominent CTA Third party review information Customer testimonials or social proofs Lead capture form 	YES NO NO NO	NO NO NO NO	NO NO NO NO	YES NO NO NO
SEO AND PERFORMANCE (Based on Rankmath)				
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meta description Keywords in title and description Page objects and few requests Responsive time under 0.2 seconds 	NO NO NO YES	NO NO YES YES	YES NO NO YES	YES YES NO YES

Figure 20. Landing pages competitor analysis (Chaffey, 2023; rankmath.com, 2018)

As shown in Figure 20, the analysis was divided into 4 categories namely, design and user experience (UX), content and messaging, conversion elements, and lastly, SEO and performance. The last category was conducted using a web-based SEO analyzer, rankmath.com.

The first category, design and user experience (UX) contribute to the overall appeal for a website visitor to stay and spend time on the website. The design of the website can influence users to engage. Because first impressions last, a well-designed landing page can create a brand perception. The fonts, colors, and layout will have a significant impact on how visitors perceive the brand. The ease of navigation will also increase the chances of retaining a visitor and it increases the probability of engagement and conversion.

Depending on the industry, there are standards and designs that customers prefer. Based on the interview conducted with the CEO of the case company, most of their customers do not have the time to read and usually prefer phone calls. There is a great chance that they use their laptop to search for something they need but they need information right away, this also says a lot about how they access most information, that is, they use their mobile phones instantly to address these needs, the reason why mobile compatibility of the website was also checked. It is important that the website can adapt to various devices and that the loading speed should be at a reasonable bounce rate. If a website is not responding or it is taking time to load the pictures or information, user satisfaction will suffer. A good website ensures that navigation is easy and there are no issues encountered while loading the page. Applying elements fit for the business and clients can greatly advance the company and outperform its competitors.

As also shown in the above figure, the opportunity is apparent in conversion elements, SEO, and performance categories which are primary to traffic building and lead generation. Figure 21 provides the social media channels and following the case company.



Figure 21. The Case Company Social Media Channels and Followers

As shown in Figure 21, the case company is present on three (3) social media channels. These are LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. With 71 followers, LinkedIn tops in terms of the number of followers.

During the analysis of the landing page, SEO analysis was also done using the rankmath website (*rankmath.com*). Figure 22 provides the scores provided by the SEO analyzer.

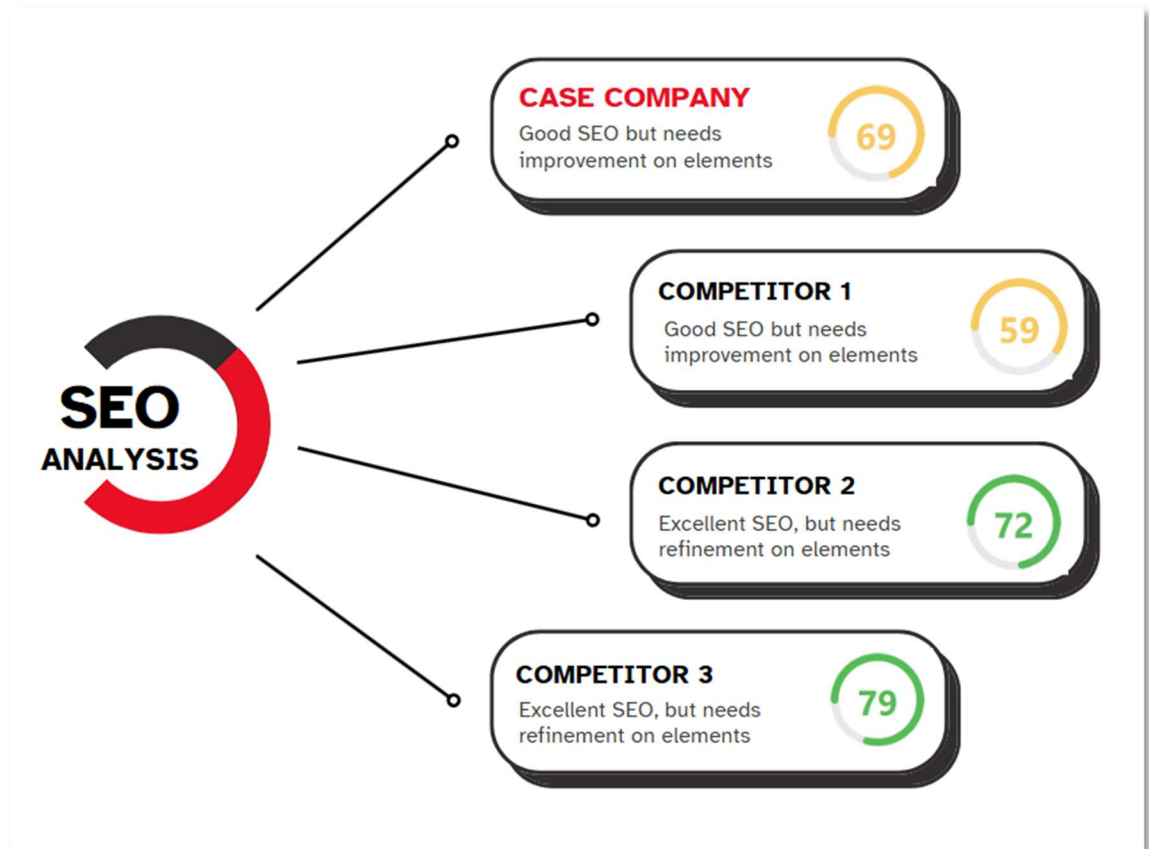


Figure 22. SEO Report for the Case Company and Top 3 Competitors

In Figure 22, shows the SEO scores of the case company and its three (3) competitors within the Finnish market. The perfect score is 100 based on basic and additional SEO elements, title readability, content readability, rich snippet support, performance, and mobile friendliness. The SEO score is interpreted in Table 8 below.

Table 8. RankMath SEO Scoring (rankmath.com, 2018)



Table 8 provides information on how the website was scored by the SEO analysis tool used in this study. There are only three (3) colors used to score the website, green being the highest and the passing score down to the poorest score of red. The numbers are different in Figure 22 because the numbers reflected for Competitors 2 and 3 are given with green score but numbers are in the range of amber. This is because some of the basic and advanced elements of SEO are present but still need improvement based on the required elements for a perfect SEO.

During the interview with the CEO of the case company, the discussion about mission and vision, he mentioned that this is still a work in progress because now, the priority is just to be out there and ensure that the business exists and that his former clients know that he is back in business.

"The most important thing, of course, is to make the business profitable." (Case Company CEO, 2025).

The commercial goal of the case company is currently focused on its financial goals. The sales goal is clearly defined which is supported by the current sales process of the company. The current sales strategy is outbound telemarketing as shown in Figure 23 below.

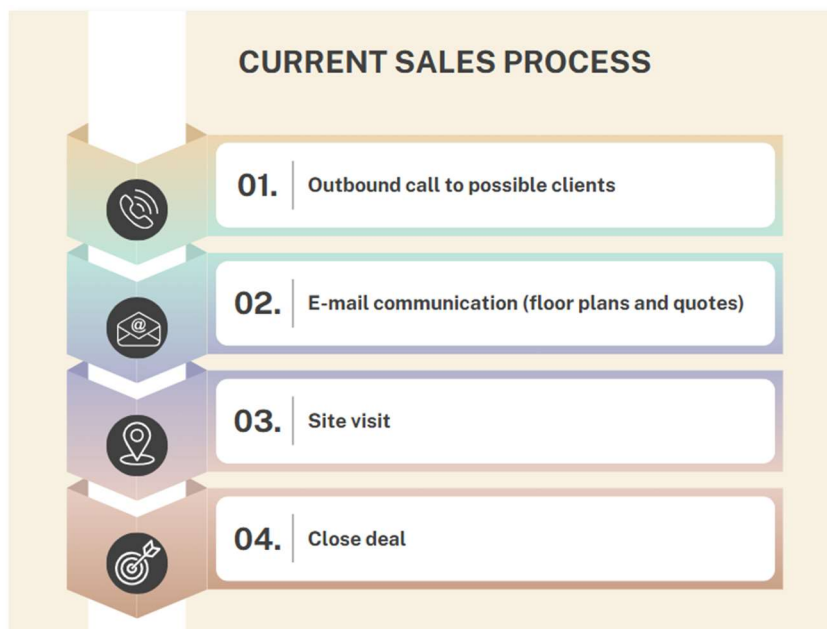


Figure 23. The Current Sales Process of the Case Company

As illustrated in Figure 23, the case company makes an outbound phone call to the leads that they have on hand. During the call, these leads are qualified based on a project that they may have been planning or a project that is about to take place. Positive responses will be followed by e-mail communications to determine details of the project and other specifications. The case company will then provide their quotes and offers. The site visit will follow and then finally the deal will be closed.

For customer acquisition, the case company does not have a process for its inbound marketing strategy. The lead generation is mostly based on the list of clients they have worked with, and others have been sourced through suppliers and other sources. Due to the presence of the website, the case company has also organically reached online customers who took the contact details from the landing page and called for inquiry.

The summary of the current digital marketing strategy based on the landing page analysis, tools and resources, and current sales process is shown below in Table 9.

Table 9. CSA Findings Based on Landing Page, Digital Assets, and Existing Sales Process



In Table 9, are the areas of focus that the strategy should be built upon based on the landing page, digital assets, and current sales process of the case company. These are smart objectives, traffic building, lead conversion, and control and review.

The case company has yet to establish its vision and mission and creating a smart objective for the digital marketing strategy should be based upon the important futuristic view because it will set the direction of the business. From the objectives, KPIs will be formed which will be relevant indicators for the business performance. Since the main objective of this study is to create a strategy proposal to acquire new clients, it is necessary to build website traffic and increase its presence online with content that will help project and communicate its image to its target audience. Lead conversion will come after increasing the traffic, which should ideally happen for the website and the social media channels by adding prominent CTAs and lead forms. Marketing automation will facilitate the collection of contacts and its management which will be an additional data analytics for the periodic review or assessment of strategy.

