



ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF E-MARKETING STRATEGIES IN SMALL
AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMES)

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Abstract

SMEs account for 95% of all business entities around the globe, and the total number of companies appears to increase every year. Thus, thanks to such characteristics as real-time customer engagement and the ability to share digital content, social media has recently become an effective marketing platform. These are activities that cannot be sought by SMEs due to budget limitations and, therefore, are not experimental uses of social media as a marketing tool. E-marketing, the most modern form of transaction, has made a substantial contribution to the overall achievement of the objectives of the modern institution through the use of electronic media. This involves web-based transactions and acquiring, increasing the perception of the brand, and promoting goods and services on a global level. The aim of this study is, therefore, to find out the importance, strategies, tools and effectiveness of e-marketing for SMEs. Skills of e-marketing like search engine optimisation (SEO), content marketing, social media marketing, email marketing, and paid advertisement have turned into important tools in reaching out to the large public at a cheaper cost. Furthermore, applications in e-marketing, such as customer relationship management, commonly known as (CRM) and mobile applications, facilitate SMEs to be closer to their customers, market their products and improve the channels of receiving feedback from their customers. This paper compares the efficiency and success of e-marketing tactics by embracing other techniques like KPIs, sales growth analysis, the level of engagement of customers, and cost-benefit analysis to aid SMEs in making a suitable evaluation of the proper e-marketing strategies that could promote their businesses.

Keywords: E-marketing, SMEs, Social Media Marketing, SEO, Digital Marketing, and Marketing Strategies.



I. INTRODUCTION

Electronic marketing, sometimes known as Internet marketing, is the practice of promoting a product or service using the Internet [1]. It involves the use of web and Internet sites to perform marketing activities and strategies. The CRM activities not conducted on the online medium are also included in the range of EMC. This is the marketing activities conducted by electronic mail, satellite communication channels, cell phones, WLANs, wireless sensor networks, and terrestrial microwave networks [2]. It connects companies with their clients by utilising a variety of technologies [3]. Several SMEs have ramped up their usage of electronic devices, particularly those used for online and social media communication, in their haste to develop reaction plans to lessen the pandemic's impact and ensure the future of their company operations [4].

As a result, SMEs across a range of industries are increasingly selling their wares using various online mediums such as pop-up, banner, and direct-response advertisements; email marketing, search engine optimisation, mobile marketing, and online communities like as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp; and electronic correspondence, namely marketing, retention, and acquisition emails.



Figure 1: Overview of Digital Marketing for SMEs

The overview of SMEs for digital marketing is shown in Figure 1. SMEs in the contemporary digital era confront the particular difficulty of building a strong online presence in order to compete with larger organisations. These companies can only afford scarcity, and they have to employ efficient and effective forms of digital marketing to attract the intended consumers[5].

Firms with limited employees and a low income are referred to as SMEs and may be categorised openly or by law and based on available standards.[6]. It remains evident that they have a significant role in the financial evolution and employment as well as innovations, primarily for developing economies. It has been noted that several factors can hinder SMEs: restricted access to funding, deficient amount of trained personnel and problems with the expansion of businesses. SMEs are mainly backed by governments and organisations by policies such as credit facilities, tax breaks and training for their growth and longevity. Over the last decade, for instance, technological advances within the digital environment have given hope to SMEs to improve productivity, efficiency and market coverage. New technologies such as AI, big data,



and cloud servicing have ensured that SMEs can compete in yet another additional level of parity with large enterprises. However, the adoption of such technologies demands some hurdles, such as cost, poor technological skills and organisational resistance[7].

The rationale of this study, therefore, is geared at ascertaining the rising importance of e-marketing for SMEs as a key means of increasing their market exposure, accessibility and competitiveness in the age of web-based technologies and information systems. It is important to establish which e-marketing techniques and resources can enhance SMEs' sales, customers' interest, and general results by trying to consider drawbacks of digital manners of advertising.

