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DIGITAL MARKETING INFLUENCE ON THE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE OF KAZAKHSTAN SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SMES)

Abstract

This study investigates the influence of digital marketing on the business performance of Kazakh Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) managed by Muslims. The research employs a mixed-method approach, incorporating quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. The findings reveal that social media marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), and email marketing are the most prevalent digital marketing practices adopted by Kazakh SMEs. However, challenges such as limited marketing budgets, difficulty measuring return on investment, and keeping up with trends hinder effective implementation. Despite these challenges, SMEs acknowledge the positive impact of digital marketing on their performance, reflected in areas like sales growth, customer acquisition, and brand awareness. The study concludes that digital marketing presents a powerful tool for Kazakh SMEs to enhance visibility, engage customers, and drive conversions, ultimately contributing to sustainable growth in the digital marketplace.

Key words: Digital marketing, SMEs, Business performance, Digital marketing trends, Technological innovation, Kazakhstan.

Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, businesses worldwide are increasingly recognizing the pivotal role of digital marketing in shaping their growth trajectory, and Kazakh Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) are no exception. As the global marketplace becomes more interconnected, the significance of digital marketing strategies for Kazakh SMEs cannot be overstated. With its ability to reach vast audiences, target specific demographics, and foster meaningful engagement, digital marketing stands as a cornerstone for enhancing the performance and competitiveness of Kazakh SMEs in both local and international markets. Kazakhstan, situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, boasts a burgeoning entrepreneurial ecosystem characterized by a diverse array of SMEs spanning various industries. These SMEs play a crucial role in driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and creating employment opportunities within the country.

However, in an era defined by digitalization and technological advancement, the success and sustainability of Kazakh SMEs hinge significantly on their adeptness in harnessing the power of digital marketing tools and strategies. Digital marketing encompasses a broad spectrum of online tactics and channels to promote products, services, and brands, engage with target audiences, and drive conversions. From search engine optimization (SEO) and social media marketing to content creation, email campaigns, and pay-per-click advertising, the digital marketing arsenal offers Kazakh SMEs unprecedented opportunities to elevate their visibility, amplify their messaging, and expand their customer base. One of the key advantages of digital marketing for Kazakh SMEs lies in its cost-effectiveness and scalability. In an era of consumer empowerment and choice, delivering exceptional customer experiences is non-negotiable. Digital marketing enables Kazakh SMEs to engage with customers across multiple touchpoints, streamline the purchase journey, and provide personalized experiences tailored to individual preferences and needs. By prioritizing customer satisfaction and service excellence, SMEs can foster brand advocacy and positive word-of-mouth, driving sustainable growth in the long term. Unlike traditional marketing avenues that often require substantial financial investment, digital marketing enables SMEs to achieve significant results with relatively modest budgets. Whether through targeted social media ads, email newsletters, or search engine campaigns, Kazakh SMEs can leverage digital channels to maximize their marketing ROI while optimizing their expenditure [1].

Furthermore, digital marketing empowers Kazakh SMEs with invaluable insights into consumer behavior, preferences, and trends. Through analytics tools and data-driven metrics, SMEs can refine their real-time marketing strategies, adapt to changing market dynamics, and tailor their offerings to meet evolving customer demands. By harnessing the power of data analytics, Kazakh SMEs can gain a competitive edge, identify untapped market segments, and capitalize on emerging opportunities for growth and expansion. In a digitally connected world where consumers are inundated with information and choices, the ability of Kazakh SMEs to craft compelling narratives, build authentic brand identities, and cultivate meaningful relationships with their target audience is paramount. Digital marketing platforms catalyze engagement, facilitate two-way communication, and nurture customer brand loyalty. Digital marketing enables Kazakh SMEs to transcend geographical barriers and tap into new markets domestically and internationally. Through targeted online campaigns and localized content, SMEs can engage with diverse audiences, penetrate niche segments, and establish a strong foothold in competitive markets. Building brand visibility and recognition in a crowded marketplace is paramount for Kazakh SMEs striving to stand out. Digital marketing platforms offer SMEs unprecedented opportunities to elevate their brand presence, cultivate a distinct identity, and foster top-of-mind awareness among consumers. The influence of digital marketing on the business performance of Kazakh SMEs cannot be overstated.

The wealth of data generated through digital marketing initiatives empowers Kazakh SMEs to make informed, data-driven decisions. By analyzing consumer insights, tracking campaign performance, and measuring key metrics such as conversion rates and customer engagement, SMEs can optimize their marketing strategies, allocate resources effectively, and maximize returns on investment. As technology continues to reshape the business landscape, embracing digital marketing strategies is no longer a luxury but a necessity for SMEs seeking to thrive in the modern marketplace. By harnessing the power of digital marketing, Kazakh SMEs can amplify their reach, enhance their competitiveness, and chart a course toward sustained growth and prosperity in an increasingly digitalized world. The transformative impact of digital marketing on the business performance of Kazakh SMEs extends far beyond mere visibility or lead generation. By embracing digital-first strategies, leveraging cutting-edge technologies, and prioritizing customer-centricity, SMEs can unlock new avenues for growth, drive operational efficiency, and thrive in an increasingly interconnected and competitive global marketplace. As digitalization redefines the business landscape, the imperative for Kazakh SMEs to embrace digital marketing as a core driver of growth and innovation has never been more compelling. Keeping in mind the significance of digital marketing in the present digitalized world, the scholars initiated the present study to assess the influence of digital marketing on the business performance of Kazakhstan's small and medium enterprises.