5 Building Proposal for Data-Driven Digital Marketing Strategy for the Case Company

Combining the results of the existing knowledge and best practices collected and the current state analysis elaborated in Sections 3 and 4 consecutively, this section will present the draft proposal for the Data-driven Digital Marketing Strategy for the case company. It will include input from the major stakeholders in line with the conceptual framework created in Section 3 of this thesis. The proposal aims to address the key issues identified during the current state analysis by utilizing all the knowledge gathered and making sure that the marketing technologies available will support the activities required for the case company to grow its data-driven digital marketing strategy. There will be a variety of options that may be applied for each stage of implementation. Because a strategy is actionable, the elements that will be used for immediate implementation are based on the most reasonable and practical considerations of the stakeholders, specifically the availability of the current manpower and budget.

5.1 Overview of the Proposal Building Stage

This section will provide the steps to building the proposal for the case company, a cold room construction company. The proposal created for the case company is a long-term strategy that will focus on creating a data-driven digital marketing strategy. The stakeholders are aware that the road to the full adoption of marketing technologies in the marketing process does not happen overnight. The following sections will provide an overall picture of how data-driven digital marketing works exclusively crafted to the needs of the business. This section will provide the relevant principles collected about digital marketing, the best practices available from related literature, and the current market trends. The strategy proposal also aims to show how data is vital in choosing the best tactics and actions for the case company to gradually increase its digital maturity, increasing online visibility and lead conversion. All issues raised during the discussions with stakeholders were considered to give answers to these needs.

The absence of a digital strategy in the current process challenged this thesis study to create a simple yet functional proposal that will help to effectively acquire clients using digital marketing. Because this is the first time for the case company to execute this type of strategy to the business. It was pointed out during the interview that they would like to make this simple and as much as possible less complicated. Hence, this thesis study

arrived at three (3) strategy proposal elements. All of these elements were strongly established in Section 3 where the conceptual framework was discussed in detail.

There are three (3) elements in creating a data-driven digital marketing strategy: planning, execution, and control. Each of these elements may also be considered as stages in the implementation of the strategy. Again, due to the absence of a digital marketing strategy, this study aims to provide the necessary steps that be carried out immediately for implementation.

The first element of this strategy proposal is planning. In one of the interviews conducted, the case company CEO mentioned that there is no vision and mission formulated, and the primary goal is to ensure that the business will be successful with its return to the market and that it will be profitable. In this thesis study, the element of planning involves the following: defining a SMART digital marketing objective and setting actionable KPIs. The planning element is a critical component of the digital marketing strategy. It provides the foundation for all marketing activities as it helps the business set its direction and define its growth aspirations. The actionable Key Performance Indicators ensure that performance is measured and evaluated. Hence, it provides clarity on whether a marketing activity is successful or not. To support the case company with additional guidance on how to assess the practicality of the objectives and KPIs, this section provides a discussion of the 360-degree digital journey, following the RACE Framework (Chaffey, 2025). It shows each stage of the customer path from discovery up to sale consummation. The importance of mapping out this journey is that it allows the company to have an overview of the entire marketing process at every stage of the customer buying process. Familiarity with this journey will help the business create better customer interaction.

The second element is the execution which follows the same framework, the purpose is for the strategy to be parallel. As agreed with the stakeholders, this will make it easier and more relevant. It provides an organized set of tools and actions leading the customer from its initial discovery or awareness stage to loyalty and advocacy. This framework helps in the execution of measurable marketing campaigns. The customer lifecycle is closely linked, enabling the business to create more value for the steps involved in this element. It involves tactics and actions focused on reaching customers where it aims to create awareness and increase traffic. The next is more focused on the act, the next step is to generate leads and nurture customers. The third focus is the conversion of

customers which is the customer acquisition part. Due to the importance of customer relationships, customer retention will be part of this focus for execution. This is also an important part of the execution strategy. It will be a segment where businesses can prove the worthiness of products and services by having repeat customers or by simply having referrals from existing customers.

The third element of the strategy proposal is control. Mainly focused on CRM, data, and marketing automation. These are tools that will provide insights for decision-makers and will allow a business to understand customers based on data collected.

With the cooperation of the case company's stakeholders, the immediate need has been identified. This pilot digital marketing strategy proposal will be a tool for the case company to learn more about the opportunities in the market that were not explored in the past business. This is one way to capture a new breed of leads. In a cold room construction business that is highly traditional in marketing strategies, the case company can leverage marketing technologies to create an online brand and at the same time, monitor marketing and sales activities and continuously grow using the data that marketing tools can provide.

5.2 Findings from Data 2

From the meeting conducted with the key stakeholders of the case company, the internal assessment and the equivalent opportunities were presented. The baseline of the study as mentioned in Section 3 of the conceptual framework, provided an opportunity for the case company stakeholders to understand the current standing of the case company and what are the areas of development needed to execute the strategy. This section of the thesis study will point to the gaps in digital marketing strategy.

During the situational analysis, the evaluation covers the case company's digital assets. It constitutes websites, social media channels or affiliations, digital content, and digital branding. Rather than considering the absence of objectives, strategy, tactics, actions, and control as challenges, it was viewed by the stakeholders as exciting and interesting. For the case company, seeing where this strategy will take the business is nothing but excitement.

Table 10. Current State Analysis and Inputs from Stakeholders (Findings from Data 2)

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	EXISTING KNOWLEDGE BEST PRACTICES	CSA RESULTS & STAKEHOLDER INPUTS
Step 1: Defining Objectives & KPIs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SMART Digital Marketing Objectives (Coleman, B., 2024) 2. Actionable Key Performance Indicators (Radu, V., 2023) 3. Customer Journey (Chaffey, 2025) 	<p>The case company recognized the need to define the objective and start setting the numbers to understand past performance and how the measures taken from the data can be used for future marketing strategies.</p> <p>As a startup and a business within a conservative and traditional industry. It is necessary to understand how this new strategy will fit the current clients of the cold room construction business and what are the effective marketing activities on each touchpoint of the customer lifecycle.</p>
Step 2: Execution of Tactics and Actions	<p>RACE Framework (Smart Insights, 2024; Chaffey 2025)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reach - Awareness and Traffic Generation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ A comprehensive SEO strategy ◦ English version of website 2. Act - Lead Generation & Nurturing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ High converting landing page design ◦ Multi-channel experience/Remarketing 3. Convert - Customer Acquisition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ CRM Integration 4. Engage - Customer Retention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Post-sales engagement/Customer Support 5. Resource allocation and upskilling (Baker, 2022) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Assigned workforce ◦ Training and development 	<p>The case company recognized the need to define the objective and start setting the numbers to understand past performance and how the measures taken from the data can be used for future marketing strategies.</p> <p>As a startup and a business within a conservative and traditional industry. It is necessary to understand how this new strategy will fit the current clients of the cold room construction business and what are the effective marketing activities on each touchpoint of the customer lifecycle.</p>
Step 3: Control and Performance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring through CRM Data (Lewis, 2018; European Commission, 2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Lead contacts management ◦ Data enrichment, data ownership, and data retention 2. Analytic Tools Implementation (Brinker, 2024; Smart Insights, 2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Dashboard and data analytics ◦ Templates and marketing email automation 3. Marketing Automation (Brinker, 2024; Smart Insights, 2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Contact management builder ◦ Marketing automation workflows and triggers 	<p>CRM system and a marketing tool have already been paid for a year by the case company. The same as the other digital assets, these are not yet fully utilized at their optimum capabilities. The challenge also lies in the technical know-how of these tools.</p>

Table 10 above provides the conceptual framework and backbone of the strategy in line with the existing knowledge and best practices collected from Section 3 of this study. In the same table, the result of the current state analysis and the response from the stakeholders was included. Both serve as the input of the case company during the co-creation stage of this strategy.

During the meeting with the stakeholders, the CEO in particular, mentioned that objectives and KPIs were not part of the initial activities of the business even from the time that the previously sold company was established.

“These are non-existent (Objectives and KPIs). Our success came from other ways but today, I understand how necessary it is to have a unique strategy. Even better than others” (Case Company CEO, 2025).

During the stakeholder discussion, the first step was the discussion about objectives and KPIs. The case company recognized that it should not be taken for granted and immediate action is necessary to create the direction for the new company. There is one key point that the CEO mentioned, with the knowledge of the type of clients, especially the decision-makers of the companies they are dealing with, the strategy needs to consider how the execution of marketing tactics and actions in terms of the conservativeness of the industry and that most of the people involved in the business are still in the process of transitioning to digital.

For the second step of the conceptual framework, focusing on the execution of tactics and action SEO, landing page, and content management, CRM integration, post-sales engagement, and resource allocation and upskilling are the focus of this area. SEO and Google Analytics are currently implemented but the benefits are not fully maximized. During the discussion, the SEO analysis was examined and the major action points for a comprehensive SEO strategy are to add meta description, add keywords in the title and description, and the www canonicalization – this is to ensure that the www and non-www versions of the URL are redirected to the same site. It was also suggested that the website should have an option to have an English version because this will strengthen SEO and will provide wider keyword options. The landing page needed modifications to convert it to a high-converting landing page. The elements that should be added to make this happen are embedding a well-formatted lead form. This will ensure that all information is captured properly when it goes down the CRM system. Prominent call-to-action buttons should also be part of the landing page including chatbots and exit-intent popups to increase the chance of capturing leads. For those clients who wish to have a conversation over the phone, it will be convenient to add a WhatsApp button that will automatically direct the action to a sales phone call. This type of strategy will best fit the type of clients within the cold room construction business. And since not all visits can be converted as leads, content management will form part of the marketing activities that will keep both visitors and engaged contacts and clients within the marketing loop. Content compatible with all existing platforms will make the case company more visible online.

