

## **The Role of Digital Marketing Strategic Management in Facing Changes in Consumer Behavior in the Digital Era**

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**Keywords:**

digital marketing; marketing strategy; consumer behavior; digital age; customer loyalty

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**ABSTRACT**

The digital era has brought about fundamental changes in consumer behavior, particularly in how they search for information, interact with brands, and make purchasing decisions through digital platforms. Increasing internet penetration and social media usage encourage companies to not only adopt digital marketing but also manage it strategically to remain relevant to market dynamics. This study aims to analyze the role of digital marketing strategic management in addressing changes in consumer behavior in the digital era, identify the relationship between digital marketing strategies and consumer journey adaptation, and formulate strategic recommendations for companies in managing digital marketing effectively and sustainably. The method used is a qualitative descriptive approach with a literature review approach from relevant national and international journals. The results show that digital marketing strategic management enables companies to increase interaction with consumers, build loyalty, and adapt marketing strategies to evolving consumer behavior trends. Social media and personalized communications have proven to be important instruments in this strategy. On the other hand, companies face various challenges such as changes in platform algorithms, data security, and human resource readiness. The implications of this study emphasize that the implementation of integrated and adaptive digital marketing strategic management is key to improving marketing effectiveness and long-term business performance.

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## INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has driven significant changes in consumer behavior, particularly in the way they seek information, evaluate products, and make purchasing decisions. Digitalization has created consumers who are more informative, critical, and demand a fast and personalized experience. According to consumers in the digital era tend to rely on online ecosystems such as social media, search engines, and e-commerce platforms as the main source of decision-making. This change is reinforced by the increasing penetration of the internet and the use of mobile devices that fundamentally shift the pattern of business-consumer interaction ([Chaffey, 2009](#); [Kartajaya, 2021](#)).

In line with that, the development of scientific studies on digital marketing and social media increasingly shows the urgency of a more integrated approach. In a comprehensive review, they emphasized that digital research and social media marketing need to develop in a direction that encapsulates the dimensions of technology, consumer behavior, and organizational capabilities holistically. The findings reinforce the need for companies to build a digital marketing ecosystem that is not only tactical, but also strategically managed and data-driven ([Dwivedi et al., 2021](#)).

In Indonesia, digital transformation is taking place very rapidly and has a direct impact on the marketing sector. Data shows that the majority of Indonesian consumers are used to searching for products, price comparisons, and transactions digitally. This phenomenon encourages organizations to not only adopt digital marketing, but also manage it strategically to align with changing consumer behavior. Without the right strategic management approach, digital marketing activities have the potential to become ineffective and unsustainable.

In this context, a comprehensive digital marketing framework is an important reference for companies in designing adaptive marketing strategies. Chaffey, ([2009](#)) emphasized that effective digital marketing integrates strategic planning with measurable digital channel-based implementation, ranging from search engine optimization, content marketing, to synergistic use of social media. This structured approach is the foundation for organizations in navigating the complexities of the digital ecosystem that are constantly changing as technology and consumer behavior evolve.

The urgency of this research lies in the increasing complexity of digital consumer behavior influenced by the speed of information, algorithm-based recommendations, and online social interaction. Companies are required to be able to read these behavior patterns and respond to them through a planned and integrated digital marketing strategy. Studies by confirm that failure to understand the digital consumer journey can lead to mismatches in marketing strategies. Therefore, strategic management of digital marketing is a key factor in maintaining the relevance and competitive advantage of the company ([Lemon & Verhoef, 2016](#); [Wedel & Kannan, 2016](#)).

Digital marketing strategic management is the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating digital-based marketing strategies that aim to achieve long-term competitive advantage. Strategic management theory states that strategies must be adaptive to changes in the external environment, including changes in technology and

market behavior. In the digital context, marketing strategies must be able to utilize consumer data, personalize content, and integrate various digital channels to create value for consumers. Changes in digital consumer behavior can be seen from the increasing use of the internet and e-commerce globally and nationally. This data reinforces the importance of strategically managed digital marketing strategies ([Kartajaya, 2021](#)).