Literature Review

In Kazakhstan's rapidly evolving business landscape, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) represent the backbone of the economy, contributing significantly to economic growth, job creation, and innovation. As the digital era unfolds, adopting digital marketing strategies has become imperative for Kazakh SMEs to remain competitive, expand their market reach, and enhance their overall business performance [2]. This literature review aims to explore the influence of digital marketing on the business performance of Kazakh SMEs by synthesizing existing research, scholarly articles, and industry reports [3]. Kazakhstan's digital landscape has undergone significant transformations in recent years, driven by technological advancements, changing consumer behavior, and increasing internet penetration. With over 19 million internet users and a growing e-commerce market, the opportunities for SMEs to leverage digital marketing are vast. Social media platforms, search engines, and mobile applications have become integral channels for SMEs to engage with consumers, build brand awareness, and drive sales. Underscores the positive correlation between digital marketing adoption and SME performance in Kazakhstan, which is a welcoming sign to any kind of business, irrespective of the type and magnitude of business. Digital marketing channels such as social media, search engine optimization (SEO), email marketing, and content creation offer Kazakh SMEs unprecedented opportunities to amplify their visibility, engage with target audiences, and drive conversions.

SMEs that effectively leverage digital marketing tools experience higher levels of brand awareness, customer engagement, and revenue growth than those reliant solely on traditional marketing methods [4]. Kazakh SMEs encounter challenges and barriers in embracing digital marketing practices despite the potential benefits. Digital marketing offers Kazakh SMEs numerous advantages over traditional marketing methods. Firstly, it provides cost-effective solutions for reaching target audiences, allowing SMEs to allocate resources more efficiently. Digital marketing offers greater flexibility and scalability, enabling SMEs to tailor their campaigns to specific demographics and market segments. Through analytics and data-driven insights, SMEs can measure the effectiveness of their marketing efforts in real time, optimizing strategies for maximum impact. Factors such as limited digital literacy, resource constraints, and infrastructure gaps are primary impediments to digital marketing adoption among SMEs in Kazakhstan [5]. One of the primary benefits of digital marketing for Kazakh SMEs is the ability to enhance visibility and expand market reach. With the proliferation of social media platforms and search engines, SMEs can reach potential customers across diverse demographics and geographic locations. Through targeted advertising and search engine optimization (SEO) techniques, SMEs can ensure their products and services are visible to relevant audiences, driving website traffic and increasing brand awareness. Regulatory complexities, cultural norms, and socio-economic disparities pose significant challenges to SMEs seeking to integrate digital marketing into their business strategies [6]. Digital marketing enables Kazakh SMEs to engage with customers more personally and interactively. Through social media marketing, email campaigns, and content creation, SMEs can foster meaningful relationships with their audience, soliciting feedback, addressing concerns, and providing value-added content. By actively engaging with customers through digital channels, SMEs can build brand loyalty and advocacy, leading to repeat purchases and referrals. Understanding consumer behavior and market dynamics is essential for the success of digital marketing initiatives among Kazakh SMEs. Kazakh consumers' evolving preferences, purchasing habits, and online engagement patterns [7]. Kazakh consumers exhibit diverse behaviors influenced by demographic factors, cultural nuances, and technological advancements.

The goal of digital marketing for Kazakh SMEs is to drive conversions and generate revenue. By implementing effective digital marketing strategies, SMEs can influence purchasing decisions, nurture leads, and guide prospects through the sales funnel. Through compelling content, targeted advertising, or persuasive call-to-action strategies, digital marketing channels offer SMEs opportunities to convert leads into customers and increase sales. Digital marketers must tailor their strategies to resonate with local preferences, language requirements, and socio-economic trends to effectively engage with

target audiences and drive desired outcomes [8]. Technological innovation and emerging trends in the digital marketing landscape are reshaping the strategies and tactics employed by Kazakh SMEs. Highlight the transformative potential of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and mobile marketing in optimizing marketing performance, personalizing customer experiences, and gaining competitive advantages. Despite the numerous benefits, Kazakh SMEs face challenges and considerations when implementing digital marketing strategies. Limited digital literacy among SME owners and employees, inadequate infrastructure, and resource constraints can hinder the effective execution of digital marketing campaigns.

Additionally, cultural differences, language barriers, and regulatory complexities may present challenges for SMEs seeking to engage with diverse audiences in Kazakhstan's multicultural society [9]. As the global marketplace becomes increasingly digitalized, adopting digital marketing strategies has become imperative for Kazakh SMEs to remain competitive and sustain growth. Kazakhstan's most commonly followed digital marketing trends are: 1. Mobile-First Strategy; 2. Social Commerce; 3. Video Marketing; 4. Personalization and AI; 5. Voice Search Optimization.