The third step is for control and performance measurement. CRM and marketing automation are at the center of this step. A full integration of marketing activities with the CRM will make it easier for the case company to manage the contacts and gather information for possible customers. Essentially, this element is working on customer data. For proper usage, data management is a necessary part of the governance including identifying the data owner in this case can be the salesperson who will access all the information related to customers necessary to perform the sales activities and lead conversions. Data retention policy should also be established, this will define how long data will be kept in the system. The data gathered in the digital marketing activities will be useful in building the dashboard. Since there is a built-in dashboard in the current CRM system of the case company, the action necessary is to improve the layout to ensure that important information is always ready whenever it is necessary. This is how the case company can leverage data analytics. Proper setup of the dashboard can ease

the process of analysis for future enhancements or changes in strategies. Part of the CRM and data analytics element is to establish rules in data enrichment and data integrity. A policy is required on how missing information or other relevant information in the CRM system is added or modified. The person in charge of the tool should ensure that there are no duplicate entries for the accuracy of the data analytics presented in the dashboard and data for reporting.

5.3 Initial Proposal of the Data-Driven Digital Marketing Strategy

The initial proposal as presented to the case company stakeholders will be discussed in the following sub-sections. It will provide detailed support on the details of the strategy as presented from the findings and co-creation with the stakeholders. The purpose is to explain how each element is relevant to the strategy and most importantly, how to convert each element into an actionable pattern of activity to achieve the main objective of this thesis study which is to acquire more customers.

5.3.1 Step 1 – Defining Objective and Key Performance Indicators

The elements of planning will be further divided into three (3) topics. These are: (1) Define SMART Digital Marketing Objectives; (2) Set Actionable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs); and lastly, (3) The 360-degree Digital Journey.

5.3.1.1 Define SMART Digital Marketing Objective

The planning stage proves essential in digital marketing strategy since it establishes the groundwork for all later actions. This part of the plan establishes SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) digital marketing goals that match the company's strategic business direction and growth targets.

This is a crucial step because it enables the company to create directions for the overall strategy. It guarantees precise, strategically coordinated, and practical goals for the business that can be achieved within a specified time.

There are several advantages of SMART objectives. And for the case company that is yet to define its goals. Using this acronym will remove the ambiguity and will help the stakeholders concentrate on what should be the area of focus. In the long term, it will allow the business to evaluate performance. Because of the focus, it ensures that time and energy are spent on business areas or tasks that will have a meaningful impact.

In the construction sector, particularly for small and medium-sized business start-ups, defining specific digital goals will help the business focus on producing qualified leads through online exposure using the correct channel and form of media and content. Table 11 provides relevant information about the element of planning during the discussion with the stakeholders.

Table 11. Step 1: Defining Objectives and KPIs and the Case Company Business Requirements

Elements of Initial Proposal	Details/Steps	Discussion with Stakeholders
Step 1: Defining the objectives and KPIs	SMART Digital Marketing Objectives	Business Requirement: Communicate the business re-entry and position the company as the cold room construction of choice.
	Define actionable KPIs	The stakeholders emphasized that the strategies puts a priority on the type of customers they have (buyer persona)

Based on Table 11 above, the most relevant information provided by the stakeholders is the communication that the business exists. This is important because most cold room construction customers in Finland knew the case company owner and the partner. Expertise comes with the name, and it is one of the top priorities for the stakeholders to let these customers know about the re-entry and, at the same time, separate this brand from its predecessor. It was highlighted during the discussion that the strategy proposal should consider the buyer persona.

The business interacts with people who do not have the luxury of time to check long e-mails. They always need information because this is crucial for the customer's decision process, whether the solutions we offer are suitable for their project. Information should be sent to them efficiently. (Case Company CEO, 2025).

The strategy uses actionable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to enable constant performance measurement and evaluation which leads to ongoing optimization. The defined KPIs will reveal campaign outcomes while promoting informed decisions for all

digital activities. This is how progress is measured towards the objective. These are quantifiable metrics used for tracking performance.

Referring to Table 11, the case company would like to have visibility to ensure that customers are aware that the business is present, especially for those customers who have been acquainted with the stakeholders.

5.3.1.2 360-Degree Digital Journey

For an effective execution of the planning element, objectives and KPIs should be aligned with the customer's digital journey. Considering all stages will assist businesses in addressing pain points in each customer touchpoints. This is comparable to a map that will enable a business to unlock personal interactions ultimately aim at satisfying customers. When these components work together, they create digital marketing activities focused on purposeful customer-centric approaches that generate measurable business value.

During the discussion with the CEO of the case company, navigating the cold room business was hard, especially during the beginning, referring to the building of the predecessor company.

This startup is not as hard to build (The Case Company CEO. 2025).

Familiarity with all aspects of the business made it possible for the business to acquire clients and close deals for upcoming projects at an early stage. As mentioned previously, there is no clear definition of objectives and there are no established KPIs yet for the case company. To help establish objectives and define the KPIs. This thesis study created the 360-degree Digital Journey based on how the current sales process with the integration of the digital tools that are already present within the case company. This was presented to the stakeholders as shown in Figure 24 below.

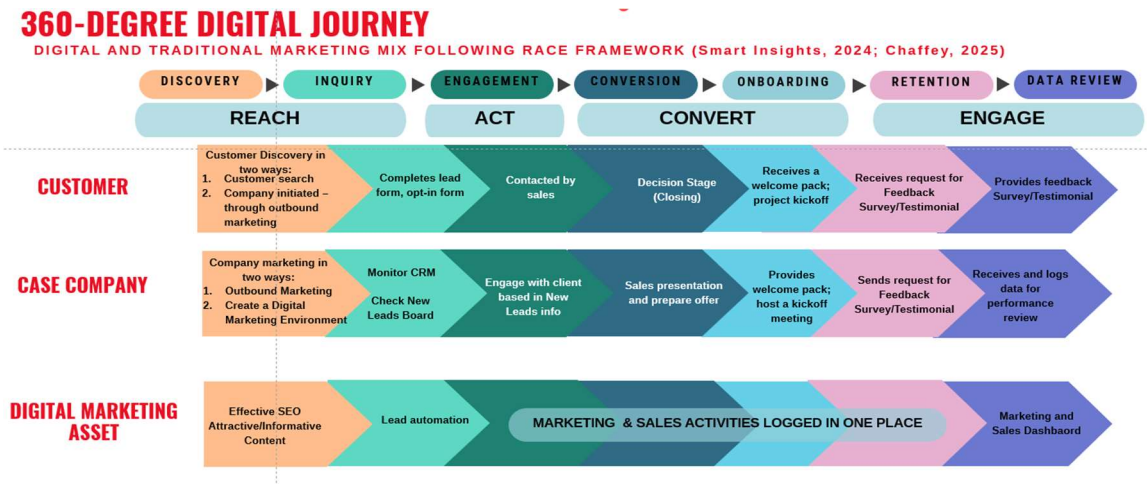


Figure 24. 360-Degree Digital Journey inspired by RACE Framework (Smart Insights, 2024; Chaffey, 2025)

Figure 24, the 360-degree Digital Journey is a complete view of the customer and case company's digital journey. Note that it includes suggested steps that can be adopted for implementation. It contains a visualization of digital marketing assets and key actions, an operational view that can be utilized by the stakeholders to understand how each action impacts the business and the customer. The bottom part shows how digital marketing assets support the business, particularly in its digital marketing process. Its role is to enhance efficiency, consistency, and scalability. Overall, aligning the digital marketing processes at both the customer level and business levels with the RACE Framework will ensure that content that best fits the right audience at a particular stage of the customer journey will support the business operation from first contact to a lasting engagement.

As a recommendation to the case company, the digital journey for customers and the case company can be used to acquire more cold room construction clients. Because everything begins with an objective, the stages can be used to identify what the company needs to bring to the table for its clients and the business and vice versa. Considering all of these may also provide meaningful and achievable KPIs that will help the business run smoothly and create value for both the customers and the business.

5.3.2 Step 2 – Execution of Tactics and Actions

The second element of the conceptual framework, which is also the second step of the strategy proposal, also follows the RACE Framework (Chaffey, 2025).

Figure 25 below contains an overview of how the strategies and tools mentioned in the second element of the conceptual framework will help the case company acquire more customers.

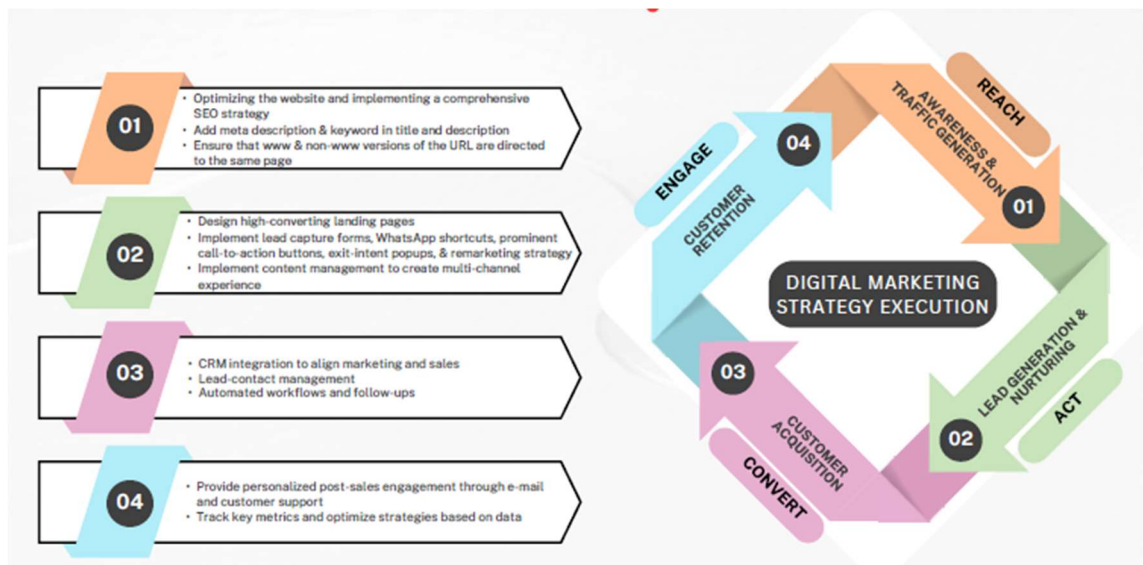


Figure 25. Digital Marketing Execution Flow (Smart Insights, 2024; Chaffey, 2025)

Figure 25 was presented to the case company to help share a common understanding with the stakeholders of how tools and actions will be utilized to execute the digital marketing strategy. The Digital Marketing Execution Flow aims to satisfy the RACE Framework, which consists of four (4) steps: Awareness and Traffic Generation; Lead Generation and Nurturing; Customer Acquisition; and Customer Retention.