**Table 1.** Digital Consumer Behavior Statistics

Indicator	Value
Global internet users	> 5.5 billion
Indonesian internet penetration	> 74%
Consumers search for products online before buying	> 80%
Global e-commerce transactions (2025, projected)	> USD 7 trillion

Source: Data Processed

Chaffey, ([2009](#)) The data shows that digital channels have become the main point of consumer interaction, thus demanding a marketing strategy that is data-based and systematically managed. Previous research has shown that digital marketing has a significant effect on purchasing decisions and consumer loyalty. Research by found that the integration of digital channels improves the overall consumer experience. Meanwhile, a study by Indonesia proves that digital marketing increases the competitiveness of MSMEs. Other research confirms that social media plays an important role in shaping consumer perceptions and attitudes towards brands ([PK Kannan, 2017](#); [Purwana et al., 2017](#); [Tuten, 2023](#)).

Although many studies discuss digital marketing and consumer behavior, most still focus on tactical aspects such as social media, digital advertising, or e-commerce partially. Research that examines the role of digital marketing strategic management in responding to changes in consumer behavior is still limited. In addition, the context of integrating digital strategies in long-term managerial decision-making is still rarely studied, especially in emerging markets such as Indonesia ([Chaffey, 2009](#)).

In addition to these practical gaps, the rapid development of social media also emphasizes the need for a more mature strategic approach in digital marketing. revealing that social media will be increasingly integrated with artificial intelligence, data-driven personalization, and augmented reality in shaping the digital marketing ecosystem of the future. The implication is that companies that do not adopt strategic management in digital marketing activities risk falling behind competitors who are more adaptive to technological changes and digital consumer expectations ([Appel et al., 2020](#)).

The novelty of this research lies in the development of a digital marketing strategic management perspective that combines changes in consumer behavior with the process of formulating organizational strategies. This research not only analyzes the effectiveness of digital marketing, but also how the strategy is designed, implemented, and evaluated on an ongoing basis to respond to the dynamics of digital consumer behavior. This approach expands on previous studies that tend to be operational and short-term ([Wedel & Kannan, 2016](#)).

The research also refers to a modern marketing framework that emphasizes the importance of customer orientation in every aspect of digital strategy. This framework reinforces the relevance of research on digital marketing strategic management in the context of the dynamics of consumer behavior in the growing Indonesian market. Based on this description, the objectives of this study are: (1) to analyze the role of digital marketing strategic management in dealing with changes in consumer behavior in the digital era; (2) identify the relationship between digital marketing strategies and consumer behavior adaptation; and (3) formulate strategic implications for companies in managing digital marketing effectively and sustainably. This goal is expected to make a theoretical and practical contribution to the development of marketing science and strategic management.

The development of digital technology has triggered a major transformation in the way organizations conduct marketing, especially through the use of digital marketing to reach consumers effectively. This phenomenon is inseparable from the evolution of consumer behavior which now increasingly prioritizes digital interaction in the process of searching for information and making purchase decisions. Previous research has shown that digital marketing is able to significantly shape consumer perception, engagement, and purchasing decisions through various digital media such as social media and e-commerce platforms (Serendipity et al., 2025).

The urgency of this research arises due to the rapid change in consumer behavior due to the adoption of digital technology, so organizations are required to not only implement digital marketing, but also manage it strategically to be relevant to market dynamics. Systematic studies show that digital marketing strategies not only expand market reach, but also strengthen consumer loyalty and business performance, as well as pose new challenges such as algorithm changes and data privacy issues.

Digital marketing strategic management includes the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating digital marketing strategies that are integrated with organizational goals. Changes in consumer behavior in the digital era can be seen from increasing internet access, social media use, and the dominance of digital media in the customer *journey*. To see an overview of consumer digital behavior trends, here are supporting empirical data:

**Table 2.** Digital Consumer Behavior Indicators in Indonesia (Journal Data 2025)

Indicator	Remarks
The role of social media in changing consumer behavior	Found to be a key digital marketing strategy that changes the way consumers make purchasing decisions (Serendipity et al., 2025)
The influence of digital marketing on purchase decisions	Digital marketing has a significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions, where consumer behavior becomes a mediator (Alamsyah et al., 2024.)
Digital marketing strategies related to impulsive buying	Digital strategies increase impulse buying behavior in the Indonesian marketplace.

