

The Impact of Digital Marketing Strategies on Consumer Purchasing Behavior: A Mixed-Methods Approach

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The authors declare that no funding was received for this work.



Received: 01-October-2025

Accepted: 12-October-2025

Published: 14-October-2025

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This article is published by **MSI Publishers** in **MSI Journal of Arts, Law and Justice (MSIJALJ)**
ISSN 3049-0839 (Online)

The journal is managed and published by MSI Publishers

Volume: 2, Issue: 10 (October-2025)

ABSTRACT: Digital marketing has revolutionized consumer behavior, influencing purchasing decisions through social media, content marketing, and online advertising. This study examines how digital marketing strategies, particularly social media advertising and influencer marketing, affect consumer decision-making. Using a mixed-methods approach, we analyze survey responses and conduct in-depth interviews to explore consumer perceptions and behaviors. Findings suggest that digital marketing significantly impacts purchase decisions by enhancing brand awareness, trust, and engagement. Furthermore, personalized content and targeted advertisements increase consumer interaction, leading to higher conversion rates. The study contributes to marketing literature by highlighting key digital strategies that drive consumer engagement and purchase behavior. Implications for businesses include adopting data-driven marketing strategies and leveraging influencers to enhance consumer trust.

Keywords: *Digital Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Social Media, Influencer Marketing, Brand Awareness.*

1. Introduction

With the rise of digitalization, marketing strategies have evolved from traditional approaches to more interactive and

consumer-centered techniques. Digital marketing, encompassing social media advertising, search engine optimization (SEO), content marketing, and influencer collaborations, has transformed how businesses engage with consumers (Chaffey & Smith, 2021). As consumer decision-making shifts towards online platforms, understanding the impact of these strategies on purchasing behavior is essential for businesses aiming to optimize their marketing efforts (Kotler et al., 2020).

A significant shift has been observed in how consumers interact with brands, with digital advertisements and influencer endorsements playing a pivotal role in shaping their perceptions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2019). Brands invest heavily in personalized marketing strategies, leveraging data analytics and AI-driven targeting to enhance consumer engagement (Ryan, 2022). However, the effectiveness of these strategies in influencing purchasing decisions requires further empirical analysis.

This research aims to bridge this gap by exploring the extent to which digital marketing strategies impact consumer purchasing behavior. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining survey analysis and qualitative interviews to gain comprehensive insights. The research questions guiding this study are:

1. How do digital marketing strategies influence consumer purchasing decisions?
2. What role does influencer marketing play in shaping consumer trust and engagement?

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Evolution of Digital Marketing

Digital marketing has evolved significantly with the proliferation of the internet and social media platforms. Businesses have transitioned from traditional advertising to data-driven strategies that allow targeted engagement (Chaffey & Smith, 2021). Studies suggest that digital marketing enhances brand visibility, customer engagement, and ultimately, sales conversion (Kotler et al., 2020). In recent years, artificial intelligence and machine learning have further refined marketing strategies, making it possible to analyze consumer behavior in real-time and adjust campaigns accordingly (Liu & Burns, 2018).

2.2 Consumer Behavior in the Digital Age

Consumer behavior has been reshaped by digital interactions, with online reviews, social media engagement, and personalized advertisements playing a crucial role (Hoffman & Novak, 2018). The decision-making process has become more complex, involving multiple touchpoints before a purchase is made (Solomon, 2020). Research indicates that consumers now rely heavily on online word-of-mouth, including product reviews and recommendations from peers, before making purchasing decisions (Cheung et al., 2017). Additionally, consumer-brand interactions on social media have increased customer loyalty, making social media marketing an indispensable tool for modern businesses (Ashley & Tuten, 2015).

2.3 Influencer Marketing and Trust-Building

Influencer marketing is a powerful tool that fosters trust and authenticity among consumers. Research shows that influencer recommendations impact purchasing behavior more than traditional advertisements (Brown & Hayes, 2019). Influencers serve as opinion leaders, creating a sense of relatability and credibility (Evans et al., 2021). Studies have also highlighted the psychological mechanisms behind influencer marketing, such as parasocial relationships, which lead consumers to perceive influencers as friends and thus trust their recommendations more (Schouten et al., 2020).