Here are the findings of the study on e-marketing for SMEs:

- According to the report, e-marketing is a vital component of contemporary company strategies as it increases the exposure of SMEs and boosts their bottom line.
- The report gives SMEs practical insights to enhance their online presence and client reach by describing a variety of e-marketing tactics, including Paid advertising, digital marketing strategies, content marketing, SEO, social media, and email.
- The study introduces essential e-marketing tools such as CRM, mobile applications, and digital advertising, empowering SMEs to build customer relationships, provide effective service, and enhance their marketing capabilities.
- It provides a framework for assessing e-marketing strategies' effectiveness using metrics like KPIs, sales growth, and customer engagement, enabling SMEs to refine and optimise their marketing efforts.
- The study sheds light on the challenges associated with e-marketing, such as privacy concerns, service delays, and product quality issues, providing SMEs with areas to address to improve their marketing outcomes.

1.1 Organization of the paper

The structure of this study is as follows: Sections II and III provide the E-Marketing Strategies and Importance in SMEs. Section IV discussed some Tools for SMEs, then Section V provided the Assess the Effectiveness Of E-Marketing Strategies in SMEs, at last Section VI and VII provided the literature review of this work with conclusion and future work.

II. E-MARKETING AND ITS IMPORTANCE

E-marketing is one of the modern concepts that has imposed itself on the transaction market, due to the latter's role in developing and achieving the goals of modern institutions.

"E" is an acronym for electronics and is typically used to refer to e-marketing, e-commerce, e-learning, e-books, e-banking, e-emails, e-selling, e-payments, and so on. The term "e-marketing" describes the electronic purchase and sale of products and services via the Internet [8][9]. Entrepreneurs utilize e-marketing, an online business, to spread the word about their products and services around the world. This electronic approach allows for the availability and accessibility of goods and services for customers.[10]



Digital marketing operations involve the use of many resources, including skills, processes, and technology,[11] to maximize the potential of digital channels in terms of engagement, targeting, customization, and optimization [12]. The consumer products firm serves as an illustration of how the marketing department's efforts greatly contribute to the growth of the bottom line. That ability is directly responsible for the rapidity, nimbleness, iterative development, experimentation, and reactivity that prosperous companies need to react to and impact the



Figure 2: Importance of e-marketing in SMEs

Figure 2 is a diagram illustrating the various components of a comprehensive e-marketing strategy. This is the central part of the diagram reflecting the usage of digital media to connect with customers.

- **Direct Marketing:** This means sending messages to individuals directly, for instance, sending mail or even email marketing.
- **Loyalty Programs:** Their purposes are to bring regular clientele and form loyal consumer's base.
- **Tradeshow Promotion:** This is the process of marketing at events in a bid to meet potential clients and create awareness of its brands.
- **Events:** This includes organizations or individuals arranging events or participating in them, with a specific intention of interacting with clients in marketing products and services.
- **Advertising:** This includes web advertising, such as search engine and social media advertising, and traditional web advertising, such as newspaper, radio, and television advertising.
- **Public Relations:** This includes ensuring that a business has the right brand reputation and building goodwill over the general public through public relations, offering community service and other activities.



2.1 The Role of E-Marketing in Modern Businesses

E-services and internet marketing are considered as the newest Investigator subjects, they are, therefore of strategic importance to enterprises that have maintained their operations in the e-market. [14][15] With the introduction of numerous digital applications spanning all economic sectors, technological advancement in the modern period has drastically altered the global economic landscape [16]. Using e-marketing as a commercial platform to promote their goods and services has given many companies a significant competitive edge[17]. Compared to conventional marketing, e-marketing is said to be a simpler way for firms to trade across national and regional borders and guarantees a lower cost of company promotion [19]. Additionally, it encourages increased adaptability, market connectedness, a wider range of products, seamless transactions, and convenience over time. Nevertheless, it has been noted that it poses several significant problems, including a lack of privacy and security, delays in service delivery, and, occasionally, the proliferation of subpar products.

