



The Relationship Between Digital Marketing Practices and Organisational Performance: An Integrated Marketing Communication Perspective in China's Mobile Phone Industry

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ABSTRACT

In the rapidly evolving digital economy, organisations increasingly rely on digital marketing practices to enhance their competitiveness and improve their performance. This is especially so within the highly competitive mobile phone market. Therefore, this research seeks to investigate the effects of digital marketing practices (SEM, social media, and content marketing) on organisational performance (Brand awareness, loyalty, and profitability) in the mobile phone industry in China. The research approach of the present study was quantitative, using a cross-sectional survey design. Primary data was gathered from the personnel working in the businesses producing mobile phones in China, marketing managers, digital marketing executives, digital marketing strategists and social media managers. Through a purposive sampling approach, a total of 778 samples were chosen. The data obtained was examined using SPSS 25 and Microsoft Excel. The data analysis techniques used were descriptive statistics, factor analysis, Bartlett's test of sphericity, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test, and analysis of variance (ANOVA). It was shown that there is a statistically significant association between digital marketing techniques and organisational success. The KMO score of 0.949 and the results of Bartlett's test at the significance level of $p = 0.000$ reveal that the data are acceptable for factor analysis and have excellent construct validity. Furthermore, the ANOVA analyses also revealed an F value of 241.263 at the significance level of $p = 0.000$; therefore, researchers accepted the alternative hypothesis that digital marketing strategies significantly affect organisational performance. This research reveals that the use of digital marketing methods is important for improving organisational performance in China's mobile phone industry.

Keywords: Content Marketing (CM); Digital Marketing Practices; Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC); Organisational Performance; Search Engine Marketing (SEM).

Introduction

The development of digital technology has greatly changed the way companies interact with clients and gain a competitive advantage. In the current interconnected corporate world, digital marketing becomes an essential part of integrated marketing communication, which helps organisations interact with clients through different internet channels. Such digital marketing techniques as SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing contribute to better customer interactions, communication of information, and improvement of brand equity (Lai et al., 2025). The mobile phone sector in China is among the most active and competitive businesses globally. Considering the pervasive use of smartphones and enhanced Internet access, mobile phone manufacturers have started the advancement of their digital marketing strategies to impact their market standing and customer buying behaviour. Some companies use digital marketing techniques to improve client interactions, build their brands, and maintain long-term relations with clients. Thus, it has become very important to examine the effect of digital marketing techniques on organisational performance (Qiao et al., 2025).

An IMC perspective suggests that digital marketing channels aid organisations to ensure consistency in brand messages and develop a cohesive customer experience through different contact points. The integration of SEM, social media marketing and content marketing could lead to increased brand awareness, creation of brand loyalty through constant interaction with the customers and, ultimately, profitability through influencing consumer behaviour. Although digital marketing has become increasingly important, empirical studies are needed to determine the effects of some digital marketing practices on organisational performance in terms of China's mobile phone industry (Aziz & Abdulqadir, 2023). This research will examine the impact of digital marketing strategies, including SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing, on organisational performance, specifically in terms of brand awareness, customer loyalty, and profitability. This research, from an IMC viewpoint, seeks to elucidate methods by which digital marketing might be used to maintain organisational success.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

There have been significant shifts in the field of marketing all over the globe as a result of the introduction of digital technology and the use of the internet. The traditional methods of marketing communications are progressively being replaced by digital marketing tactics. These approaches assist the organisation in engaging with the consumers in a more effective manner and in giving them a more personalised experience (Chang et al., 2023). Within the framework of competition, digital marketing has emerged as a fundamentally significant strategic instrument for the enhancement of performance and the acquisition of a competitive advantage. Among the many methods of digital marketing, SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing have garnered a lot of attention due to their capacity to influence the behaviour of consumers and to establish more robust ties between brands and their customers (Rehman et al., 2022).