The first step comprises the tactics and actions to satisfy the first letter of the RACE Framework - Reach. The primary purpose of this initial stage is *awareness and traffic generation*. For proper execution, it was suggested that SEO should be used to generate more website traffic because this is one of the known tools available in the market that can help in traffic generation. Optimizing the website and content will increase the chance for the website to be on top of the browsing searches. As a result, this will also increase the chances to be right in front of customers wishing to find products and

services that the business offers. The content created for the digital channels should also be considered to make this strategy effective. This will give way for the business to establish its online brand, attract interest, and build a professional image for the business. The case company may also consider paid advertising such as Google and social media ads. The combination of existing marketing tools known to boost online traffic will give better opportunities for a wider target audience to reach. Table 12 highlights the discussion related to this customer interaction stage.

Table 12. Step 2: Execution of Tactics and Actions and The Case Company Business Requirement

Elements of Initial Proposal	Details/Steps	Discussion with Stakeholders
Step 2: Execution of Tactics and Actions	Reach: Comprehensive SEO strategy	Business Requirement: The stakeholders would like to take advantage of the website and the paid Google Analytics
	Act: High-converting landing page Content management/multi-channel experience Retargeting/Remarketing	Business Requirement: The stakeholders would like to use the website as a tool for inbound marketing. To increase the brand image of being an expert in the cold room construction business. The case company would like customers and possible customers to be a continuous part of the digital marketing
	Convert: Full CRM Integration	Business Necessity: Real-time information about clients A single hub for all marketing activities making it easier to monitor and follow-up.
	Engage: Post-sale engagement and customer support	Business Requirement: The case company stakeholders would like to leave a good impression and collect feedback
	Resource allocation and upskilling	Business Requirement: Learning digital tools and creating a continuous learning culture.

Table 12 represents the need for the company to make use of the website, one of their digital assets. Before the start of the operation, the case company CEO has already been working on building the company website. Time and resources have been spent to make this suitable for the customers of the cold room construction business. To make this work, the case company would like to take advantage of this and start increasing the website traffic and producing organic visitors.

The second step is to act for *lead generation and nurturing*. As mentioned previously, the company website is a powerful tool for lead generation when proper elements are deployed. The display of products and other information the website provides is necessary to empower a visitor. A visitor is a passive inquiry, this is considered as an

intent signal. From a business perspective, this is an opportunity that should not be missed. This website's engagement should be identified and tracked. To make the company website work as a lead magnet and not just a library of information, the website should be designed as a high-converting landing page. With the implementation of a lead capture form and chatbots, website visitors will no longer be just anonymous visitors. Contacts can be captured and monitored. Another element in this step is A/B Testing and conversion rate optimization. This test is also called split testing. This can be a landing page test where different headlines, layouts, or CTA buttons are implemented or Ads where images are usually used to attract the audience and improve CTR (Click-through rates). The traffic will be measured on which versions are most effective, logically, the one with the greatest number of leads can be chosen as the best fit for the strategy. Conversion Rate Optimization (CRO) involves user behavior analysis, user experience improvement, and other trust signals such as customer testimonials and security badges which help to increase credibility.

Inbound marketing is one of the best possible ways to execute digital marketing by using the webpage. For this part, the author of this thesis study, together with the case company stakeholders tried to look for features that would allow the business to generate leads and to nurture these leads. In addition to what can be done with the landing page, a multi-channel experience will not only increase the brand image. The content itself is a tool in SEO that will increase brand visibility. Search engines like Google prioritize content. Relevance, informativeness, and value to users are factors that can contribute to an effective SEO. Lastly, the case company would like to seek ways to keep the visitors of the website in the loop of the marketing activities. During the discussion, the stakeholders specifically need help on how to make customers go back to the website or simply continue to be engaged or be part of their marketing activities. To answer this, the author of this thesis study together with the case company stakeholders, agree that retargeting or remarketing strategy can be an answer to this need.

The third step is the conversion. This is the core of the strategy and the entire thesis study, customer acquisition. Marketing activities are meant to support the financial goals of the business and converting leads into actual sales can mean the success of marketing activities and strategies. To enable the business to take this step, CRM was the suggested tool. This is a key to aligning marketing and sales. Going back to the illustration presented in Figure 22: 360-Degree Digital Journey of the previous subsection, this digital marketing tool can make life better for businesses to process

workflows. It is an automation tool that does all the repetitive tasks of both marketing and sales. From welcome e-mails to follow-ups and nurturing leads and clients, this tool equips the business to provide a seamless customer experience from the first point of contact to the consummation of the sale.

The current CRM has features but there are issues related to learning the features and integrating them to other existing marketing technologies to capture leads automatically, contact management, and building dashboard data. To address this need, a full integration of the CRM is necessary to take full advantage of its features that will help automate and streamline both the marketing and sales processes.

The last step in the digital marketing execution flow is customer retention. Reaping the glory of all the marketing and sales efforts of the business by closing the deal is not the end of the business relationship. This client who trusted the business should be valued and re-engaged in the marketing system. This is done by providing a post-sales engagement marketing activity such as surveys, e-mails, and customer support. This stage is critical to the brand and image of the business. Relationships should go beyond closing the deal. The trust that the business can build at this stage can communicate an accountable and reliable business partnership. Customer satisfaction and how well the service was delivered can be good metrics that will help optimize the strategy for continuous business improvement.

The consummation of sales should not be the end of customer relationships. Repeat business or referrals will form part of the advocacy stage of a customer. It creates another level of marketing for the same business when clients provide positive feedback on the quality of the products and services received. In the execution step of engaging customers, a full CRM integration is a part of completing the requirement. From the system, the business can effectively engage customers by taking advantage of automation and workflows to create regular check-ins, maintain reminders, and follow-up emails, and offer additional products or services. This allows a business to have a proactive approach that strengthens trust and reliability, positioning the company as a partner rather than just a provider. Another great tool for execution in the engagement stage is the metric strategy assessment. The dashboard insight will contain relevant data that will help the business evaluate strategies. In this manner, the business can ensure a cycle of continuous improvement and customer loyalty.

5.3.3 Stage 3 – Control and Performance Measurement

Data is the most essential element of the data-driven digital marketing strategy. This is what every marketer is trying to catch in this strategy. This is the focus of why the strategy exists. It is essential as it is part of the entire process from start to finish. Data is what is required to capture, automate, process, and report. Finally, data is converted into useful information using a dashboard and analytics for insights. The CEO of the case company stated during the interview: “We currently have tools to check the growing number of visitors to the website since we launched it. However, we do not have the information about these visitors”. As the strategy leads to data capture, this section of the study will provide an overview of the digital marketing data flow and how this will be ideally managed in the entire process of the marketing cycle. Table 13 below presents the summary of the steps and the business requirements of the stake holders

Table 13. Step 3: Control and Performance and the Case Company Requirements

Elements of Initial Proposal	Details/Steps	Discussion with Stakeholders
Step 3: Control and Performance Measurement	Monitoring through CRM Data	Business Requirement: Seamless contact management monitoring and all relevant data about the customer that can be accessed by members of the team. Easy visualization of sales and marketing task. To see the numbers that matters. Automate the marketing tasks particularly emails.
	Analytic tool implementation	
	Marketing Automation	

Included in the discussions done with the stakeholders, the focus for this part of building the proposal is the alignment of operational processes and sales performance. The emphasis on the business requirements related to contact management and monitoring, visualization of sales and marketing tasks and how to take advantage of automations are among the needs that were identified. The steps suggested are designed to enhance the decision-making, improve how marketing activities are executed, and streamline the workflows. The outcome of the discussion provides a foundation for the appropriate MarTech tools that will carry out the functions required by the business and support the current needs of the business.

To assist the case company stakeholders, a process diagram was presented during the discussion that will show the data flow and how MarTech can assist in the process. Figure 26 is the process diagram of the initial digital marketing strategy proposal for the case company. The data is a product of the lead capture form embedded on the company website, how it flows in the entire digital marketing process and its monitoring.