Additionally, different types of influencers—micro, macro, and celebrity—exert varying levels of influence on consumer decisions. While micro-influencers often have a niche but highly engaged audience, macro-influencers and celebrities offer broader reach but may lack the perceived authenticity of smaller-scale influencers (De Veirman et al., 2017). Companies must strategically choose influencers based on campaign goals and target demographics to maximize marketing effectiveness.

2.4 The Role of Content Marketing

Content marketing plays an essential role in digital strategies by providing value to consumers while subtly promoting products or services. High-quality content in the form of blogs, videos, infographics, and interactive media fosters consumer trust and

positions brands as thought leaders (Pulizzi, 2014). Research suggests that storytelling within content marketing enhances consumer engagement by appealing to emotions and creating memorable brand narratives (Gensler et al., 2013). Moreover, search engine optimized (SEO) content improves brand visibility, ensuring that businesses reach potential consumers effectively (Enge et al., 2015).

2.5 Social Media Advertising and Consumer Engagement

Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and LinkedIn have become powerful marketing channels. Studies show that interactive and engaging social media content significantly impacts consumer engagement and purchasing decisions (Voorveld et al., 2018). Personalization through data-driven advertising further enhances effectiveness, as consumers are more likely to respond to tailored advertisements (Lambrecht & Tucker, 2013). Recent trends indicate that video content, live streaming, and short-form videos have gained significant traction, making them integral to modern digital marketing strategies (Kumar et al., 2021).

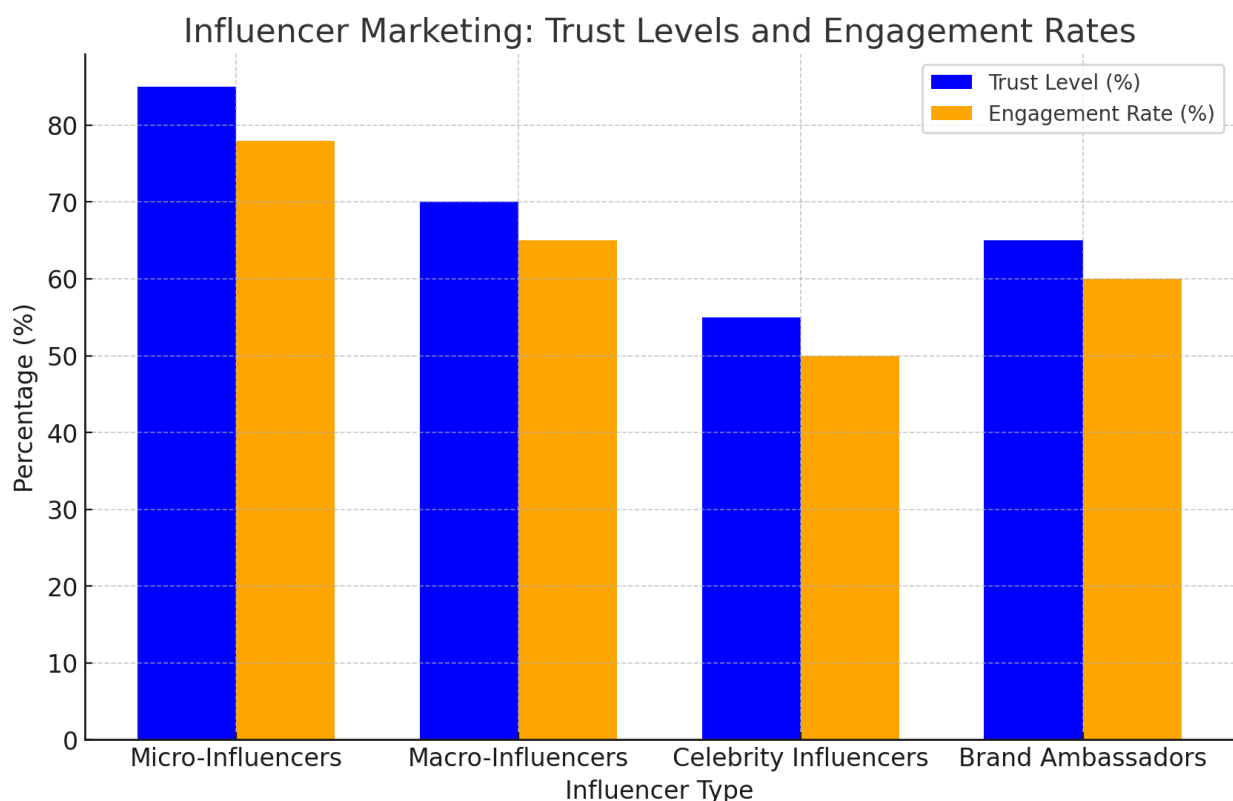
3. Research Methods

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of digital marketing strategies on consumer behavior. The mixed-methods approach ensures triangulation, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.