The mobile phone sector in China serves as a relevant environment for evaluating the efficacy of digital marketing. China has one of the biggest smartphone marketplaces globally, characterised by intense rivalry among domestic and foreign firms. Companies consistently vie for dominance by launching innovative goods and making significant investments in digital communication technologies. As more Chinese consumers rely on digital platforms, social media sites, search engines, and digital content, there have been new opportunities for mobile phone providers to engage customers during the entire process of shopping (Liu, 2022). The theory of IMC stresses the importance of integration of various communication tools in order to ensure consistency in messages conveyed about the brands. In the digital age, SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing are indispensable aspects of IMC by an organisation. SEM enhances online visibility by making it possible for consumers to access information about products and brands through search engines. Social media marketing allows for two-way communication, builds engagement and communities, whereas content marketing provides valuable information to customers (Liang et al., 2025).

According to previous literature, the implementation of effective digital marketing strategies can contribute significantly to the effectiveness of organisations through improving brand awareness, fostering customer loyalty, and increasing profitability. Brand awareness helps develop a strong presence in the market, customer loyalty leads to repeated buying behaviours and long-term relationships, while profitability means the success of marketing initiatives in terms of profits (Zhou & Fang, 2024). However, in spite of growing usage of digital marketing tools in China's mobile phone industry, there is a lack of evidence about the combined effect of digital marketing strategies on the organisational performance from an IMC perspective (Zhou & Soonthonsmai, 2024). This research examined the correlation among SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing, as well as their impacts on brand awareness, customer loyalty, and profitability within China's mobile phone sector. The study results are anticipated to contribute significantly to marketing theory and management practices within the realm of digital marketing.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

This study aims to investigate the relationship between digital marketing tools and company performance in China's mobile phone sector under the framework of IMC. As digital media increasingly impacts consumer behaviour and marketing communication tactics, organisations are progressively using digital marketing solutions to bolster their competitive edge and facilitate growth. This research examines the impact of three essential digital marketing strategies, SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing, on organisational performance outcomes. The performance of organisations is measured by three important dimensions: brand awareness, customer loyalty, and profitability. The above-mentioned factors are recognised as key performance indicators in marketing effectiveness and organisational success. The research aims to determine the extent to which the combination of SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing enhances brand exposure, customer relationship management, and financial performance for mobile phone manufacturers in the Chinese market. This study aims to get real data on the marketing efficacy of various digital marketing tools used within an Integrated Marketing Communications plan. The objective of the study is to enhance the current understanding of marketing and provide actionable advice for managers and marketers in the mobile phone manufacturing sector.

Literature Review

The rise of digital marketing has become a significant factor for the planning of current organisations, which enables the exchange of communication between organisations and customers through different internet-based media. As per the IMC concept, organisations can increase the effectiveness of their marketing by making sure that their communication takes place across many media channels in order to have consistent communication. Within this context, SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing have become major aspects of digital marketing that have proven to improve business performance (Kerr et al., 2023). SEM is the practice of using paid advertisements and SEO practices to increase the visibility of the firm's name on search engine result pages. Previous studies have shown that SEM helps in building brand awareness through increased visibility on the internet and directs potential buyers to company sites. Improved search visibility enables companies to reach out to consumers looking for product information, thus improving conversion rate and sales effectiveness. Studies show that effective SEM strategies increase profitability through attracting quality visitors and reducing customer acquisition costs (Duralia, 2024).

Social media marketing includes the use of digital platforms such as social networking sites to reach out to respondents, market products, and create brand communities. The present literature highlights the power of social media as an effective tool in building client relationships and increasing brand presence. Firms can reach out to their clients, get their feedback and develop emotional relationships through interactive communication (Ahmad Al Serhan & Zhang, 2025). Research has shown that interactive communication through social media improves consumer satisfaction and loyalty, thereby ensuring good performance of firms and profitability. Content marketing emphasises making and distributing good and appropriate content so as to attract and retain clientele. Researchers have argued that appropriate and appealing content helps companies build credibility and trust and influence customer decisions. Good content can also improve brand awareness and create consumer engagement and help in building relationship programs. It has been observed from the research findings that companies involved in content marketing tend to have higher brand loyalty and better performance due to improved retention and buying intentions of their customers (Ali et al., 2023).