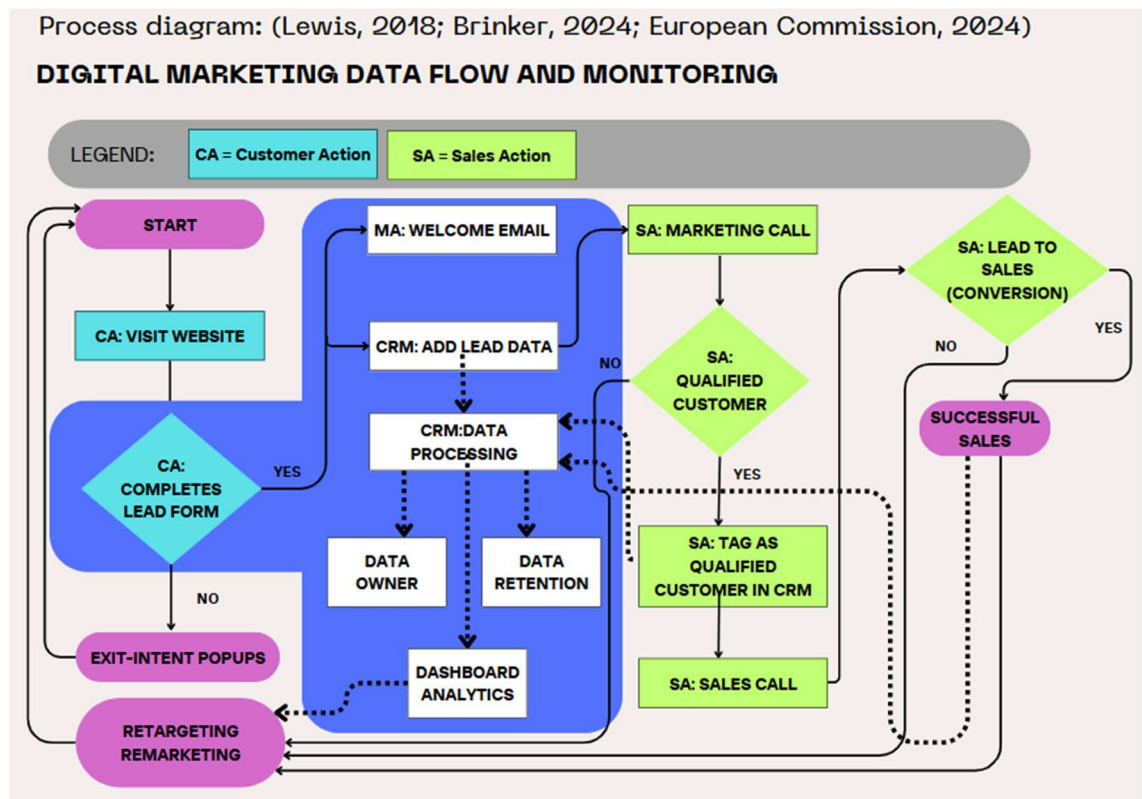


Figure 26. Process Diagram of Digital Marketing Data Flow and Governance

As shown in the process diagram in Figure 26, the process starts when a customer visits the website. With a lead capture tool in place, the website should be attractive enough to engage the visitors. Leads form should be prominently displayed to influence the visitor to sign up and provide information. Lead forms should have a standard in a way that name fields should have a proper format because these fields will flow to the marketing technologies in use. In this manner, lead capture will ensure the quality of the information. Marketing automation and CRM are the tools that will form the next part of the process after a successful signup. As marketing automation creates repetitive actions, integration into CRM will help with smooth data processing. Under data processing, data ownership should be defined, and data retention policies should be established. CRM feeds data to create a dashboard, translating all the strategies in place

into insights that can be utilized by the case company to create new marketing strategies. Highlighted in blue are the processes within which data should be managed, controlled and monitored. Expressed in broken lines are related to how data flows in the background of the entire data flow process. The leads, captured through the form implemented on the website and saved in the CRM system can now be utilized by sales to qualify and convert. No matter what the result of the sales process, everything goes back to this marketing cycle through a remarketing strategy.

5.3.3.1 CRM Implementation and Analytics

Industries that rely on repeat clients and intricate B2B transactions must implement successful customer relationship management (CRM) to sustain business growth over time. In the cold room construction company, a CRM system facilitates the systematic management of customer data along with pipeline processes and sales for post sales follow-ups (MSD), and service scheduling. A CRM system acts as a central repository for client data, manages interactions, and streamlines customer communication throughout the lifecycle of customers. This not only enhances the effectiveness of operations but also aligns the sales and marketing teams with providing consistent, bespoke experiences.

Choosing the right CRM solution is just one of many challenges that must be faced before successful implementation. This involves establishing clear business goals, harmonizing workflows, and maintaining data integrity. The CRM can be set up to monitor digital campaigns, generate leads, and manage consultations. Additionally, the case company can also view the project status. It is crucial to have contact management, activity tracking, task reminders, and integration with marketing tools such as email platforms or landing page builders. Automation features can facilitate post-installation surveys, quote management, and follow-up after inquiries to improve conversion and retention efforts. The CRM will function as a knowledge base, maintaining institutional memory and improving the consistency of customer service.

Converting unstructured customer data into actionable insights, CRM analytics enhances decision-making. Real-time dashboards and custom reporting are utilized to monitor metrics

By utilizing these data, marketing and sales personnel can enhance campaign effectiveness, pinpoint relevant customer segments, and tailor communications to individual patterns. In addition, analytics help evaluate the ROI of digital marketing efforts as well as refine segmentation strategies.

5.3.3.2 Marketing Automation

Among the key benefits of marketing automation is its ability to improve efficiency and effectiveness in digital marketing, particularly for small to medium-sized businesses that need to expand their operations with limited resources. The use of automation by a B2B cold room construction company enhances communication, lead nurturing, and brand interaction across multiple digital channels. Automated automation of marketing tasks like email campaigns, social media postings, and lead follow-ups allows the business to focus on high-impact areas such as sales consultations and technical support.

By utilizing marketing automation tools, the company can create workflows that are responsive to user behavior and dynamic. A contact form or brochure download can trigger an automated sequence that results in a thank you email from the prospective client, followed by content highlighting the company's expertise, project experience, and service quality. This is like how it would use Google forms with multiple usernames and email addresses. The buyer journey is accompanied by automated sequences that educate prospects, build confidence and encourage them to take action. Furthermore, automation enables lead scoring by monitoring interactions and assigning values to different actions, which assists the sales team in identifying potential customers with the highest conversion rates.

Besides efficiency, marketing automation offers comprehensive analytics that provide valuable insights into campaign performance. To optimize content and user experience, marketers can monitor open rates, click-through rates (throughs), time spent on pages, and conversion paths. By utilizing real-time data, marketing automation can integrate customer engagement with a CRM system and maintain synchronization with marketing and sales activities. Marketing automation is not only a tool for operational productivity, but also enables the cold room construction business to deliver timely, targeted, and measurable marketing communications that drive business growth. This is crucial for this business.

5.3.3.3 Data Collection and Monitoring

Data is a fundamental resource that informs strategic thinking and customer experience, while also serving as supplementary information and analytics for metrics. For a cold room construction company, effective data collection and governance measures are crucial for operational efficiency, trust, and legal compliance. As a business that collects data through contact forms, email subscriptions, CRM inputs, and website analytics, it must develop 'a strong foundation' around which it can act ethically and securely.

Data integrity is the cornerstone of successful digital marketing and analytics. Misguided decisions, poor campaign targeting, and customer dissatisfaction can result from inaccurate, outdated, or duplicated data. Data integrity can be maintained through standardized data entry procedures, validation rules, and regular audits. To illustrate, contact details entered in web forms should be automatically checked, while CRM records should always be updated to reflect changes in customer interactions or preferences. Keeping up with data quality not only enhances operational responsiveness and customer service but also improves accuracy in marketing.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is the EU's comprehensive framework for data protection and privacy, and its practices must align with those of the company from a governance perspective. The GDPR provides individuals with specific rights to access, rectify, remove, and limit the processing of personal data. As a result, it is imperative to establish clear data ownership within the organization, with designated roles for data controllers and processors to ensure accountability. Additionally, the organization must implement data retention procedures that specify the duration for which different data types are retained and the legal grounds for such retention. Marketing data, such as lead information, may only be retained for collection unless additional authorization is granted. Users must be informed of these practices through the use of digital touchpoints, which contain privacy policies and consent mechanisms.

To put it simply, the implementation of data collection and governance measures ensures that marketing initiatives are based on reliable, secure, and lawful data practices. As a B2B company grows, it reinforces credibility and forms the foundation for sustainable digital growth.

5.4 Summary of the Initial Proposal

In this summary of the initial proposal, restating the strategy's objective will fortify this thesis study's intention. For a conservative construction industry, where the case company belongs, developing a data-driven digital marketing strategy will address the lack of structured customer acquisition in the online market. The current traditional approach by the case company does not necessarily mean this will be put aside. The intention is for the case company to explore a new avenue of opportunities that will help transform the business and embrace the positive contribution of digitalization to its business processes. Table 14 below provides the digital marketing strategy proposal. This is the result of the discussion with the stakeholders, considering the business need and requirements of the business to move forward to implementation.

Table 14. Digital Marketing Summary of Initial Proposal

<h1>Digital Marketing</h1> <h2>Initial Strategy Proposal Summary</h2>		
OBJECTIVES & KPIs	EXECUTION of TACTICS & ACTIONS	CONTROL & PERFORMANCE MEASURE
<p>1. Define SMART Digital Marketing Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building visibility and attracting new potential customers Encourage meaningful on-site interactions Turn leads into customers Build long-term relationships and customer lifetime value <p>2. Set actionable KPIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase website traffic by 30% using a comprehensive SEO strategy over the next 3 months Generate at least 20 leads over the next 3 months by implementing a lead capture form and improving CTA placement on the landing page Lead conversion of at least 15% from the generated leads within 3 months Send a personalized post-sale email and gather feedback to identify the top 3 priorities for the next quarter 	<p>1. Reach - Awareness and Traffic Generation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a comprehensive SEO strategy (addition of meta description & keywords in title & description; check www & non-www versions of URL) <p>2. Act - Lead Generation & Nurturing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website should have a high-converting landing page (lead capture form, WhatsApp shortcut, prominent call-to-action buttons, exit-intent popups, remarketing strategy) Implement content management to create multi-channel experience Retargeting/Remarketing strategy <p>3. Convert - Customer Acquisition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full CRM integration (manage lead contacts and qualify automated workflows and follow-ups) <p>4. Engage - Customer Retention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide post-sales engagement and customer support <p>5. Resource allocation and upskilling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign a person in charge of the CRM and Marketing Tools to understand features better and maximize the usability of the system 	<p>1. Monitoring through CRM Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of the lead capture form to build the lead contacts in CRM Establish data enrichment rules for adding missing details in contacts/leads Assign a data owner and establish a data retention policy <p>2. Analytic Tools Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve dashboard layout and leverage data analytics Using the templates, create a customized e-mail that will be used for marketing e-mail automation <p>3. Marketing Automation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automation setup for contact builder Setup triggers for marketing e-mail distribution

Table 14 is a co-creation summary of the data-driven digital marketing proposal. Considering all of the marketing tools and best practices that are available in the market, the result of the current state analysis, and the input of the case company stakeholders.