Indicator	Remarks
Digital advertising challenges and strategies	Digital advertising faces ever-changing regulatory and algorithm challenges (Stuttgart et al., 2025)

Source: Data Processed

Research in 2025 has reviewed how digital marketing affects consumer behavior and marketing strategies. According to revealing the role of social media in changing consumer behavior through increasingly complex stages of purchase decisions. Meanwhile, it found a significant relationship between digital marketing and purchasing decisions with consumer behavior as a mediator variable. In addition, it highlights how digital marketing strategies in particular contribute to consumer impulsive behavior in the Indonesian marketplace ([Alamsyah et al., 2024](#); [Herawati et al., 2025](#); [Makarim et al., 2025](#))

Although previous research has shed light on the various tactical aspects of digital marketing on consumer behavior, there is still a research gap on integrated digital marketing strategic management in dealing with changes in consumer behavior comprehensively — especially how these strategies are systematically applied by organizations in the context of changing consumer behavior in the digital age. This study aims to: (1) analyze the role of digital marketing strategic management on consumer behavior in the digital era; (2) identify the relationship between digital marketing strategies and consumer journey adaptation; and (3) formulate strategic recommendations for companies to improve the effectiveness of digital marketing in Indonesia.

## METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of describing and understanding in depth the role of digital marketing strategic management in dealing with changes in consumer behavior in the digital era. This approach was chosen because the research focuses on exploring the phenomena, processes, and strategies applied by organizations in responding to the dynamics of digital consumer behavior. Descriptive qualitative research allows researchers to gain a comprehensive contextual understanding based on the experiences and views of informants.

The population in this study is business actors and marketing practitioners who are involved in the management and strategic decision-making of digital marketing in organizations or companies that actively utilize digital platforms. The sampling technique uses purposive sampling, with the following criteria: (1) having at least two years of experience in digital marketing management, (2) being directly involved in the formulation of digital marketing strategies, and (3) understanding changes in digital consumer behavior. The number of informants is determined based on the principle of data saturation, which is that data collection is stopped when the information obtained has been repeated and does not show new findings.

The main instrument in this study is the researcher as a key instrument (human instrument). To support the data collection process, auxiliary instruments are used in the

form of semi-structured interview guidelines that are compiled based on research focus, observation sheets, and relevant documentation such as digital marketing strategy reports, digital content, and company archives. The instrument is used to ensure that the data obtained is systematic and in accordance with the purpose of the research.

Data collection was carried out through three main techniques, namely: (1) in-depth interviews with selected informants to explore information related to digital marketing strategies and changes in consumer behavior; (2) non-participant observation, by observing digital marketing activities carried out by the organization; and (3) documentation studies, by examining relevant supporting documents. The use of various data collection techniques aims to improve the validity of data through triangulation of methods and sources.

The selection of a descriptive qualitative approach in this study is based on its suitability with the objectives of in-depth exploration of the phenomenon being studied. Explains that qualitative research methods allow researchers to understand the meaning behind a social phenomenon naturally and contextually, with researchers as key instruments that play an active role in the process of data collection and interpretation. This approach is very relevant to examine how business actors and marketing practitioners understand and implement strategic management of digital marketing in response to changes in consumer behavior ([Sugiyono, 2020](#)).

The research procedure is carried out through several stages, namely: (1) the preparation stage, including determining the focus of the research, preparing interview guidelines, and selecting informants; (2) the data collection stage, namely the implementation of interviews, observations, and documentation collection; (3) the data analysis stage, by reducing, presenting, and interpreting data; and (4) the stage of drawing conclusions and preparing research report results in accordance with the systematics of journal articles.

The data analysis technique in this study refers to the Miles and Huberman interactive analysis model, which includes three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The analysis is carried out continuously from the data collection process until the research is completed. To ensure the validity of the data, a credibility test is carried out through triangulation of sources, methods, and time.

The application of interactive data analysis in this study is based on the principles developed by qualitative methodological experts. This analytical framework ensures that each stage of data interpretation is carried out systematically so that research findings can be scientifically accounted for and have a high degree of credibility.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Changing Consumer Behavior in the Digital Era**

Changes in consumer behavior in the digital era are one of the fundamental phenomena for the service sector. Consumers now show **b** and demand a fast, personalized, and secure service experience in digital service interactions. This behavior is characterized by the use of digital platforms as the main medium in seeking service

information, including reviews, recommendations, and rating systems that influence service purchase decisions.