III. E-MARKETING STRATEGIES IN SMES

One method of employing using technology, especially the internet, to ship products or provide services straight to buyers or merchants is called e-marketing. Additionally, a merchant can use the internet to offer their goods online. Internet users will promote their products on sites, Facebook, Instagram, and blogs among other forms of media. At this time, the best way to sell goods and services is through online marketing [20]. Marketing through the Internet has the ability to increase product sales, launch new products, and provide the most effective marketing solution. SMEs can use a variety of e-marketing tactics[21]. One example is SEO, which includes paid advertisements, content



Figure 3: E-Marketing Strategies in SMEs

Figure 3 shows the E-Marketing Strategies in SMEs that are discussed below;

3.1 Social Media Marketing

The rapid rise of social media and its billions of users has made it one of the most important technologies of our day. Like, as of March 31, 2019, Facebook said that they have an average of



1.56 billion daily users and 2.38 billion total users every month. Nearly 42.3 percent of the world's population, or 3.29 billion individuals, will be active on social media in the year 2021. In light of the massive potential audience that uses social media across several platforms for hours every day, it is not surprising that marketers have embraced social media as a marketing channel [22].

3.2 Email Marketing

One subset of Internet marketing is email marketing, which also includes online marketing through blogs, social media, websites, and other platforms. Essentially, it's the same as direct mail, except instead of using the postal service, communications are sent electronically through emails. Every year, email marketing has the potential to boost a company's revenue in extraordinary ways. For instance, a 2018 study by E-consultancy found that, excluding offline sales influenced by emails, the UK generates around £29 million in retail sales annually. It also found that 73% of marketers rank email marketing as the best digital channel for investment.[23].

3.3 Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Search engines have become an important channel for increasing SMEs' global reach as well as competing with larger companies. Therefore, SMEs are enhancing their business visibility through search engine optimization (SEO). With effective SEO techniques, small companies can appear ahead of large, well-known companies on search results. However, in addition increasing the ranking on a search engine results page (SERP), there may be other benefits that SMEs may enjoy while engaging in an SEO campaign.

The term SEO refers to the steps taken to increase a website's visibility in natural search results through the use of various ranking algorithms. For SMEs aiming to grow globally and compete with bigger companies, search engines are more important. Consequently, SEO is assisting SMEs in raising their company's profile. By implementing effective SEO methods, small businesses have the potential to surpass larger, more famous ones in search engine rankings. There are a number of potential benefits to implementing an SEO strategy for SMEs beyond just raising their ranking on SERPs[24].

3.4 Content Marketing

The approach of content marketing involves marketers planning, producing, and disseminating information that can draw in certain audiences and encourage them to become consumers. Not many SMEs employ digital marketing to operate their businesses, despite the fact that a content marketing strategy is crucial. The growing rate of interest in purchasing items supplied by SMEs will be further increased by a marketing strategy that incorporates a pattern of strategic content [25].

3.5 Paid Advertising (PPC)

To stay competitive and reach a worldwide audience, the majority of businesses have reorganized their advertising budget and strategy. Globally, advertising has become a top



priority for small, medium, and big businesses. It has always been challenging to quantify advertising conversions and the effect of advertising on sales. It was nearly hard to assess the impact of traditional kinds of advertising, such as print, television, or radio, without conducting intricate surveys, to which customers are typically not particularly receptive [26].

IV. E-MARKETING TOOLS FOR SMES

There are several creative marketing strategies that managers may take into account for their businesses. Below are some of the most often used and practical tools for SMEs to sell their industrial products.

4.1 WWW as a Promotional Tool

Indian business companies have seen over the past 20 years the impact that online activities may have on their business. These days, anyone can build a website and promote their wares on a worldwide scale for a reasonable price. Having a website that is regularly updated was recommended by nearly all respondents. Because a comprehensive and easy-to-navigate website is essential [27].