The strategy proposal used the RACE Framework, which not only gives structure but it ensures that all activities can cover all of the customer touchpoints that were highlighted by the customer journey. These are the three (3) steps: First step refers to building the objectives and KPIs, second step focuses on the execution of tactics and actions, and finally, the steps for control and performance measurement.

The implementation of this strategy proposal will be a pilot strategy for the case company. Built based on the business priorities, the digital assets present, and the availability of resources that will manage the data-driven digital marketing strategy, this is an attempt to enhance the current marketing strategy to acquire new customers, taking advantage of the available technologies and the vast opportunities that the online space offers.

The first step of the strategy proposal covers setting SMART digital marketing objectives and setting actionable key performance indicators (KPIs). It is essential to make this as the very initial activity for the stakeholders. Admittedly, the stakeholders mentioned during the discussions about the lack of familiarity with creating objectives and KPIs. To support this step, this thesis study came up with the 360-degree digital journey. It aims to provide a top-level view, helping the stakeholders to understand the importance of each customer's touchpoints. Because this will set the direction for the rest of the steps of this strategy proposal, the stakeholders must be able to answer the question – "Where do we want to go?" on the other hand the KPIs should be set after objectives have been identified to answer the question – "How will we know if we have achieved it?".

Using the information provided by the stakeholders, the thesis study came up with objectives such as building visibility in the online space and attracting new potential customers; encouraging meaningful on-site interactions, turning leads into customers; and building long-term relationships and customer lifetime value. To measure the success of these objectives, Figure 27 provides the details of the key performance indicators formulated for the case company to check if the objectives after a particular period, in this case, for 3 months after the implementation, will be met or exceeded based on the measure.

The second step of the strategy proposal is centered on implementing tactics and actions that follow the customer journey, which will support the business to achieve its defined objectives. To execute a data-driven digital marketing strategy, this step involves implementing a comprehensive SEO. This will help to increase website visibility and build traffic. The addition of meta descriptions, the addition of relevant keywords to titles and descriptions, and the proper configuration of URL versions of the case company website are issues found during the analysis of the current SEO strategy, and applying a fix to these SEO elements will improve the current strategy. For a high-conversion design, the implementation of elements on the landing page, such as a lead capture form, a WhatsApp shortcut, call-to-action buttons strategically placed in prominent areas of the website, exit-intent popups, and remarketing strategies, has been included in the proposal. Full CRM integration will be implemented to convert leads into customers, utilizing automation and follow-ups for efficient contact management. Post-sales engagement and responsive customer support will be utilized to encourage customer retention.

The last step in the strategy proposal covers control and performance measurement. Supporting the execution process, particularly the lead capture area, this part of the strategy proposal focuses on the data collection and monitoring, using the CRM system, which will be utilized to manage the new contacts and organize them within the system. To ensure the worthiness of the data, data enrichment rules should be established. The case company is currently a small operation, and although it does not require the sophistication of data governance, following the policy surrounding data should still be observed. For data security and relevance, a data owner will be designated to manage the data and enforce adherence to etiquette by establishing a data retention policy. It will use analytic tools, including a better dashboard design and data analytics, to make actionable insights more visible. Furthermore, exclusive email templates will be created to facilitate marketing email automation. Among the marketing automation processes will be the automation of contact builders set up with trigger-based distribution of emails, which streamlines and personalizes communication with leads and customers.

6 Validation of the Proposal

This section reports on the results of the validation stage and points to further developments to the initial Proposal. At the end of this section, the final version of the proposal will be presented.

6.1 Overview of the Validation Stage

This section contains the validation stage of the initial proposal for the data-driven digital marketing strategy. For the most part, development of the strategy was developed closely with the CEO of the case company.

The initial proposal was sent to the stakeholders as a PowerPoint presentation. The second step in this validation was a follow-up discussion to ensure that the elements and actions were parallel with the immediate needs of the company. According to the case company CEO, it was quite unclear at first how digital marketing works, but as the stages of this thesis study progressed, its importance and contribution to the business started to look promising. It slowly built its value by opening untapped opportunities through the current marketing practices.

The discussion covered the details of each step as enumerated in the initial proposal. The following sub-sections will provide the comments by the stakeholders forming the validation of the data-driven digital marketing proposal as delivered to the case company stakeholders.

6.2 Developments to the Proposal (based on Data Collection 3)

This section contains the comments and feedback from the stakeholders during the validation process of the strategy. The Data Collection 3 formed a solid guide for the co-creation of the strategy. It was a learning experience for both parties as the case company stakeholders, specifically the case company CEO expressed a better appreciation of how this can help the business in a way that was never tried before. On the other hand, learning more about the needs and comprehending the priorities of the case company made it clearer what actions are required to get on with the digital marketing activities. From the financial side of the strategy, there are not many

adjustments required for the case company because the tools and systems required to start the strategy have already been paid for a year.

Table 15. Co-creation of Strategy Proposal (Post-Validation)

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Digital Marketing</h2> <h3 style="text-align: center;">Strategy Proposal Summary – Post Validation</h3>		
OBJECTIVES & KPIs	EXECUTION OF TACTICS & ACTIONS	CONTROL & PERFORMANCE MEASURE
<p>1. Define SMART Digital Marketing Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building visibility and attracting new potential customers Encourage meaningful on-site interactions Turn leads into customers Build long-term relationships and customer lifetime value <p>2. Set actionable KPIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase website traffic by 30% using a comprehensive SEO strategy over the next 3 months Generate at least 10 leads over the next 3 months by implementing a lead capture form and improving CTA placement on the landing page Lead conversion of at least 15% from the generated leads within 3 months Send a personalized post-sale email and gather feedback to identify the top 3 priorities for the next quarter 	<p>1. Reach - Awareness and Traffic Generation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a comprehensive SEO strategy and Google Analytics (addition of meta description & keywords in title & description; check www & non-www versions of URL) <p>2. Act - Lead Generation & Nurturing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website should have a high-converting landing page (lead capture form, WhatsApp shortcut, prominent call-to-action buttons, exit-intent popups, remarketing strategy) Implement content management to create multi-channel experience <p>3. Convert - Customer Acquisition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full CRM integration (manage lead contacts and qualify automated workflows and follow-ups) <p>4. Engage - Customer Retention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide post-sales engagement and customer support <p>5. Resource allocation and upskilling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign a person in charge of the CRM and Marketing Tools to understand features better and maximize the usability of the system 	<p>1. Monitoring through CRM Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of the lead capture form to build the lead contacts in CRM Establish data enrichment rules for adding missing details in contacts/leads Assign a data owner and establish a data retention policy <p>2. Analytic Tools Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve dashboard layout and leverage data analytics Using the templates, create a customized e-mail that will be used for marketing e-mail automation <p>3. Marketing Automation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automation setup for contact builder Setup triggers for marketing e-mail distribution
All items in the proposal will be retained; the lead generation target was decreased to 10; action will be assigned to the case company CEO and partner	SEO strategy will be combined with Google Analytics as suggested by the stakeholders; Content management/multi-channel experience will be on hold due to lack of resources; all others will be retained	All items in the proposal will be retained and implemented. However, at this stage, the stakeholders have yet to assign the highlighted items

As seen from Table 15, Expert suggestions (findings of Data 3) for the Initial proposal contain the details of the strategy and the expert suggestions on the details that are found impactful for the case company strategy. As also shown in the table, data collection 3 turned out to be positive. The response of the stakeholders, particularly the case company CEO, agreed to retain almost all of the suggested parts of the key elements of the strategy.

“I do not see anything wrong with jumping into these new activities. There are opportunities within the company that we have not explored. Digital marketing tools are in front of us, and we will just have to put them to use”(Case Company CEO, 2025).

There was positive feedback when the planning was introduced to the stakeholders. Since there are only two key areas that were advised to define and set, the objectives and the KPIs, consecutively. This area of strategy helped the case company realize that all activities should be bound by goals. Quantifying the actions in the business processes will help measure the company’s success (Case Company CEO, 2025). As mentioned in the previous section, the initial proposal for planning was supported by a recommendation to check the 360-degree digital journey.

“The previous company I built did not have objectives nor KPIs, and yet we made it. And it was successful. But today can be unique and different “(Case Company CEO, 2025).

This is a new thing for the case company. The need for this element was previously non-existent. After discussions, the stakeholders understood how essential it is to have the objectives and KPIs for the growth of the business. This should be done according to the case company CEO. Hence, this is retained in the proposal, and tasks related to this element will be assigned to the key stakeholders of the case company.

There are five items mentioned in the second element of the initial proposal: execution of tactics and actions. The first involves tactics and actions that will help in creating awareness in traffic building, the second is for lead generation and nurturing, the third is for conversion or customer acquisition, the fourth is customer retention, and lastly, resource allocation and upskilling.

The first recommendation for the second element of the initial proposal is to revisit the current SEO strategy. Using the SEO analysis results, there were issues identified, and the fixes that should be deployed to correct these issues were suggested to achieve better performance. These issues are the following: the absence of a meta description, there are no keywords in the title and description, and the versions of the URL should be checked to avoid misrouting, which is for the www and non-www versions of the website URL. Tactics and actions for lead generation and nurturing should be focused on the landing page of the company website. Because this will be used to attract potential customers, the design should be reviewed and ensure that conversion elements are present to make it highly converting. The case company CEO highlighted the buyer’s persona because, for the stakeholders, the current design of the website matches the customers and the way they look for information. During the session, it was agreed that modifications to the website would not touch the entire layout. The proposal will only cover the addition of conversion elements such as a lead capture form, which is an important tool in inbound marketing, the addition of a WhatsApp button or shortcut, prominent call-to-action buttons, and exit-intent popups.