The IMC emphasises the integration of SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing for improving the efficiency of communication. Rather than acting independently, these digital marketing techniques work together to deliver a consistent experience to clients through multiple contact points. Previous literature reveals that the use of integrated digital marketing methods increases the visibility of the brand, increases customer loyalty, and improves profits more effectively

than individual marketing initiatives. However, there is no previous literature available regarding the relationship of these techniques in China's mobile phone industry; hence, further research is needed (Agarwal, 2025).

RESEARCH QUESTION

- What is the role of digital marketing practices (SEM, social media, and Content Marketing) on organisational performance (Brand awareness, loyalty, and profitability)?

Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach to investigate the link between digital marketing practices (SEM, social media, and content marketing) in organisational performance (Brand awareness, loyalty, and profitability) in China's mobile phone industry. Data were gathered via a structured questionnaire using the purposive sampling technique. The number of respondents for this study was 778 in total, and they all belonged to mobile phone firms. Demographic information was acquired using the questionnaire, coupled with Likert scale items evaluating the core constructs of the study.

6.2 Sampling

Participants were selected for the study using purposive sampling. The sample size of 778 was calculated using Krejcie and Morgan's formula through the RaoSoft calculator. There were 896 questionnaires distributed, and 823 questionnaires were received back. Out of which 45 questionnaires were discarded because of incomplete answers. Finally, 778 questionnaires were used for this research, which consisted of 405 females and 373 males. In the research process, purposive sampling was adopted while identifying respondents from marketing managers, digital marketing executives, digital marketing strategists and social media managers.

6.3 Data and Measurement

A survey technique was employed by the researchers in order to collect primary data from the employees of the Chinese phone industry, it was done using survey questionnaires, which were previously developed for the research respondents. Section one of the survey questionnaire contained the demographic details of the participants, while section two comprised the 5-point Likert scale on the various components of both online and offline networks. The secondary research data was composed mainly from the digital network.

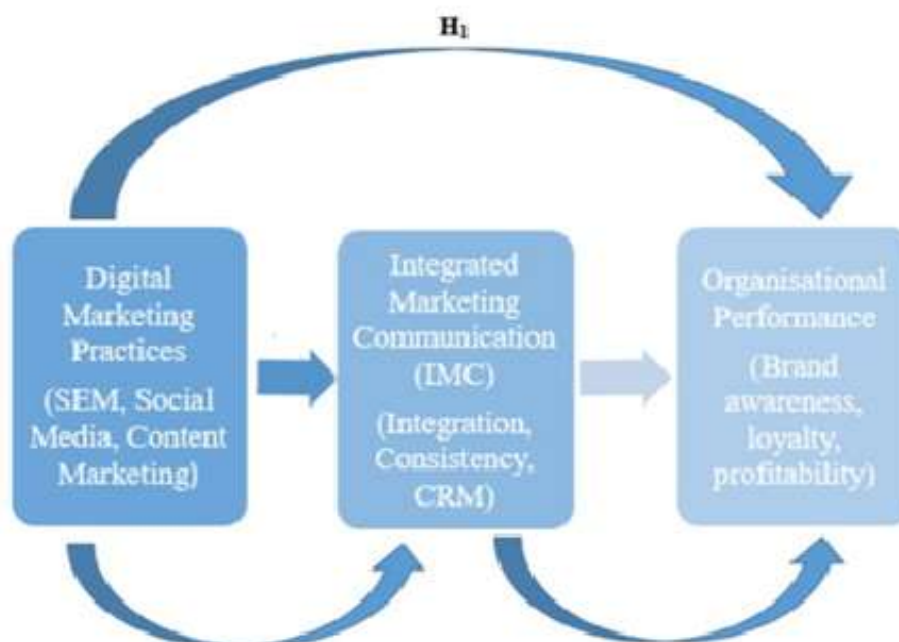
6.4 Statistical Software

The researchers used SPSS version 25 along with Microsoft Excel to analyse the quantitative data.