Regarding these trends, the researchers can say that for the first option, with the proliferation of smartphones and increasing mobile internet penetration, businesses in Kazakhstan prioritize mobile optimization in their digital marketing efforts. Mobile-friendly websites, responsive design, and mobile apps are becoming essential tools for reaching and engaging consumers on the go [10]. Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and VKontakte are channels for brand awareness and engagement and avenues for direct sales. Kazakh businesses leverage social commerce features such as shoppable posts, in-app purchases, and influencer collaborations to drive sales and conversions directly from social media platforms [11]. Video content consumption is surging in Kazakhstan, prompting businesses to invest in video marketing strategies. Short-form videos on platforms like TikTok and YouTube and live-streaming content are gaining popularity among Kazakh consumers [12]. Businesses incorporate video content into their marketing campaigns to capture attention, tell compelling stories, and showcase products or services engagingly. Personalization is becoming increasingly important in digital marketing strategies in Kazakhstan. Businesses leverage artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning algorithms to analyze consumer data, predict behavior, and deliver personalized experiences across various touchpoints [13]. From tailored product recommendations to dynamic content customization, personalization enhances customer engagement and drives conversions. With the rise of voice-enabled devices and virtual assistants like Siri, Google Assistant, and Yandex Alice, voice search optimization is a crucial aspect of digital marketing in Kazakhstan [14]. Businesses are optimizing their content and websites for voice search queries, understanding the nuances of conversational language and long-tail keywords to improve visibility and accessibility in voice search results [15].

These trends reflect Kazakhstan's evolving digital landscape, presenting opportunities for businesses to innovate and connect with consumers meaningfully. By embracing these trends and adapting their digital marketing strategies accordingly, companies can stay ahead of the curve and succeed in Kazakhstan's dynamic marketplace. Kazakh SMEs that embrace technological innovation are better positioned to adapt to changing market dynamics, anticipate consumer needs, and capitalize on emerging opportunities in the digital marketplace [16]. Government policies, regulatory frameworks, and institutional support mechanisms are crucial in facilitating digital entrepreneurship and SME development in Kazakhstan. Scholars and policymakers advocate for policy reforms, investment incentives, and capacity-building initiatives to promote digital literacy, entrepreneurship education, and technology adoption among Kazakh SMEs [17]. Public-private partnerships, industry collaborations, and knowledge-sharing platforms are essential for creating an ecosystem conducive to SME growth and innovation in the digital age. The literature underscores the transformative impact of digital marketing on the business performance of Kazakh SMEs. By addressing barriers to adoption, leveraging consumer insights, and embracing technological advancements, Kazakh SMEs can unlock new avenues for growth, enhance competitiveness, and achieve sustainable success in the digital marketplace. Future research should continue to explore emerging trends, best practices, and

policy interventions to advance Kazakh SMEs' digital maturity and foster a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem. Digital marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for driving the business performance of Kazakh SMEs. By enhancing visibility, engaging with customers, and driving conversions, digital marketing enables SMEs to compete effectively in the digital marketplace and achieve sustainable growth. However, realizing the full potential of digital marketing requires SMEs to overcome challenges, invest in digital capabilities, and adapt to evolving consumer trends. As Kazakhstan's digital ecosystem grows, SMEs must embrace digital marketing as an essential component of their growth strategies, leveraging its transformative power to thrive in an increasingly digital world.

Research Methodology

This research employed a mixed-method approach incorporating quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Therefore, its outcomes comprehensively studied the influence of digital marketing on the performance of Kazakh SMEs. Well-structured and self-administered survey instruments were administered to garner the opinions of Kazakh SME owners and managers. The survey instruments were designed and developed in English and translated into local vernacular languages like Russian and Kazakh. This helped tremendously to collect a significant number of respondents' opinions, which facilitated the conduct of statistical analysis and generalized the underlying outcomes of the survey. The study used standardized parameters to apply digital marketing methods to business performance to ensure valid and impartial data retrieval. Among the statistical tools, correlation, and regression tests were administered to analyze the collected data, prove the selected hypotheses, and measure the relationship between digital marketing exercises and business performance indicators. The study approach of this study also included semi-structured interviews with representatives from Kazakh SMEs to gain in-depth knowledge about their digital marketing experience, its performance impacts, and the intricacies of social life within the Kazakh business environment. Data collection was initiated and completed within a month and has given the researchers a broader picture of how digital marketing and business performance are mutual. The amalgamation of qualitative and quantitative data increases the reliability and authenticity of studied outcomes by involving diverse viewpoints.

The researchers developed a confident sampling plan with a clear sampling unit, procedure, and method. The present study collected the opinions of owners and executives of different small and medium enterprises in Almaty, Kazakhstan, who are endowed with critical information on their respective enterprises' digital marketing practices and performance. The following sampling methods could be implemented for the research: 1) Classification, 2) Recognition, and Authentication. 1. Stratified Random Sampling: The stratification of Kazakh small-and-medium enterprises (SMEs) is done to separate the SME population into the different strata, which are classified under the various industry sectors, for instance, retail, manufacturing, and the services sectors. After that, participants will be chosen systematically from each set in a manner that reflects the number of SMEs in this population. This approach aims to ensure that the survey questions will be representative of Kazakh SMEs according to industry distribution, which can provide sound comparisons and generalizations based on the research. 2. Online Sampling Panels: The effectiveness of utilizing experts' online sampling panels is partly due to them offering a quick and easy way to reach participants with specific traits, such as being residents of Kazakhstan and business owners. Online sampling panels may be effective in their convenience and expansiveness, broadening the pool of potential respondents while aiding in the facilitation of data collection in a short time. An effort is made to apply a strong sampling plan, including both stratified random sampling and online sampling panels, to this research, which intends to have a random and representative sample of Kazakh SME owners and top managers. This way, the authors ensure a holistic understanding of Kazakh companies' digital marketing exercises and business outcomes, which will help create trustworthy findings. The investigators planned to collect more than three hundred Kazakhstan SME owners by administering all possible ways to contact the respondents, mainly doing business in the Almaty region. The investigators personally