The customer acquisition tool will be executed by a full integration of the CRM system which refers to the seamless connection of the CRM platform to various digital marketing tools and other business tools. This integration allows a real-time view of data across departments of the business, creating a centralized hub. Taking advantage of this will

help in managing customer relationships and interactions, making it vital in improving lead generation, nurturing, and conversion. Because a CRM system can be integrated in different platforms and tools, it captures data and makes tracking easier, which enables a business to respond quickly throughout the customer journey. Using automation and workflows, it facilitates personalized marketing efforts that ensure timely and relevant communication. The data captured by this integration provides business efficiency, accuracy, and effectiveness for customer conversion efforts. It reinforces collaboration and consistency across departments. A full integration of the CRM system also supports the fourth item, customer retention. This means that contacts maintained in the system are not put to waste after the completion of a project. The business can continue engagement using the data collected, and this last phase of the sales transaction can be supported by post-sale communication and customer support.

Resources should be part of the tactics and actions. This strategy proposal will set the stage for the case company to shape its digital environment. As time passes, the rapid changes in technological innovation and consumer practices should be foreseen by any business by creating a future-ready workforce. More than assigning a person-in-charge, the case company should have an assessment of the current competencies and target the training or development programs focused on addressing the critical skill gaps. This approach will help build an agile organization. A workforce that is effective because of its internal capabilities and its readiness to respond quickly to support organizational strategies and goals.

The third step of the strategy proposal included a presentation of the process diagram of digital marketing data flow and monitoring.

“The flowchart presented in the initial proposal contains information about the flow of data in the marketing process. This makes it clearer and more understandable”.
(Case Company CEO, 2025).

The case company's CEO agreed that all actions should be monitored. The three items under control and performance are: Monitoring through CRM Data, analytic tools implementation, and marketing automation. Data in this step is a vital tool for the case company to use to further enhance the strategy and to maintain the worthiness of the data captured, data enrichment rules should be established with a designated data owner and clear data retention. This step would like to focus on the dashboard, an important analytics tool that can provide data insights for a better decision-making

process. This can only be taken advantage of if the layout is customized based on what is necessary to know briefly, especially for the executive level. The marketing automation will work well for the marketing emails and workflows. This can be used to create customized marketing emails and streamline their distribution for the efficiency of the campaigns.

6.3 Final Proposal

This section provides the results of the discussion with the key stakeholders of the company after the presentation of the initial proposal. The additional remarks provided by the stakeholders of the case company were used to modify the initial proposal presented and arrive at the final proposal, as shown in Table 16

Table 16. The Final Proposal

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Digital Marketing Strategy Proposal Summary – Final</h2>		
OBJECTIVES & KPIs	EXECUTION OF TACTICS & ACTIONS	CONTROL & PERFORMANCE MEASURE
<p>1. Define SMART Digital Marketing Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Building visibility and attracting new potential customers o Encourage meaningful on-site interactions o Turn leads into customers o Build long-term relationships and customer lifetime value <p>2. Set actionable KPIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Increase website traffic by 30% using a comprehensive SEO strategy over the next 3 months o Generate at least 10 leads over the next 3 months by implementing a lead capture form and improving CTA placement on the landing page o Lead conversion of at least 15% from the generated leads within 3 months o Send a personalized post-sale email and gather feedback to identify the top 3 priorities for the next quarter 	<p>1. Reach - Awareness and Traffic Generation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Implement a comprehensive SEO strategy and Google Analytics (addition of meta description & keywords in title & description; check www & non-www versions of URL) <p>2. Act - Lead Generation & Nurturing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Website should have a high-converting landing page (lead capture form, WhatsApp shortcut, prominent call-to-action buttons, exit-intent popups, remarketing strategy) o Implement content management to create multi-channel experience o Retargeting/Remarketing strategy <p>3. Convert - Customer Acquisition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Full CRM integration (manage lead contacts and qualify automated workflows and follow-ups) <p>4. Engage - Customer Retention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Provide post-sales engagement and customer support <p>5. Resource allocation and upskilling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Assign a person in charge of the CRM and Marketing Tools to understand features better and maximize the usability of the system 	<p>1. Monitoring through CRM Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Integration of the lead capture form to build the lead contacts in CRM o Establish data enrichment rules for adding missing details in contacts/leads o Assign a data owner and establish a data retention policy <p>2. Analytic Tools Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improve dashboard layout and leverage data analytics o Using the templates, create a customized e-mail that will be used for marketing e-mail automation <p>3. Marketing Automation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Automation setup for contact builder o Setup triggers for marketing e-mail distribution

As shown in Table 16, almost all parts of the initial strategy proposal have been accepted. A few modifications were applied such as the lead generation was trimmed down to 50% of the original proposal and the SEO strategy being combined with Google Analytics. The multi-channel experience was retained although it will not be part of the pilot implementation. This will not be removed though from the strategy but there will be delay on this part of the strategy due to challenges in resources. The following is Figure 27 provides the timeline of implementation for the strategy.

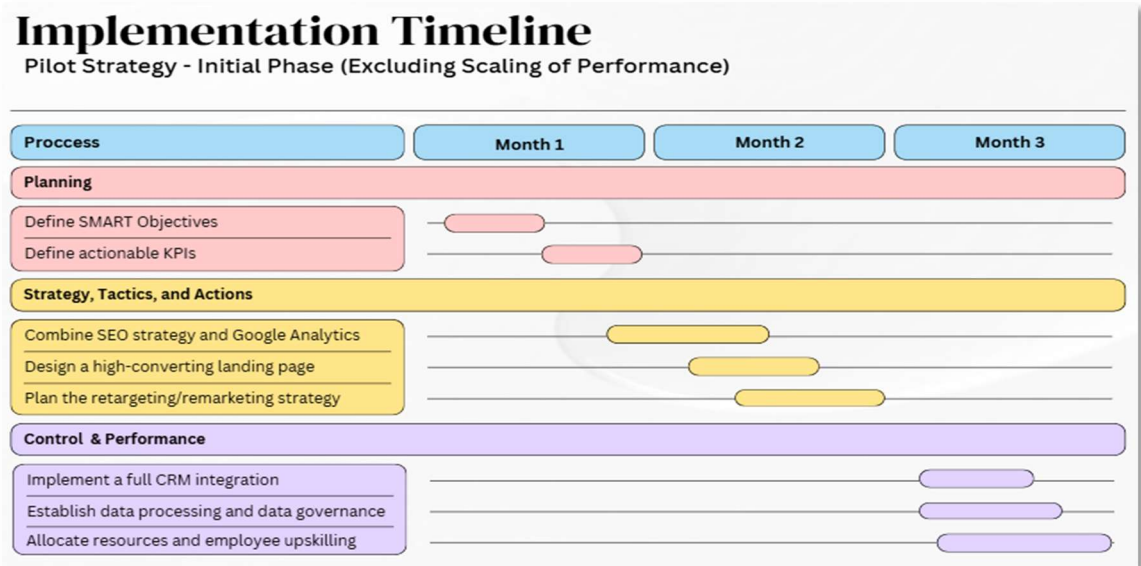


Figure 27. Initial Phase of Strategy Implementation

The above illustration, Figure 27, is a short-term phase of the initial implementation of the data-driven digital marketing strategy for the case company. Because the tools are available, the only challenge for the case company is the planning element, the setup of the tools, and the upskilling on the marketing tools that will be part of the roll-out. The scaling phase, which will make the most of the data analytics, will be part of the long-term phase. This phase requires data for six (6) to twelve (12) months. The strategy aims to ensure sustainable growth for the case company, and collecting data cannot be accelerated. Providing a decent timetable will give a return of meaningful data. If the collection is too short, this may lead to inefficiencies and errors. Data will provide the case company with a better view of customer behavior, the performance of the campaigns, and other relevant information impacting the business. As a result, the decision-making process will be supported with reliable data, making it easier to adjust the strategies.

This final strategy proposal is more aligned with the business need and considers the current resources available for the case company to seize the opportunity that lies within the digital space. This strategy equips the case company with the necessary tools and actions to acquire more customers digitally, creating an additional avenue for the case company to grow and expand its reach. The next section will present the executive summary and evaluation of this thesis.

7 Conclusion

This section contains a summary of the study's key findings. It will reflect on the relevance of the data-driven digital marketing strategies for the cold room construction startup, highlighting their impact on customer acquisition and supporting the growth and competitiveness of the case company.

7.1 Executive Summary

Facing the challenge of acquiring new customers, this study aims to develop a data-driven digital marketing strategy that will address the challenges of the cold room construction startup re-entering the business. With an operation that started the first quarter of this year, 2025, the case company would like to establish a brand that will set it apart from its predecessor which was sold by the founder in 2023. For the early stage of its development, the case company seeks to find solutions for a cost-effective marketing approach that will help in establishing the brand and contribute to the growth of the business by using the available digital tools and strategies in customer acquisition.

The study adopted both an applied-action approach and qualitative research methodology. To strengthen the foundation of the proposal, the theoretical framework was established by collecting the best digital marketing solutions available in the market and literature reviews. A critical assessment of the current state of the company followed and during this stage of the study, internal data was collected and a total of three interviews were conducted, one with the supplier and two with the stakeholders. The SOSTAC Framework was used for evaluation. Integrating the findings from this evaluation and theoretical knowledge from the review of the literature guided the development of the co-created data-driven marketing strategy.

The outcome of the study is a practical and scalable data-driven digital marketing strategy proposal built around three steps of execution. The first step involves defining SMART objectives and actionable KPIs. This will serve as drivers and direction for the organization. The second step is the execution of tactics, and actions which is focused on the digital assets and marketing strategies in place such as SEO, the landing page, the CRM system, content management, and the resources. Essentially, these items will help the case company to increase its online presence, improve branding, and both

attract and continuously engage potential customers, creating a loop effect on strategy. Lastly, the third step involves control and performance measure. CRM and data analytics are the core of this last element. Full integration of marketing activities with CRM and leveraging data analytics will allow the company to streamline marketing activities by using automation functionalities and feeding the data into the CRM system, which is critical in creating a dashboard. Processed data that complies with data standards will result in efficient and precise management decisions for long-term growth. The proposal also included a three-month implementation timeline for the initial phase of the strategy. A short-range timeline was suggested to make the most of the existing digital assets and resources, this will allow the case company to have a functional data-driven digital marketing strategy without creating financial impact. Due to the required period to gather essential data which can last up to twelve months, scaling of performance was excluded in the timeline.