4.2 Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

All companies are aware of the importance of customer relationship management. These days, it's common knowledge among entrepreneurs that the top 20% of customers generate 80% of a company's income. To sum up, a little CRM investment is worthwhile, and when we polled people about their opinions, they were quite complimentary of the concept. Unlike lower-level personnel, such as sales executives, senior managers may have access to a range of personality development programs. It is recommended that SMEs provide their sales team with specialist training in order to foster enthusiasm, commitment, and originality in their job[28].

4.3 Digital Advertising

The proliferation of Internet advertising mediums is likely to cause a meteoric rise in the industry. In order to enable prospective industrial purchasers to comprehend how SMEs operate without visiting factories, the firms' activities might be videotaped and posted online[29].

4.4 Mobile applications as a Service tool

In order to ensure that customers don't miss any payments, invoices, or other important business-related information, mobile applications can be used as a service tool [30].

4.5 Reach best-qualified prospects

An excellent substitute for B2B marketers who target particular industries or individuals is to obtain a list of potential customers from the organization's individuals who divulge details such as their email and mailing addresses. In order to get their attention, you should send them an intriguing sales letter or email many times. According to the replies, the bulk of their sales



executives no longer prospect and are solely engaged in providing customer service to their current clientele.

4.6 Improving feedback mechanism

Information on your customers is essential to the marketing function. SMEs should be well aware of our end consumers, including who they are, why they buy our products, when they buy them annually, and how we may encourage them to make further purchases. They need to step up their efforts to interact with customers directly through salespeople, social media and the Internet (website).

4.7 Following up on leads and converting it into sales

Maintaining track of and following up with leads or forecasts is a difficult endeavor. Every lead or prospect should be asked how they learnt about the business by the person answering incoming calls. The person in charge needs to confirm the source of the leads. He must monitor the effects of print, television, and internet advertising. Additionally, he has to make sure that the lead is followed up with within 24 hours after the prospective customer's inquiry.

4.8 Generate new sparks (Ideas)

Small businesses must not rely just on their little selling team; instead, they should solicit input from every employee and even every client in order to enhance their offerings. This autumn, managers of businesses can make innovation a shared duty by holding brainstorming sessions, corporate retreats, or recognizing those who have the best ideas.

4.9 Cluster Approach

If they want to stay in the game, SMEs should employ a cluster approach. The members' mutual understanding is essential to this strategy. To make sure this strategy works, the cluster member must work on complimentary items rather than competitive ones. The SMEs' market capacities will be improved by the official cluster establishment process, which also offers the cluster members additional negotiating leverage[31].

V. ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF E-MARKETING STRATEGIES IN SMES

Evaluating how successfully e-marketing tactics support corporate objectives, including raising brand recognition, creating leads, boosting sales, and improving customer interaction, is part of determining how effective these tactics are in businesses (SMEs). These are the main techniques for evaluating SMEs' e-marketing initiatives' efficacy:



Table 1: Assess the Effectiveness of E-Marketing Strategies in SMEs

Assessment Method	Description	Key Metrics	Tools/Techniques	Interpretation
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) [32]	Define and measure specific marketing goals	Traffic, conversion rate, CTR, CAC, ROI, CLV	KPIs tracking via dashboards	Determine whether marketing goals are met
Sales and Revenue Growth [33]	Measure changes in sales and revenue attributed to e-marketing	Sales growth, revenue changes	Sales Analysis	Determine the impact on business growth
Customer Engagement Metrics [34]	Monitor audience interaction with the material.	Average session length, bounce rate, likes, shares, and comments on social media	Social media analytics, Google Analytics	Assess content effectiveness and customer interaction
Traffic Analysis [35]	Monitor website traffic sources and trends	Traffic by source (organic, social, direct)	Google Analytics, traffic analysis tools	Identify effective channels for driving traffic
Customer Feedback and Surveys [36]	Ask customers directly for their opinions.	Customer satisfaction scores, survey results	Surveys, interviews, NPS	Evaluate customer satisfaction and campaign relevance
Cost-Effectiveness Analysis [37]	Compare costs with marketing outcomes	Marketing costs vs. revenue	Cost-benefit analysis	Determine cost efficiency and ROI of campaigns
Return on Investment (ROI) Analysis [38]	Calculate financial returns from marketing campaigns	ROI percentage	ROI calculation	Assess overall profitability of e-marketing strategies
Social Media Analytics [39]	Track social media performance metrics	Follower growth, brand mentions, engagement rate	Social media platforms' analytics tools (e.g., Facebook Insights)	Assess brand visibility and audience interaction on social channels
Email Marketing Metrics [40]	Analyze the effectiveness of your email campaign.	Conversion rate, unsubscribe rate, open rate, and CTR	Platforms for email marketing (like MailChimp)	Measure audience engagement and interest
Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC) and Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) [41]	Compare cost of acquiring customers vs. value generated	CAC, CLV	Financial analysis	Determine customer acquisition efficiency and value over time
Online Reviews and Reputation Monitoring [42]	Monitor brand reputation and customer sentiment	Number and sentiment of online reviews	Reputation monitoring tools (e.g., Google Alerts)	Evaluate brand perception and its impact on consumer trust
Competitor Benchmarking [43]	Compare marketing performance against competitors	Industry-standard KPIs, engagement comparison	Competitive analysis tools (e.g., SEMrush)	Assess the relative effectiveness of marketing strategies in the market
Conversion Attribution Modeling [44]	Identify contribution of each marketing channel	Attribution metrics (first-touch, last-touch, etc.)	Google Analytics, attribution models	Determine which channels are most effective in customer conversions



VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section includes previous research that assessed the effectiveness of e-marketing tactics for SMEs.

In, Ayele et al. (2018), Pursuing an understanding of the difficulties faced by SMEs in the Nordic region when it comes to marketing management. Additionally, examining the variables that could affect SMEs' global competitiveness is the second goal. We created a questionnaire and conducted a survey for a chosen group of local SMEs in instruction to encounter the goals. The purpose of the surveys is to assess how well local SMEs' marketing tactics are working, which will help them create a more intelligent marketing management plan[45].

Hence, Liu and Song (2019) In light of current events, the purpose of this project is to find out how to leverage data from all the firms on the New Three Board between 2015 and 2018 to develop multiple linear regression equations for empirical studies that look at how private equity affects the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Private equity investment substantially boosts the growth rate of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), regardless of whether control variables are taken into account or not. Analysis of heterogeneity reveals that the effects vary depending on the industry[46].

In, (Lin, 2021) determined which marketing objectives are critical to the expansion of SMEs and how complementary social media might be leveraged to achieve these objectives. The relative importance of regional and international marketing objectives and complementary community media was verified using the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) study. Lastly, they employed a Taiwanese SME as a case study with respect to confirm given that the usage of the complementary social media mentioned overhead may achieve the advertising objectives mentioned above and perhaps improve the survival of SMEs in Taiwan throughout their development period[47].

In, Sunday, Eka, Nneoyi Nnana, et al., (2021) evaluated small and medium-sized businesses' performance and e-marketing tactics. The study's conclusions showed that email marketing, internet advertising, and social media marketing significantly improved SMEs' performance in the new normal. Results showed that SMEs who advertised on social media had higher conversion rates and better overall marketing and sales results. Also included as a guide for future researchers are suggestions for further studies.[48].

In, Oanh et al. (2021) In light of the Covid-19 epidemic, the study aims to ascertain how various factors affect small company owners' intentions to use e-marketing in Vietnam. The study used a mix of qualitative and quantitative research approaches. While the purpose of quantitative research is to assist develop a range, the qualitative technique is utilized to validate and adjust a scale. The findings indicate that four factors—compatibility, attitudes towards e-marketing usage, perceived utility, perceived obstacles to use, and subjective norms—have an impact on e-marketing intention. Of these, perceived usefulness is the most important one. Numerous



recommendations have been made by the research to increase organisations' motivation to use e-marketing [49].