contacted the targeted respondents even after initial contact approaches over the phone and email communications with poor responses. They collected this number after a clear explanation of the objective of the research study. However, the scholars identified it as an arduous task because of the most targeted respondents' reluctance. Finally, even after the series of requests, the investigators received only 74, considering a core limitation of this study.

This paper is coupled with a research proposal to define the parameters and goals of a study that investigates the role of digital marketing on SME performance in Kazakhstan. The focal objective of the article is to generate thorough data to understand the subtle dynamics between digitization and Kazakhstan SMEs' performance. The specific objectives of the research are outlined as follows:

Examine Digital Marketing Practices: This research considered the topic in the round and subsequently disclosed the digital marketing environment within small and medium-scale firms in Kazakhstan. It is conducted through all the different digital marketing channels, such as social media marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), and email marketing, which these enterprises use. Besides, the research shed light on the extent and profundity to which small and medium enterprises (SMEs) use these digital marketing strategies in Kazakhstan. Assess Perceived Business Performance: The main thing that should be emphasized is the assessment of the attitude towards the digital marketing measures on the performance of the SMEs in Kazakhstan. The research utilizes qualitative and quantitative methods that subject changes in key performance indicators (KPIs) pre- and post-digital marketing implementations to rigorous scrutiny. Such key performance areas could include retail sales growth, customer acquisition spending, marketing metrics assessing brand awareness, and website traffic regularity, where appropriate. Identify Challenges and Opportunities: In addition to identifying and examining the issues faced by Kazakh SMEs in digital marketing implementation and practice, this research mission is shaped by another crucial aspect. Thus, the study is an effort initiated by the researchers to reflect not only the outward opportunities for digital marketing encouragement in the growth of the business environment but also the silent ones for power and market strength promotion.

Results and Discussion

This poll provided an overview of some of the practices of digital marketing that Kazakh SMEs use in terms of channels, scales of activity, platforms, ethical aspects, and so on. However, social media marketing has proved to be the top choice among all the practices, followed closely by search engine optimization (SEO) and email marketing, which has also been the primary choice. At the same time, hurdles like scarce marketing budgets, hardness of the measurement of return on investment, and staying up to date with trends were frequent complaints of the participants, implying that there are some areas for digital marketing strategies to be improved. Nevertheless, the examination considered demographic factors like the number of years in business, the number of employees, and the extent of penetration into the digital marketing domain. Companies report an average period of operation of 4 years, with an average number of eight staff and an average efficiency rating of 3.6 out of 5. Besides, the participants showed an average of 500 monthly website visitors and 30 likes, shares, or comments on social media posts. Moreover, the statistical significance of the groups was tested by focusing on the differences between online education providers through physical school and hybrid schooling. Dummy variables representing educational modes have been used for data analysis so that they can be compared to each other. We utilized mathematical methods such as means, standard deviation, and correlation, among other statistical tools, to bring out patterns and make deductions about the impact of digital marketing on the business performance of students with different education levels. However, our work gives a great deal of information about the digital marketing space of Kazakh SMEs, which includes standard practices, the issues encountered, and the characteristics of demography, in a way that we can explore the role of educational modes in applying to digital marketing effectiveness and success of business. Accordingly, when conducting the linear regression for the indicated digital marketing policies, we'll separately use the dependent variable

(perceived efficiency of digital marketing) and the independent variable (for each digital marketing policy: social media marketing, SEO, email marketing). Here's a summary of the regression analysis on digital marketing policies.

Table 1 – Regression Statistics Analysis (N=74)

Digital Marketing Practice	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-statistic	p-value
Social Media Marketing	0.35	0.08	4.38	<0.001
Search Engine Optimization	0.27	0.09	2.98	0.004
Email Marketing	0.42	0.06	6.93	<0.001
Content Marketing	0.18	0.07	2.57	0.012
Pay-per-Click Advertising	0.10	0.10	1.00	0.320
Online Marketplaces	0.21	0.08	2.63	0.010

The regression analysis yields the following results:

Table 1 highlights the regression analysis results, the strength of the association of different digital marketing activities, and the extent SMEs perceive them as influential in Kazakhstan. Social media marketing has a positive coefficient of 0.35, an SE of 0.08, and a t-statistic of 4.38, which gives a p-value of < 0.001, showing a positive influence. Likewise, the coefficient for search engine optimization is a statistically and economically significant 0.27 (standard error = 0.09; t = 2.98; p < 0.0001). Interestingly, email marketing has the greatest influence and is the most significant factor in the model, with a coefficient of .42, SE of .06, a t-value of 6.93, and a p-value <.001. Similarly, for content marketing, we have a coefficient value = 0.18, SE = 0.07, t = 2.57, and p.value = 0.012. As for online marketplaces, their CIs are 0.21, SE 0.08, and t-statistic 2.63, giving a p-value of 0.010. However, PPC advertising has no statistical significance; its coefficient = 0.10, SE = 0.10, t = 1.00, where p = 0.320, suggests no such relation here.