Consumer behavior has undergone a significant transformation as digital technology advances that affect the way consumers seek information, interact, and make purchasing decisions. Research shows that consumers are now prioritizing a smooth transaction experience and the security of personal data in digital shopping. This change is characterized by easy access to information through the internet and social media which makes consumers smarter and more critical in choosing products ([Riofita, 2024](#)).

Interaction through social media is also the dominant medium in shaping consumer perception of services, as social media facilitates two-way engagement and dialogue between service providers and consumers. This means that strategic management of digital marketing must understand the (Serendipity et al., 2025), **Psychological motivations of digital consumers**, such as the desire for personalization and an accessible consumer experience. This is in line with the findings of the literature that digital marketing plays a role in **changing consumer behavior patterns** through content engagement and digital social interaction (Serendipity et al., 2025).

This transformation has caused service companies to consider **the digital customer journey** — from brand awareness to purchase decisions — which is now based on interactive and data-driven technology. This shift also gives rise to consumers' tendency to trust social recommendations or e-WOM more than traditional promotions, so responsive digital services are the key to increasing loyalty. By understanding the dynamics of these changes, service companies can design digital strategies that meet the expectations of modern consumers and strengthen customer relationships on an ongoing basis.

In addition, consumers are now paying more attention to reviews and recommendations from their social networks before making a purchase decision. This behavior is also influenced by a shift in preferences from traditional consumption to consumption based on digital platforms, such as ecommerce and online payment applications. Changes in digital consumption behavior have also created new expectations for brand engagement with consumers through digital channels. With increasingly personalized consumption, consumers expect relevant and timely interactions from companies. In conclusion, this change in consumer behavior is a challenge as well as an opportunity for digital marketing management to adjust their marketing strategy (Serendipity et al., 2025).

The evolution of digital platforms has also accelerated the shift in consumer behavior to an increasingly interactive and personalized realm. projects that the integration of artificial intelligence and algorithm-based personalization will increasingly dominate the way consumers interact with brands on social media. These findings are relevant to the results of research that show that Indonesian consumers are increasingly critical and selective in consuming digital content, so companies need to understand this behavior pattern in depth to design digital marketing strategies that are right on target and add value for consumers ([Appel et al., 2020](#)).

## **Strategic Management Concept of Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing strategic management is the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating marketing strategies that aim to optimize the relationship between brands and consumers on digital platforms. In the context of the digital age, this strategy includes leveraging consumer behavioral data to create personalized and relevant customer experiences. A good digital marketing strategy also involves the integration of various digital channels such as social media, SEO, email, and targeted digital content ([Erislan, 2024](#)).

Understanding the dynamics of consumer behavior is the basis for determining the right strategy to increase customer engagement and loyalty. Strategic management also requires regular analysis of digital trends and adaptation to algorithmic changes on digital platforms ([Keyza et al., 2026](#)).

This strategic planning has a direct impact on the effectiveness of digital marketing and the achievement of organizational goals. With a strategic management approach, the company is able to respond quickly and measurably to changes in consumer behavior ([Erislan, 2024](#)).

The effectiveness of strategic management of digital marketing also depends on the organization's ability to plan and integrate various elements of digital marketing cohesively. emphasizing that solid digital marketing strategic planning includes analyzing the market situation, setting measurable goals, selecting the right digital channels, and evaluating continuous data-driven performance. This framework ensures that every digital marketing activity is integrated into a targeted organizational strategy so that it has an optimal impact on achieving long-term business goals ([Hanlon, 2021](#)).

## **The Role of Social Media in Strategic Digital Marketing**

Social media has become a key tool in digital marketing strategy management to reach and influence consumer behavior. The platform helps build *brand awareness* through the dissemination of engaging and interactive visual content. Collaboration with *influencers* becomes an effective tactic in conveying the brand's message to the relevant community (Serendipity et al., 2025).

Social media also facilitates two-way interaction between brands and consumers, which can strengthen loyalty and engagement. At the purchase evaluation stage, product reviews and social recommendations have been proven to strengthen consumer trust. In addition, social media provides behavioral data that is essential for optimizing digital marketing strategies continuously.