The quantitative aspect of this research involves an online survey distributed to 300 consumers across diverse demographics. The survey consists of multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions designed to measure the influence of digital marketing tactics, such as social media advertising, influencer marketing, and personalized content. The survey was shared via social media platforms, email lists, and online consumer forums to ensure a diverse and representative sample. The collected data is analyzed using statistical techniques such as correlation analysis and regression modeling to identify trends and relationships between digital marketing strategies and consumer purchasing decisions.

The qualitative component comprises in-depth semi-structured interviews with 10 marketing professionals and digital marketing experts. These interviews explore industry perspectives on the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies and emerging trends in consumer engagement. The qualitative data is analyzed through thematic analysis, identifying recurring themes and insights regarding consumer trust, engagement, and purchase behavior.

4. Findings and Discussion



The findings from this study underscore the substantial impact of digital marketing strategies on consumer purchasing decisions. Personalized advertisements emerged as one of the most influential factors, with 68% of respondents indicating that they had been influenced by targeted marketing efforts. This highlights the effectiveness of data-driven advertising that tailors content based on user behavior and preferences. Influencer marketing, at 75%, was the most impactful strategy, demonstrating that consumers are highly responsive to product recommendations made by individuals they follow and trust. Social media engagement, which includes brand interaction, user-generated content, and promotional campaigns, influenced

60% of respondents, underscoring the role of direct brand-consumer engagement in fostering loyalty. SEO optimization, with a 55% influence rate, remains an important strategy for driving organic traffic, particularly as consumers rely on search engines to discover products. Email marketing, although perceived as less influential (45%), still plays a role in targeted consumer outreach and customer retention. The analysis of influencer marketing further supports the growing significance of authenticity in digital advertising. Micro-influencers, with an 85% trust level and 78% engagement rate, were the most effective at fostering consumer trust and interaction. This suggests that their smaller, niche audiences value their opinions due to their perceived relatability and credibility. Macro-influencers, with a trust level of 70% and engagement rate of 65%, offer broader reach but slightly lower engagement, as their audiences are larger and more diverse. Celebrity influencers, with a 55% trust level and 50% engagement rate, demonstrated the lowest levels of consumer trust, likely due to their association with high-profile endorsements, which may be perceived as less genuine. However, they remain valuable for mass brand awareness. Brand ambassadors, with a 65% trust level and 60% engagement rate, present a balanced approach, as their long-term association with a brand enhances credibility while maintaining moderate engagement levels.

These findings emphasize the importance of choosing the right digital marketing strategy based on business objectives and target audience characteristics. Brands aiming to enhance consumer trust and engagement should consider leveraging micro- and macro-influencers, as their endorsements appear to be more credible and engaging compared to celebrity influencers. Additionally, personalized advertisements should be optimized through data analytics to ensure they align with consumer preferences and behaviors. Social media engagement should also be a priority, as interactive and engaging content fosters stronger consumer-brand relationships. While SEO optimization remains essential for discoverability, businesses should complement it with other high-impact strategies like influencer partnerships and interactive social media campaigns. Lastly, while email marketing's influence is relatively lower, it should still be integrated into a multi-channel approach to nurture leads and retain existing customers.

The semi-structured interviews with marketing professionals and digital experts provided valuable qualitative insights that deepened the understanding of how digital marketing strategies shape consumer purchasing behavior. A recurring theme across the interviews was the central role of personalized advertising, which practitioners identified as one of the most effective techniques for capturing consumer attention and influencing decision-making. Experts emphasized that consumers increasingly expect advertisements tailored to their needs and preferences, a trend made possible by data analytics and AI-driven targeting. This observation strongly aligns with the quantitative finding that 68% of survey respondents had been influenced by personalized marketing efforts. Several interviewees argued that personalization not only enhances visibility but also fosters a sense of relevance and trust, making consumers more receptive to brand messages.