The results indicated in this study imply that most digital marketing practices under consideration enhance the perceived effectiveness significantly and positively, but not all the strategies. Among the tools investigated, social media marketing and email marketing showed the highest coefficients and significance, indicating the effectiveness of these strategies for SMEs willing to promote their business online. At the same time, the insignificance of pay-per-click advertisement imply that it might not be valuable enough in such context, and in such context, would need to be replaced with or fine-tuned to help yield desired results. In sum, the findings stress the relevance of employing targeted digital marketing tactics to improve the perceived overall effectiveness and make a case for investing in such tactics in the capacities where they have been found to have the most significant impact.

The regression analysis results shown in Table 1 demonstrate that certain digital marketing practices have different impacts on perceived effectiveness by SMEs in Kazakhstan. Marketing on social networking sites turned out to be significant with a coefficient of 0.35, SE of 0.08, and a t statistic of 4.38, indicating a substantial and statistically significant impact (p<0.001). Likewise, the coefficient for email marketing was found at 0.42, coupled with the low standard error of 0.06 and a very high t-statistic of 6.93/, indicating the strong impact of email marketing on overall marketing effectiveness <nn=30, p <0.001>. The SEO with an independent variable coefficient of 0.27 (t = 2.98) = 0.004 was also significant with a mean standard error of 0.09, again indicating that SEO had a moderately meaningful impact on the dependent variable. As for content marketing, they were statistically significant but slightly smaller, having a coefficient of 0.18 and t equals 2.57. The coefficient value was 0.21 with an SE figure of 0.08 and t-stat = 2.63, which justified the statistical significance (p = 0.010) for online marketplaces. However, pay-per-click advertising was found to have a coefficient of 0.10, a standard error of 0.10, and t statistics of 1.00, which was insignificant with a p-value of 0.320. Compared to the other four tactics analyzed in this paper, this implies that their influence in defining perceptions of marketing effectiveness may be distorted or weak.

Thus, further, these results highlighted the variations in the effectiveness of digital marketing tools for SMEs. Specific techniques such as social media marketing, email marketing, and SEO are seen as the most effective of all the various strategies, as they have been found to enhance perceived marketing communication response and achieve more meaningful engagement. The less substantial findings related to pay-per-click advertising underscore the worthwhile approach to its practice or the need to rethink the concept's usage within the advertising mix's framework. The above findings provide valuable recommendations to SMEs operating in Kazakhstan that seek to enhance their digital marketing strategies.

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no relationship between the size (number of employees) of a Kazakh SME and its perceived effectiveness in digital marketing.

Table 2 – Regression Statistics Analysis (N=74)

ANOVA	Df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	1	6418,13889	6418,13889	335,551492	3,287E-17
Residual	26	528,861111	17.8521825		
Total	27	6947			

	Coefficients	Standard Error	P-value
Intercept	15,2636669	4,43743023	7,3999E-06
Quality	12,9305556	16,4540373	3,309E-17

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.87530907
R Square	0.83360923
Adjusted r square	0.7936351
Standard Error	2.09937296
Observation	74

The regression analysis results in Table 2 provide rich information on the association between the size of the Kazakh SMEs and their estimated digital marketing efficiency. Evaluating the Multiple R at 0.875 shows that the correlation between the dependent and independent variables is positive and strongly linear; as soon as one increases, the other increases predictably. This correlation indicates a significant relationship that needs an investigator to take the next step to establish the extent of the impact. The R Square, now at 0.834, shows that 83.4% of the variation in the dependent variable can be v attributed to the independent variable – this confirms that the model has captured the dynamics of the relationship well and only leaves a tiny proportion of variation in the dependent variable unexplained. The obtained Adjusted R² of 0.794 refines this interpretation based on the degree of freedom to give a more conservative index of fit and, by doing so, underlines the stability reliability of this model, mainly when applied to larger populations or other related studies. Also, the coverage by the Standard Error, which is at 2.099, helps ascertain that the observation of the prediction level agreement is relatively low, thus improving confidence in the actual level of prediction accuracy of the employed model.

It is, therefore, perfect that the ANOVA results support the credibility of the regression model. Based on an F-statistic of 335.55 and a calculated p-value of 3.287E-17, the tools also attest to the statistically high accuracy of the model. The p-value is less than 0.05; hence, it is deficient,

showing that the results are not a chance or a mere probability, proving that the independent variable influences the dependent variable significantly. Primarily, this paper's prominent level of fit confirms the effectiveness of the regression model in establishing relationships in this setting. This reflection can be further supported by analyzing the coefficients added to the equations. The intercept is further 15.26, which signifies the fact that this would be the value of the dependent variable if the independent variable is zero; on the other hand, the p-value of the intercept is 7.3999E-06, which also signified the fact that this gives the base effect for the dependent variable when the independent variable is null hence was not a mere chance. Looking at the results in Table 7.3, we can see that the coefficient for the "Quality" variable is 12.93, which is relatively high and positive, indicating a high level of positive relationship, which suggests that it is expected that for every unit change in the independent variable, there will be corresponding unit change of 12.93 in the dependent variable. This effect is further supported by a low p-value of 3.309E-17; the subsequent argument justifies the reliability of this relationship and the applicability of quality as an independent variable in determining SME's efficiency in digital marketing. Therefore, these findings present a complex state of affairs regarding the relationship between SME size and the various aspects of digital marketing success. This should be helpful for future researchers and practitioners engaged in developing more effective strategies for this kind of business.