6.2 Statistical Tools

The researchers employed a descriptive statistical research methodology to have a more profound understanding of the key components of the quantitative data obtained. The study employed ANOVA technique to examine the relationship among the variables. Factor analysis was used by the researcher to determine validity.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Result

• Factor Analysis

The factor analysis (FA) is a statistical procedure applied to find underlying patterns and relationships within data. The KMO test measures the suitability of data for FA. The result obtained from the KMO test varies from 0 to 1, to be interpreted by the researcher. The sample size is considered adequate if the result is between 0.8 and 1. The standards set up by Kaiser for adequacy are:

"Poor 0.50 to 0.59, Unacceptable 0.60 to 0.69."

"Acceptable point scores are 0.80 to 0.89. The score in the range of 0.90 to 1.00 is considered marvellous."

"Testing for KMO and Bartlett's Sampling Adequacy Measured by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin: 0.949"

The findings of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity are as follows:

Approx. Chi-Square = 7315.249

df = 190; sig = .000

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test^a		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.949
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	7315.249
	df	190
	Sig.	.000
a. Based on correlations		

Regarding this matter, the researchers used Bartlett's test of sphericity to determine the statistical significance of the relationship. The KMO index value of 0.949 is an indicator that the survey questions distributed are valid. Statistical significance of the findings was determined using the very small p-value of approximately 0.00.

• Independent Variable: Digital Marketing Practices (SEM, Social Media, Content Marketing)

Digital marketing techniques denote the strategic utilisation of the internet, digital technology, and online communication channels to promote industries, goods, and services. These techniques include several marketing tactics, including SEO, SEM, social media marketing, email marketing, pay-per-click advertising, content marketing, influencer marketing, campaign marketing, e-commerce marketing, display advertising, and data-driven marketing. Industries use these digital platforms to communicate with existing users, attract new respondents, strengthen brand visibility, and achieve specific marketing objectives (Hidayati et al., 2024). Digital marketing is not limited only to internet-based platforms. It also includes non-Internet digital communication tools such as mobile phones, SMS, multimedia messaging, call-back services, and on-hold mobile ringtones. These channels help industries maintain direct and continuous engagement with their target audience. SEM, for example, improves brand exposure on search engines through paid advertisements and optimisation techniques, helping organisations attract relevant visitors (Na et al., 2023). As technology advances, digital marketing strategies have become essential for companies striving to maintain competitiveness in the digital landscape. Websites, search engines, social media, email, online brochures, digital adverts, and other digital branding assets enable organisations to engage people in their predominant online environments. Overall, digital marketing practices provide a flexible and effective approach for building relationships, promoting goods and services, enhancing customer engagement, and supporting broader organisational marketing goals through the strategic use of digital tools and communication technologies (Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2023).

• Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance (Brand awareness, loyalty, profitability)

There are various parameters used in measuring the performance of an organisation, such as the attainment of strategic goals, the delivery of value to customers, and being able to make one's organisation stand out from others. The current study focuses on the performance of the organisation based on three critical aspects, which include brand awareness, customer loyalty, and profitability. These are measures of how successful marketing contributes to organisational growth and helps customers meet their purchasing goals (Nalbant & Aydin, 2025). Brand awareness can be defined as the ability of customers to recognise and remember a certain brand in comparison with other competing brands. High brand awareness means that the organisation has successfully used its marketing tactics to generate favourable perceptions about its brand. In case the customer has come across the organisation on various occasions in relation to digital marketing efforts, they will think about the organisation's products while making purchases. In this way, the organisation can enhance its market reach, attract more customers, and enhance the performance of its sales process. Customer loyalty can be seen as the ability of an organisation to keep its customers loyal. Loyal customers tend to show some kind of trust and affection towards a particular brand due to continuous positive interactions. This will make the relationship between the customer and the organisation stronger. Moreover, profitability can be seen as another indicator of the performance of the organisation, which measures the financial success of the organisation as a result of successful marketing. Overall, brand

awareness, customer loyalty, and profitability serve as key indicators of organisational success (Sungnoi & Soonthonsmai, 2024).