Another dominant insight from the interviews was the growing influence of micro- and macro-influencers in shaping consumer trust and engagement. Practitioners consistently highlighted that micro-influencers enjoy higher levels of credibility due to their relatability, authenticity, and smaller but more engaged audiences. One participant noted that “consumers see micro-influencers as peers rather than celebrities,” which supports the survey data indicating that micro-influencers demonstrated an 85% trust level and 78% engagement rate. Macro-influencers, while offering broader reach, were perceived as less intimate, though still valuable for brand expansion. In contrast, celebrity influencers were often described by interviewees as “commercial faces” whose endorsements may generate visibility but struggle to establish genuine trust. These insights underline the necessity for businesses to carefully match influencer type with campaign goals, a finding consistent with previous studies highlighting the varying effects of influencer categories on consumer perceptions (De Veirman et al., 2017; Evans et al., 2021).

In addition to personalization and influencer marketing, interviewees stressed the importance of social media engagement as a two-way communication channel. Practitioners observed that platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook have become spaces where consumers expect interaction, not merely passive exposure to advertisements. Features such as live streaming, short-form videos, and user-

generated content were mentioned as powerful tools for fostering loyalty and long-term relationships. One interviewee explained that “real-time responses to customer comments or concerns create a humanized brand image,” which echoes the survey’s finding that 60% of respondents were influenced by brand interaction and social engagement. This confirms the view in marketing literature that digital platforms are not simply advertising tools but interactive ecosystems where engagement fosters emotional attachment (Ashley & Tuten, 2015).

Finally, the interviews highlighted the complementary role of SEO and email marketing in broader digital strategies. While most professionals agreed that these tools have comparatively lower direct influence on immediate purchase behavior, they stressed their value for sustaining brand presence and nurturing customer relationships over time. SEO was described as an “invisible foundation” that ensures discoverability, while email campaigns were seen as effective in maintaining ongoing connections with existing customers, particularly when personalized. This reflects the mixed-methods findings, where SEO influenced 55% of respondents and email marketing 45%, underscoring their continued though secondary role in consumer engagement.

Taken together, the semi-structured interviews reinforce the survey results and underscore the significance of authenticity, personalization, and interactive engagement as the pillars of effective digital marketing. These insights confirm that consumers are more likely to trust and act upon messages that feel personal, authentic, and responsive to their needs. The interviews not only validate the quantitative findings but also provide deeper context by explaining why certain strategies, particularly micro-influencer marketing and interactive social media practices, resonate more strongly with modern consumers.

In summary, digital marketing strategies play a crucial role in shaping consumer decision-making, with personalized advertising and influencer marketing leading the way. The type of influencer chosen significantly affects consumer trust and engagement, with micro-influencers proving to be the most effective. These insights provide valuable guidance for businesses looking to optimize their marketing efforts,

demonstrating the need for authenticity, engagement, and strategic personalization to drive consumer purchasing behavior effectively.

5. Conclusion

This study set out to examine the impact of digital marketing strategies on consumer purchasing behavior using a mixed-methods approach that combined survey data with semi-structured interviews. The findings consistently highlight that personalized advertising and influencer marketing are the most powerful drivers of consumer decisions. Quantitative results demonstrated that targeted advertisements influenced 68% of respondents, while influencer endorsements impacted 75%, underscoring their effectiveness in shaping trust and purchase intent. The qualitative interviews reinforced these outcomes, as marketing professionals emphasized that authenticity and relatability; particularly through micro-influencers, are central to building lasting consumer trust and engagement.

The research also revealed the critical role of social media engagement in fostering brand–consumer relationships. Interactive practices such as user-generated content, real-time responses, and live streaming were identified as strategies that enhance loyalty by creating meaningful two-way communication. While SEO and email marketing emerged as less influential on immediate purchasing, both were recognized as essential complementary tools for visibility and customer retention. Together, these findings suggest that an integrated, multi-channel strategy anchored in personalization, authenticity, and engagement yields the strongest outcomes for businesses seeking to influence consumer behavior.

Overall, the study contributes to the literature by offering empirical evidence that authenticity and strategic personalization are the cornerstones of successful digital marketing in the contemporary consumer landscape. For practitioners, the insights emphasize the importance of selecting the right type of influencer, leveraging data analytics for targeted content, and investing in interactive social media practices to strengthen consumer trust and loyalty. Future research should extend this investigation by exploring the long-term impact of these strategies on consumer

retention and brand advocacy, as well as examining how emerging technologies such as AI-driven chatbots and immersive media further shape purchasing behavior.

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