Therefore, Sun et al. (2021) provides a motivating viewpoint for looking for elastic and time-independent evidence. Invoices, a vital foundation of accounting in China, provide comprehensive notes on financial business taxes, added information around economic declarations, and greater liveness over time, allowing for the development of a long-term strategy to quickly grasp the operational data of SMEs. In order to handle SMEs' bill data, we utilize machine learning techniques, investigate significant factors under the first digit law, which is modelled after Benford's law, and direct experiments by creating scorecards [50].

The contributions of each study are arranged in Table 2, which also summarizes the main conclusions about the efficacy of e-marketing strategies in (SMEs).

Table 2: Summary of literature Review on Effectiveness of E-Marketing Strategies in SMEs

Author(s) & Year	Title & Objective	Methodology	Findings/Conclusions	Impact on SMEs	Recommendations
Ayele et al. (2018)	Key issues facing SMEs in the Nordic area with regard to marketing management.	Survey using questionnaires	Identified challenges in marketing strategies and provided recommendations for improving them.	Marketing management	Develop smarter marketing strategies.
Liu and Song (2019)	Private equity's effect on the expansion of SMEs.	Multiple linear regression	Growth rate is positively impacted by private equity, with industry-specific variances.	Growth via private equity	Consider private equity for growth, with industry focus.
Lin (2021)	Marketing goals and use of social media for SME growth in Taiwan.	AHP analysis, Case study	Identified marketing goals and complimentary social media strategies that increase SME growth.	Social media for marketing	Utilise social media to attain marketing goals.
Sunday et al. (2021)	The performance of SMEs with e-marketing tactics.	Survey research	Email marketing, social networking, and Internet advertising all improve performance.	E-marketing effectiveness	Use social media to improve your marketing results.
Oanh et al. (2021)	Impact of variables on e-marketing intention in Vietnam during COVID-19.	Mixed methods (qualitative & quantitative)	Found that compatibility, attitudes, perceived usefulness, perceived barriers, and subjective norms impact e-marketing intention.	E-marketing adoption	Proposals for enhancing e-marketing adoption.
Sun et al. (2021)	Analysis of invoice data for SMEs based on Benford's law to improve accounting.	Machine learning, Scorecard method	Analyzed influential variables in invoice data for a sustainable approach to SME operation information.	Financial data analysis	Use invoice data flexibly for SME accounting.

VII. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

E-marketing has proven to be a crucial component of business growth for SMEs, providing numerous opportunities to connect with customers, enhance brand awareness, and compete with larger businesses on a global scale. It allows SMEs to reach targeted audiences through



cost-effective digital channels, leveraging strategies like SEO, and Email Marketing to boost sales and brand loyalty. E-marketing also helps overcome geographical limitations and offers greater flexibility compared to traditional marketing methods. However, challenges such as privacy concerns, delays in service delivery, and maintaining product quality must be addressed. Evaluating the effectiveness of e-marketing strategies through metrics like ROI, customer engagement, and lead conversion rates helps SMEs refine their approaches and achieve marketing goals effectively. As technology continues to evolve, SMEs must stay adaptable, leveraging new e-marketing strategies to maintain competitive advantages and capitalize on emerging digital opportunities.

There is need for future research, which seeks to uncover other efficient e-marketing strategies that could be implemented to the SMEs especially those with limited capital. Contemporary technologies, including artificial intelligence, machine learning, and analytics, appear to have literature breakthroughs for personal marketing and must be considered for future research directions for e-marketing for SMEs. Furthermore, in order to identify and assess the scope and character of the impacts of Internet advertising on the expansion and survival of SMEs, innovative, comprehensive, and long-term research initiatives are required. Future policies should encourage and support small and medium enterprises transition to e-marketing through creating opportunities such as training, grant funding, and subsidies so as to allow them unlock the full potential of digitization in a dynamically changing business environment.

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