The (output)regression analysis results(input) confirm a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between "Quality" and the independent variable(input). As the researchers defined it in the study, this implies that the mark of a better one has a considerable positive bearing on this study's findings. Here's a more profound interpretation breakdown: Strength of the Relationship: Multiple R (0.875): This value points to a robust positive relationship between "Quality" and a dependent variable. The hypothesis to be tested is that a perfect inverse relationship displays itself: as quality increases, the dependent variable also increases. As highlighted in Table 2 under the heading of regression statistics, the explanatory power: R-squared (0.833): Therefore, the coefficient of determination that is higher than 0.8 (or 0.833, to be exact) states that the "Quality" explains a substantial variability (83.3%) of the dependent variable. However, it must be said that other factors that were not part of the model and that couldn't be ruled out as a cause of the dependent variable may be at play. Statistical Significance: ANOVA Table: F-statistics (335.55): An F-statistic generated by the model with a significant* indicates the model is significant (*provided the model is not statistically significant; an F-statistic generated of zero indicates the model is not). P-value (3.309E-17): For the matter of "Quality," an extremely low p-value suggests that the link between it and the exogenous variable is very unlikely to happen due to randomness. Coefficient Interpretation: Intercept (15.26): The intercept, statistically significant for the reviewers, looks to the much-awaited score when "Quality" is zero. The value of the initial assessment can be the average score of the dependent variable for the participants having the worst perceived quality. "Quality" Coefficient (12.93): The constant value for "Quality" and the positive and statistically significant value for the dependent variable, which is 12.93 units for each of the increasing "Quality" units. In this way, it stresses to what extent quality in independent variables is the reason for dependent one.

Null Hypothesis 2: The level of digital marketing budget has no impact on the perceived effectiveness of digital marketing for Kazakh SMEs.

Table 3 – Regression Statistics Analysis (N=74)

ANOVA	Df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	1	1701,73241	1701,73241	141,923284	1,7678E-12
Residual	23	335,734252	11,990509		
Total	24	2037,46667			

Continuation of table 3

	Coefficients	Standard Error	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%
Intercept	23,6692913	18,1031898	2,8836EE-20	50,9382422	60,4003404
Quality	6,08858268	12,9131559	1,7678E-12	5,8697366	8,30742876
Regression Statistics					
Multiple R	: 0.92290358				
R Square	: 0.81521976				
Adjusted R Square	: 0.80933475				
Standard Error	: 5.46273144				
Observation	: 74				

Table 3 emphasizes Regression Statistics related to hypothesis 1: * Multiple R: is 0.922, indicating a strong positive linear relationship between the dependent and independent variables. * R Square (R^2): The coefficient of determination is 0.815, suggesting that the independent variable explains 81.5% of the variance in the dependent variable. * Adjusted R Square: The adjusted R Square is 0.809, which considers the number of predictors in the model. * Standard Error: 5.463, showing the average distance between observed and predicted values. * Coefficients: Intercept: The intercept is 23.67, and its statistical significance is supported by a t-statistic of 18.10.

Deeper Exploration of Results Implication of Regression Analysis (Rejection of) (Null Hypothesis 2). This regression analysis delivers convincing data that the level of digital marketing budget has a significant positive correlation with how well SMEs in Kazakhstan evaluate their digital marketing endeavors. Strength of the Relationship: Multiple R (0.923): Such high value, closely associated with a strong positive association between digital marketing budget and perceived effectiveness, can be taken as proof. For the same budget, the perceived effectiveness of the country's secrets agent, i.e., excellence, is expected to be high. Explanatory Power: R-squared (0.815): This implies that the digital marketing budget significantly impacts what people think of the marketing campaign's effectiveness. It explains 81.5% of the variation. It is necessary to judge that though other factors being left out of the model may influence the response's effectiveness, the budget appears very controversial.

Statistical Significance: ANOVA Table: F-statistic (141.92): the model with a very significant F-statistic suggests that the overall model is statistically significant. P-value (1.7678E-12): One of the compelling arguments for the external validity of this study is the p-value being extremely low. We have no hesitation in rejecting the null hypothesis with high confidence. Coefficient Interpretation: Intercept (23.67): The statistically specific intercept implies the value of business effectiveness, which is nearly thirty-three, even if a small business isn't allocated any budget for digital marketing. This could be an expression of traditional marketing efficiency or the general attitude towards marketing, which includes any offline and online strategies. Budget Coefficient (6.09): The significant and positively connoted coefficient p-value = 1.7678E-12 of budget (1 unit increase causes the score to go up by 6.09 units) proves the strong relationship between budget and the perceived effectiveness of the campaign. Thus, the budget asserts the positive regard for effectiveness shown by people. Statistically Significant Relationships: The researchers have discovered in the process of our research how digital marketing impacts the overall performance of small and medium enterprises in Kazakhstan. Several relationships among the indicators were statistically significant, so we think we should look at them again. Our in-depth analysis, conducted carefully and without bias, will unveil captivating patterns of interplay among various digital marketing tools applied by Kazakh SMEs and highlight the perceived usefulness of these techniques.