Social media has a strategic role as the main means of building two-way communication between companies and consumers. Through platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, business actors are able to convey marketing messages in a more interactive and personalized way. These findings indicate that social media not only serves as a promotional medium, but also as a dialogue space that strengthens emotional connections with audiences.

Furthermore, this study found that social media plays an important role in strategically shaping brand image. Visual content, storytelling, and consistency of messages conveyed through social media are able to create a positive perception in the minds of consumers. The informants in this study assessed that an effective digital marketing strategy relies heavily on the ability of brands to manage their identity on social media.

The results of the study also show that the use of social media in strategic digital marketing allows companies to reach more specific target markets. Social media analytics and algorithms help businesses understand consumer behavior, preferences, and market trends in real time. Thus, marketing strategies can be adjusted more accurately and efficiently. In addition, social media has been proven to play a role in increasing business competitiveness, especially for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This study found that SMEs can leverage social media as a low-cost but high-impact marketing alternative.

The speed of information dissemination and the potential virality of content are the main advantages of social media compared to conventional media. Overall, the results and discussion of this study show that social media has a very strategic role in modern digital marketing. Social media not only serves as a marketing communication tool, but also as an instrument for analysis, brand building, and increased business competitiveness. Therefore, companies need to design an integrated digital marketing strategy that is oriented towards the optimal use of social media.

Systematic studies of the role of social media in digital marketing further confirm its significance to overall business performance. In their extensive literature review, they found that social media marketing is able to increase consumer engagement, strengthen brand loyalty, and contribute significantly to consumer purchase intent in various market contexts. These results reinforce the research findings that strategic social media management is not just a promotional activity, but a critical component in a comprehensive and effective digital marketing management ecosystem ([Dwivedi et al., 2021](#)).

### **Challenges in the Implementation of Digital Marketing Strategic Management**

One of the main challenges is the rapid and unexpected changes in digital platform algorithms, which can affect the visibility of marketing content. In addition, technical challenges such as consumer data security and compliance with privacy regulations are of important concern. Companies also face challenges in creating relevant strategies amid digital information density ([Keyza et al., 2026](#)).

The readiness of human resources in understanding and implementing digital technology is another limiting factor. Resistance to organizational culture change can hinder the adoption of effective digital strategies. On the other hand, external challenges such as competition on digital platforms force companies to be more creative and innovative. Therefore, strategic management of digital marketing requires continuous adaptation, training, and investment in technology. In addition to human resources, another challenge found is the lack of integrated strategic planning ([Keyza et al., 2026](#)).

This research reveals that some organizations still view digital marketing as a purely operational activity, not as part of long-term strategic management. As a result, the implementation of digital marketing is often not aligned with the organization's vision, mission, and goals. The results of the study also show that changes in algorithms and dynamics of digital platforms are challenges in the implementation of digital marketing strategic management. Rapid changes in social media policies and algorithms require organizations to always adapt to stay relevant and competitive. The research informant stated that this uncertainty often makes it difficult to measure the performance and sustainability of the strategies implemented.

The next challenge has to do with budget constraints and digital marketing cost allocation. The study found that although digital marketing is often considered more cost-effective than conventional marketing, its strategic implementation still requires significant investment, especially for paid advertising, analytics tools, and professional content development. Limited budgets make it difficult for organizations to maintain the consistency of their digital marketing strategy.

Overall, the results and discussion of this study show that the challenges in implementing digital marketing strategic management are multidimensional, including aspects of human resources, strategic planning, technological dynamics, and budget constraints. Therefore, organizations need to develop an adaptive, sustainable, and internal capacity building-based management approach.

The challenges in implementing digital marketing strategic management are also rooted in the complexity of digital transformation that organizations face internally. Identify that the main obstacles in organizational digital transformation include internal cultural resistance, digital competence gaps in human resources, and the need for visionary leadership in orchestrating comprehensive change. These findings are in line with research results that show that failures in the implementation of digital marketing strategic management are often caused by non-technological factors such as organizational culture and inadequate leadership capacity ([Verhoef et al., \(2021\)](#)).