The proposed strategy was validated by the case company CEO through open discussions and presentations conducted related to the elements of the proposal. Initial tests were completed such as the lead capture forms, e-mail marketing templates, and contact management automation. While comprehensive testing is outside the scope of the study, the case company CEO provided positive feedback on the feasibility of implementation of the strategy and acknowledged the framework, particularly during the presentation session. In addition, the stakeholders agree that the proposal can serve as a guide and reference for future implementation.

The construction industry is traditional. It is one of the biggest industries in the world and yet it is also amongst the slowest in digitalization. Implementation of the strategy, although will not form significant data in the scale of the construction industry around the region, is a sign that there are companies that are willing to go outside its traditional ways to overcome the challenges of embracing technologies. For the case company, the strategy holds significant potential that will improve its online visibility and strengthen its brand. It is a new avenue to penetrate the market systematically. It offers growth opportunities by enhancing competitiveness by leveraging cost-effective marketing activities and data analytics without requiring substantial resources.

7.2 Recommendations toward Implementation

The strategy's implementation starts with defining the digital marketing objectives and establishing actionable KPIs. Both should align with the core business goals of the case company.

The next step is to build digital assets that will enable the case company to boost its digital presence and increase its online attractiveness by creating a digital brand that is most inviting to potential customers. A fancy analytics tool is not a requirement, a simple tool that will help capture customer data and measure performance will be enough for a pilot strategy. Enhancement will come after additional needs are identified along the process. This can be periodically done because the period in data capture is an element in the analysis. MarTech tools do not have to be expensive. If the existing tools support automation and allow tracking and data capturing, this is acceptable.

Finally, management should revisit the strategy, and the effectiveness of the tools. This is when data plays a crucial role because it will provide insights and relevant information that will help in further strategy developments. As the company grows, data will also follow. Big data processing can be a demanding task and in the long run, continuously building internal capacity by upskilling internal resources or outsourcing digital marketing tasks may be considered to create a greater impact on the business.

7.3 Thesis Evaluation

The study was conducted to help a cold room construction business address its challenge of effectively acquiring new customers by building a proposal for a data-driven digital marketing strategy. The goal of this section is to assess the quality, relevance, and usefulness of the research and the proposed strategy for the business.

The initial stage of the thesis study began with identifying the objective. Primarily, the objective is to develop a proposal for a data-driven digital marketing strategy that will help in acquiring new customers and will equip the case company with insights and tools to build a strong market presence and achieve long-term success. For a startup that started its operations barely a quarter when the thesis study was initiated, all business processes are in the early stage of development. There is no marketing strategy in place

except for its traditional way of cold-calling and reaching out to clients. The objective was successfully achieved by combining the theoretical knowledge gathered from the review of related literature and the data collected from the market assessment and evaluation of the case company's digital maturity. With the support of the stakeholders and an open dialogue with the case company CEO, practical insights provided a way for the study to create a tailored strategy proposal for the case company.

The proposed strategy is well suited for the early stage of the company case because it is practical and scalable. Considering the limited resources, the proposal was focused on identifying the available tools that can be used to implement an effective solution and make the most out of digital assets without disturbing the financial side of the business. It provided actionable and progressive recommendations that can guide the implementation.

The research design was a combination of a review of related literature which resulted in the theoretical framework. The conceptual framework was a result of a thorough analysis of the case company. Using internal data and a series of interviews and discussions with the suppliers and the case company stakeholders, the stage of this study provided an understanding of the needs of the case company to start its digital marketing strategy. There was a limitation on the internal data given that the operation of the business had just begun. However, with the cooperation of the stakeholders, particularly the case company CEO, this was supplemented by being open to discussions. The cooperation of the case company aided in building the strategy proposal.

The valuable insights gathered from the interviews and discussions with the case company CEO contribute to the practical knowledge of a startup, particularly in the cold room construction business. The research method used in this thesis study created a structure to identify the areas of development. Hence, this is a valuable resource that offers a structured approach for startups within the construction industry to build a digital presence and customer engagement that will lead the target audience of the strategy to the sales funnel.

The proposal was shared with the case company in the form of a presentation. Because this is a result of highly collaborative research, the response was positive. The case company CEO developed a better understanding of the details of each element of the

strategy proposal through the entire journey and mentioned that the schedule for a meeting should be set to discuss the initial phase of the implementation. Although the tests conducted were partial, the case company CEO expressed interest in utilizing the proposal as a reference for the next planning sessions because of its practicality and realistic value.

Suggestions for future research are to check the effectiveness of the tools and a periodic assessment of the strategy by using the data collected and understanding the dashboard. Evaluation of performance is necessary. An audit of the marketing activities and their performance will help the business shift its focus and define new opportunities.

7.4 Closing Words

This thesis study intends to find solutions. The proposed strategy is relevant, practical, and customized to the needs of a startup company. There are limitations to the research. However, this study created a pathway for the case company to take advantage of the opportunities that sit in the digital space and enhance its marketing capabilities by being one of the few small companies that embrace the power of data to achieve the business's long-term success.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions with the Case Company Supplier

Interview questions conducted via Teams Meeting on 17 February 2025.

PART 1. Situation Analysis (for understanding the supplier's current market position)

- Supplier's role as a supplier within the cold room construction industry.
- Key challenges when working with companies like the case company.
- Have you noticed any recent shifts in customer preferences or market demands in the cold room construction sector?

PART 2. Objectives (Supplier's business goals and alignment with the case company strategy)

- What are your key business objectives for the next 1-3 years?
- How do you ensure that your objectives are aligned with industry trends and digital transformation?

PART 3. Marketing Strategy (Supplier's marketing, competitive, and digital strategies)

- Do you align your marketing and sales objectives with your business growth?
- How do you support your customers in achieving their marketing and business goals?

PART 4. Tactics and Actions (Supplier's execution of marketing and sales strategies)

- How do you currently market your products and services to businesses in construction?
- What channels (e.g., direct sales, digital marketing, partnerships) do you use to reach your customers?
- What are your key marketing campaigns or sales initiatives from the last year?
- How do you personalize your communication with business customers?
- Do you have a content marketing strategy (e.g., blogs, case studies, industry reports) to attract B2B clients?
- How do you handle lead generation and customer acquisition?
- Are there any collaborative marketing activities you do with [Case Company] or other clients?

PART 6. Control (Measurement & Improvement Processes) (Evaluating success metrics and adjustments)

- How do you measure the success of your marketing and sales efforts? Are there specific KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) you track to measure your success?
- What tools or software do you use to track performance?
- How often do you review and adjust your marketing and business strategies?
- Have you conducted any customer feedback or market research initiatives to improve your service?
- In your opinion, what role does **data** play in improving marketing strategies?

Closing Question Is there anything you would like to add regarding how digital marketing or supply chain collaboration can be improved in the cold room construction industry?

Appendix 2: Interview Questions with the Case Company CEO

Interview questions conducted via Teams Meeting on 23 February 2025.

PART 1: Situation Analysis – Where are we now?

- Let's talk about a little bit of history, would you be able to share how Viilee Constructions started and what motivated you to establish the company?
- Who are the main competitors of Viilee Constructions and what do you think are their strengths and weaknesses?
- Who are the primary customers of the business? What are their needs and pain points?
- In terms of your digital presence, how would you assess the company's online visibility and engagement?
- Briefly, would you be able to name some of the company's strengths and weaknesses? What are the opportunities and threats that you perceive?

PART 2: Objectives – Where do we want to be?

- What are the specific, measurable goals you want to achieve in the next 12 months?
- What are your desired outcomes for the company's digital marketing target? Outcome for online lead generation, website traffic, and social media engagement?
- What metrics will you monitor to evaluate the success of your digital marketing efforts?

PART 3: Strategy – How do we get there?

- Which customer segments will you focus on? Why are these segments important?
- What unique value does the company offer to these segments?
- Which online platform and channels are you prioritizing to reach your target audience?
- How will you guide potential customers from awareness to conversion?

PART 4: Tactics and Actions – How exactly do we get there?

- What type of content are you currently creating? What are your future thoughts on the company content?
- What SEO practices have you implemented? Is there any plan for the website search rankings?

- Have you considered investing in paid advertising? What is or will be your budget allocation?
- Is there an e-mail marketing campaign to nurture leads and retain customers?
- What tools or platforms are you using to coordinate and manage marketing efforts?
- Who will be the main person for the execution of the digital marketing plan?

PART 5: Control – Did we get there?

- How will you track the performance of your digital marketing activities?
- How often will you review and analyze the digital marketing metrics?

Appendix 3: AI Written Statement

WRITTEN STATEMENT on the use of AI-based tools in this thesis

by Sarah Goles, the student of BI Master's Degree Programme

Thesis title: A Data-Driven Digital Marketing Strategy for a Cold Room Business

According to the "Guidance for addressing the use of AI-based tools in studies at Metropolia Business School (for written submissions)" from August 2023, I make this statement on the use of AI-based tools in my submitted Master's thesis.

- 1) Which AI-based large language models or other AI-based tools I used
ChatGPT and Grammarly
- 2) In which parts of the thesis which tools were used, and for which tasks (*please make a list*)
The tool was used in Chapter 3: Existing Knowledge & Best Practices for Building a Digital Marketing Strategy.
- 3) What portion of the text was helped with these tools, for each use
It was used to simplify the sentences.
- 4) Which prompts were asked, exactly (*please indicate the page number in the text where used*)
There were no prompts
- 5) Here, I describe what continues an ethical and reliable use of AI-based tools that I used (*use, for example, the recommended documents from "MBS Guidance" referred to above*)
The tools were utilized to improve my academic writing.
- 6) Here, I describe how ethically and reliably I used the AI-based tools in my thesis submission
I fully understood that AI should be used appropriately and responsibly for this thesis.

This written statement makes part of my thesis and is done to help in evaluation and assessment.

18 April 2025, Helsinki, Finland

(*Data and place*)



(*Signature*)