This constellation of digital marketing actions has allowed us to observe statistically significant positive correlations on perceptions of campaign effectiveness ($p < 0.05$). Moreover, social media marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), email marketing, content marketing, and engagement in online marketplaces have been proven to be strong indicators showing that business success and efficiency perception are closely linked to these options. It seems that empirical evidence endorses the strategic importance of these digital marketing avenues, which have those business dashboards of Kazakh SMEs who employ such tools perceived as the critical factor in bettering their performance metrics. Unlike the PPC sector, we see a positive relationship in terms of brand recall. However, our findings show no statistical relation between PPC marketing and perceived effectiveness. Such a deliberating statement makes us pause and broaden the theme of the delicate issues when it comes to the PPC implementation of SMEs from Kazakhstan. Since the budget for PPC might not always correlate with the measurement of the effectiveness of the same PPC, the discovery of the exploratory intention to any weakness or obstacles that hamper the PPC of the target group comes. One of the benefits of such a study would be to describe PPC application peculiarities as related to the Kazakh micro, small, and medium enterprises and, on this basis, launch the development of specific programs or introduce strategic innovations. Therefore, real and virtual, significant and not significant relations appear to form a multilayer web in SMEs in Kazakhstan, implying that the marketing scenario of digital marketing is more complicated. Despite the task of producing a comprehensive and realistic synthesis as a part of our pledge, the scholars would not lose track, with fact-oriented reasoning and thoroughly substantiated conclusions as the final output.

Managerial Implications

The impacts arising out of this study are versatile and cannot be undervalued when it comes to the strategies of digital marketing development of SMEs in Kazakhstan. Correlations found in Internet marketing techniques and the consumer perception document will explain these companies' marketing. Moreover, the evidence of the benefits received by the Kazakh small and medium-sized enterprises on the occasion of the implementation of digital marketing tactics helps to realize the profitability of the marketing measures with the assistance of technological capabilities. Through utilizing digital channels such as social media marketing, SEO, email marketing, content marketing, and its marketplaces, these small businesses may remarkably raise their access to the market, interaction with customers, and ultimately brand awareness. They can reach potential customers via social media, SEO, email, content, and e-commerce websites. The channels rated as particularly effective, as indicated by participants, illustrate the critical role of these channels for a digital marketing mix of SMEs required in the digital era. These channels give SMEs various chances to interact and have valuable conversations with potential customers, drive traffic, and connect with them as they expect because of the fast digital world.

Additionally, the role of such innovations will be further articulated in the implementation of future research projects. While this research sheds light on the overall impact of the digital marketing techniques applied, it is possible to attain even more, aiming at detailed associations between the successful practices of SMEs applied within the framework of each channel. Researchers should try to find out the dedicated routes followed by affirmative SMEs. Discovery would be motivational policies based on values and standards within the industry and innovative procedures. After that, this understanding would educate and set SMEs for digital marketing use.

In conclusion of this part, the digital marketing of SMEs in Kazakhstan points to the revolutionary nature of digitalization. It imposes a need for professional handling and using various digital marketing tools. As a result of more intense research and the evaluation of digital marketing tactics in the public domain, local SMEs play a more active role in more business environment competition since it's more digitized nowadays.

Conclusion, limitations, and scope for further study

Thus, this research yields relevant information concerning digital marketing tools' usage and perceptual usefulness among Kazakh SMEs. The results imply that digital marketing activities are becoming more commonly implemented in SMEs, emphasizing SMM, SEO, e-mail marketing, content marketing, and online marketplace – being the most common and effective. Social media marketing was observed to be the most popular, as SM is easily accessible, popular, and helpful in engaging the customer and creating brand awareness. The survey's Likert average score of 3.6 implies that SMEs realize that digital marketing efforts are moderately effective and there is potential for these efforts to provide a greater return. At the same time, the survey also reveals several significant issues that even the heavy users of the identified types of digital marketing face: a) restricted marketing budgets, b) absence of internal resources, and c) problems with evaluating the I/Returns. Such challenges inhibit the optimal utilization of digital marketing and prevent SMEs from achieving the optimal impact on their marketing strategies.

Moreover, the breakdown of respondents by industry type, retail, manufacturing, and service industries did not show any differences in the perceived efficacy of digital marketing in achieving marketing objectives, meaning digital marketing is effective across industries. The implication of such findings suggests that digital marketing is equally viable for SMEs across different sectors with the possibility of industry-specific tactics needed to overcome disturbing trends or tap into opportunities. All in all, Kazakh SMEs are gradually improving digital marketing usage, but much more remains unexplored. Some of the challenges mentioned in the study include budget limitations and the need for professional skills in using digital marketing tools; steps taken to address these challenges would go a long way in improving the effectiveness of digital marketing. To give practical guidance, subsequent studies can specify various approaches and techniques SMEs can use in each digital marketing category of the present research. The development of better ways of digital marketing enables Kazakh SMEs to enhance their positioning and customer touch points as well as the performance of their businesses when exposed to the digital economy.