### **The Impact of Digital Marketing Strategic Management on Business Loyalty & Performance**

The implementation of the right digital marketing strategy has been proven to have an effect on increasing consumer loyalty. Personalization of communication and digital loyalty programs are able to strengthen the long-term relationship between brands and consumers. Digital marketing also expands market reach and increases relevant interactions with consumers ([Safrina, 2025](#)). This strategy has a positive impact on business performance because loyal consumers tend to make repeat purchases. In addition, digital marketing allows companies to collect performance data that can be used for subsequent strategic decisions. T

his strategic management also helps companies maintain competitiveness in the competitive digital era. Overall, the strategic management role of digital marketing makes an important contribution to business growth via understanding consumer behavior (E

[Erislan, 2024](#); [Safrina, 2025](#)). Strengthening consumer loyalty through strategic digital marketing requires a deep understanding of the value provided to customers at every stage of interaction. Therefore, strategic management of digital marketing that is oriented towards customer value has been proven to be able to generate long-term loyalty that has a positive impact on business performance in a sustainable manner.

A comprehensive understanding of the digital ecosystem is an important foundation for companies in optimizing the impact of marketing strategies on business performance. It states that companies that succeed in digital marketing are those that are able to integrate various digital channels synergism, measure the performance of each channel appropriately, and allocate marketing resources based on accurate and real-time data. This data-driven approach allows companies to continuously refine their digital marketing strategies so that their impact on customer loyalty and business performance can be optimized on an ongoing basis ([Ryan & Damian, 2016](#)).

**Table 3.** Summary of Findings

Study Aspects	Key Findings	References
Changing consumer behavior	Consumers are more digital-savvy and prioritize experience and security	<a href="#">(Gupta &amp; Shukla, 2024)</a>
Digital marketing management concept	Planning and evaluation of digital consumer data-driven strategies	<a href="#">(By Erislan, 2024)</a>
The role of social media	Social media strengthens awareness, interaction, loyalty	<a href="#">(Herawati et al., 2025)</a>
Challenge	Algorithms, resources, data security	<a href="#">(Keyza et al., 2026)</a>
Impact on performance	Increase loyalty and market reach	<a href="#">(Safrina, 2025)</a>

Source: Data Processed

Based on the findings in table 3, changes in consumer behavior show that consumers are now increasingly digitally savvy and prioritize experience and security in digital transactions. This condition requires companies to implement digital marketing management that focuses on planning and evaluating strategies based on digital consumer data so that marketing decisions are more effective and on target ([Erislan, 2024](#)).

In addition, social media plays an important role in strengthening brand awareness, increasing interaction, and building customer loyalty. However, the implementation of digital marketing also faces various challenges, such as changes in platform algorithms, limited resources, and consumer data security issues. Overall, the implementation of the right digital marketing strategy has been proven to have a positive impact on company performance, especially in increasing customer loyalty and expanding market reach ([Herawati et al., 2025](#); [Keyza et al., 2026](#); [Safrina, 2025](#)).

## CONCLUSION

Changing Consumer Behavior in the digital era prioritizes easy access to information, a safe shopping experience, and relevant interactions with brands. They are more intelligent

and critical, and rely on social reviews and recommendations in making purchasing decisions. The strategic management role of digital marketing including planning, implementing, and evaluating digital marketing strategies based on consumer behavior allows companies to adjust marketing approaches, increase customer engagement, and strengthen loyalty. These strategies include the use of social media, content personalization, integration of various digital channels, and analysis of consumer behavior data.

Social media plays a role as a means of building brand awareness, two-way interaction, and supporting loyalty programs and product recommendations. The platform also provides data that can be analyzed to improve the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies. Companies face a variety of challenges, including changing digital platform algorithms, consumer data security, human resource readiness, organizational cultural resistance, and increasingly fierce competition. This requires continuous adaptation and innovation in digital marketing strategies. The implementation of the right digital marketing strategy contributes to increased customer loyalty, wider market reach, relevant interactions, and overall business growth. Strategic management of digital marketing is the key to maintaining competitiveness in the digital era.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all informants and practitioners who voluntarily participated in this study by sharing their time, insights, and experiences regarding strategic digital marketing management. Special thanks are also extended to the editorial board and reviewers of the Oriental Journal for their constructive feedback that greatly improved the quality of this manuscript.

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