- **Relationship between digital marketing practices and organisational performance**

Due to the high level of competition and fast-paced nature of China's mobile phone industry, digital marketing techniques have played a major part in enhancing organisational effectiveness. Due to the industry being driven by technology and innovation geared towards customers, techniques such as SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing allow firms to enhance brand awareness, customer loyalty, and profit. SEM enhances the presence of companies online by ensuring that their goods and services show up at the topmost of search engines' search results. This enhances brand awareness and draws potential customers, increasing chances of making conversions and earning profits. Social media marketing plays a huge part in allowing interaction between businesses and customers (Safitri & Komaryatin, 2025). It is through effective communication, personalised engagement, and immediate feedback that companies can develop trust, emotional attachment, and customer loyalty. This also makes the brand more visible and can help in expanding the reach of the brand through viral marketing. The other way in which an organisation will be able to benefit from its digital marketing efforts is through content marketing that allows it to provide relevant information to the customers. Good quality content makes sure that customers make the right decision and that the company is viewed as knowledgeable (Nuseir et al., 2024).

Based on the above discussion, the researcher was able to form the following hypotheses that examine how digital marketing approaches (SEM, social media, and content marketing) influence organisational performance (awareness, loyalty, and profitability).

“**H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between digital marketing practices and organisational performance.**”

“**H₁: There is a significant relationship between digital marketing practices and organisational performance.**”

Table 3: H₁ ANOVA Test

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	69588.62	287	242.469	241.263	.000
Within Groups	492.77	490	1.005		
Total	70081.39	777			

In this study, the result is significant. The value of F is 241.263, which reaches significance with a p-value of .000 (which is less than the .05 alpha level). This means the “**H₁: There is a significant relationship between digital marketing practices and organisational performance**” is accepted, and the null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion

As the ANOVA analysis reveals, there is a strong relationship between digital marketing practices (SEM, social media, and content marketing) in organisational performance (Brand awareness, loyalty, and profitability) ($F=241.263$; $p = .000$). In this regard, it is possible to say that digital marketing practices (SEM, social media, and content marketing) have a substantial impact on organisational performance (Brand awareness, loyalty, and profitability). As for performance, firms that implement complex digital marketing techniques usually perform better. It is done by making customers interact with each other and exposing them to the market more often. The results of this research are consistent with and strongly supported by previous research, which proved that digital marketing significantly improved the performance of organisations through innovation and strategy alignment (Türkeş, 2024). Not only does internet marketing expand the market reach, but it also increases the performance of companies due to increasing customer interactions and conversions (Ravi & Rajasekaran, 2023). Consequently, the findings align with contemporary studies demonstrating the significance of digital marketing methods, including SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing. Thus, it is reasonable to assert that the study's practical consequences enable managers to allocate funds towards SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing to enhance revenue and improve market placement.

Conclusion

This study aimed to determine the influence of digital marketing strategies, including SEM, social media marketing, and content marketing, on the performance of organisations within the mobile phone sector in China. The study focused on organisational success across three primary dimensions: brand awareness, customer loyalty, and profitability. Due to the highly competitive, technology-driven, and consumer-focused character of the mobile phone sector in China, it is essential to use digital marketing methods. The study findings clearly indicate a significant correlation between digital marketing techniques and organisational effectiveness. The findings are derived from the ANOVA test, which yielded significant results with $F = 241.263$ and $p = .000$, indicating a value below the .05 significance threshold. The null hypothesis was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. Digital marketing methods substantially influence organisational performance. The SEM assists firms in augmenting their online visibility to guarantee that their goods and services are prominently shown in search engine results. This will enhance brand awareness and attract prospective clients actively

seeking mobile phones or related services. Social media marketing is an efficacious technique that enables organisations to engage with consumers, offering timely responses, product information, and fostering trust. It assists companies in improving their performance by cultivating consumer loyalty and engagement. Content marketing is a technique that improves organisational performance by providing relevant and helpful information to clients. The study reveals that digital marketing techniques are a crucial strategic instrument for enhancing organisational performance in China's mobile phone business. Search Engine Marketing, social media marketing, and content marketing may assist firms in engaging clients at various phases of the purchasing process. Mobile phone firms should use digital marketing strategies to enhance brand awareness, cultivate consumer loyalty, and increase profitability.

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