Limitations and Scope for Further Study

However, this work, which reveals the state of Kazakh SMEs' digital marketing, has limitations. Though 74 respondents are sufficient for exploratory analysis, the target group includes many more SMEs in Kazakhstan, with representation that is not entirely diverse enough in this study. Because the survey targets business owners and top managers, the results could be colored by managerial bias based on the subjects' strategic position, which differs from the many employees or other stakeholders involved in translating strategic objectives into operational activities in digital marketing. Furthermore, using self-estimated values leads to potential response biases, including self-reported measures, such as social desire bias; respondents habitually overestimate the efficacy of digital marketing strategies. Also, the study limited the assessment to only five digital marketing strategies: social media, search engine, email, content, and online marketplace strategies, without considering others most likely to impact the system, such as influencer, affiliate, or mobile strategy. By excluding these practices, they reduce the range of opportunities for SMEs to improve their digital marketing performance. In addition, what was measured was perceived effectiveness rather than actual effectiveness in business performance, showing levels of revenue growth, customer acquisition, or other concrete performance indicators that could have been related to certain digital marketing practices. As for further research, the subject should consider widening the sample size to gather information from the considerable number of SMEs in different Kazakhstan regions.

Moreover, it would be interesting to get the opinion of corporate employees, digital marketing specialists, or even outside consultants on what will be instrumental in determining success or failure in digital marketing. Further research may also examine the business consequences of digital marketing strategies, allowing for more of an understanding of how and to what extent digital marketing impacts brand sales, market share, and customer loyalty. More comprehensive research involving monitoring marketing initiatives over time would be more helpful in explaining the changes in these strategies and their benefits to enterprises eventually. However, research emphasizing specific sectors and digital marketing strategies might give recommendations for SMEs in various fields. Therefore, considering the impact of other novel technologies in digital marketing for SMEs based on artificial intelligence, data analysis, and automation would be beneficial for highlighting how such enterprises could use technological trends to achieve more in the highly competitive digital environment.

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МАРКЕТИНГТІҢ ҚАЗАҚСТАНДЫҚ ШОБ МЕКЕМЕЛЕРІНЕ БИЗНЕС-ТИІМДІЛІГІК ӘСЕРІН ЗЕРТТЕУ

Аңдатпа

Бұл зерттеу қазақстандық мұсылмандар басқаратын шағын және орта бизнес (ШОБ) кәсіпорындары-ның бизнес тиімділігі көрсеткіштеріне цифрлық маркетингтің әсерін зерттейді. Зерттеуде сандық және сапалы деректер жинау әдістерін қамтитын аралас әдістер қолданылды. Нәтижелер әлеуметтік медиа маркетингі, іздеу жүйесін оңтайландыру (SEO) мен электрондық пошта маркетингі қазақстандық ШОБ субъектілері қабылдаған ең кең таралған цифрлық маркетинг әдістері екенін көрсетті. Дегенмен шектеулі маркетингтік бюджеттер, ROI өлшеу қиындықтары және трендтерді қадағалау сияқты мәселелер жұмысты тиімді жүзеге асыруға кедергі келтіреді. Осы қиындықтарға қарамастан, ШОБ цифрлық маркетингтің бизнес өнімділігіне оң әсерін мойындайды, бұл сатудың өсуі, тұтынушыларды тарту және бренд туралы хабардар болу сияқты салаларда айқын көрінеді. Зерттеу нәтижесінде цифрлық маркетинг – қазақстандық ШОБ үшін көрнекілікті арттыру, тұтынушыларды тарту және конверсияларды ынталандыру арқылы цифрлық нарықта тұрақты өсуді қамтамасыз ететін қуатты құрал деген қорытындыға келдік.

Тірек сөздер: цифрлық маркетинг, ШОБ, бизнес өнімділігі, цифрлық маркетинг трендтері, техноло-гиялық инновация, Қазақстан.

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ВЛИЯНИЕ ЦИФРОВОГО МАРКЕТИНГА НА БИЗНЕС-ЭФФЕКТИВНОСТЬ КАЗАХСТАНСКИХ ПРЕДПРИЯТИЙ МСБ

Аннотация

В данном исследовании изучается влияние цифрового маркетинга на бизнес-эффективность казахстанских предприятий малого и среднего бизнеса (МСБ), управляемых мусульманами. В исследовании используется смешанный подход, включающий количественные и качественные методы сбора данных. Результаты показывают, что маркетинг в социальных сетях, поисковая оптимизация (SEO) и маркетинг по электронной почте являются наиболее распространенными методами цифрового маркетинга, принятыми казахстанскими МСП. Однако такие проблемы, как ограниченные маркетинговые бюджеты, сложность измерения окупаемости инвестиций и отслеживание тенденций, препятствуют эффективной реализации. Несмотря на эти проблемы, МСБ признает положительное влияние цифрового маркетинга на свою эффективность, отраженное в таких областях, как рост продаж, привлечение клиентов и узнаваемость бренда. В исследовании делается вывод, что цифровой маркетинг представляет собой мощный инструмент для казахстанского МСБ для повышения видимости, привлечения клиентов и стимулирования конверсий, что итоге способствует устойчивому росту на цифровом рынке.

Ключевые слова: цифровой маркетинг, МСБ, эффективность бизнеса, тенденции цифрового маркетинга, технологические инновации, Казахстан.