



Digital Marketing and Entrepreneurial Success: A Conceptual and Bibliometric Review

Nadya Dwi Kusumaningtyas¹

¹ Universitas Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Abstract

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Digital transformation has changed the global business landscape and presented new challenges as well as great opportunities for entrepreneurs, especially MSMEs and startups. This study aims to understand the relationship between digital marketing strategies and entrepreneurial success through qualitative-based conceptual methods with literature review and bibliometric analysis. Data is collected from the Google Scholar database with strict selection criteria to guarantee relevance and quality. The results of the study show that social media, SEO, content marketing, and the integration of new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR), and chatbots play an important role in improving financial performance, brand positioning, innovation, and customer loyalty. However, there are gaps in implementation, especially among MSMEs who face limited digital literacy and resources. This research emphasizes the need for collaboration between academics, practitioners, governments, and technology providers to build an inclusive and sustainable digital entrepreneurship ecosystem. The practical implication is that digital marketing should be placed as a core strategy in modern entrepreneurship, while its academic implications open up room for further research on the integration of new technologies and socio-cultural factors that affect the effectiveness of digital marketing.



1. Introduction

The development of the digital age has brought fundamental changes in the global business landscape. Digitalization not only drives the efficiency of internal processes, but also influences the company's strategy in reaching consumers and creating value. In Indonesia, more than 213 million people will use the internet in 2022, with a social media penetration rate of 167 million active users (*Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia/APJII*). Globally, the digital economy is expected to account for more than 15.5% of the world's GDP, in line with the rapid growth of e-commerce and technology-based services. This transformation indicates that digital marketing strategies are the main pillar for entrepreneurs, especially MSMEs and startups, in maintaining competitiveness in an increasingly competitive market. Digital marketing is no longer just an option, but a strategic need for business sustainability.

Although the literature on digital marketing has grown rapidly, there is a knowledge gap in understanding the specific relationship between the implementation of digital marketing strategies and entrepreneurial success. Some studies emphasize the significant contribution of social media to the growth of MSMEs (Marolt et al., 2022), while others show inconsistent results regarding their impact on financial performance (Ziolkowska, 2021). In addition, certain aspects are still not explored in depth. For example, the role of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and content marketing in supporting entrepreneurial innovation has not been studied systematically. Likewise, the use of new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR), and chatbots in marketing strategies, which

have great potential to improve customer experience, but there is still a lack of empirical research. Another dimension that is rarely touched is the intersection between digital marketing and social factors such as gender, education level, and digital culture that have the potential to moderate entrepreneurial success (Dharma et al., 2022).

To understand this phenomenon theoretically, a number of important foundations can be used. The theory of competitive advantage explains that unique and hard-to-replicate resources, including digital capabilities, can create sustainable added value (Annarelli et al., 2020). In addition, the concept of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is the key to building customer loyalty in a digital era full of choices. Innovation theory in entrepreneurship also emphasizes the importance of adaptability to technological changes and consumer behavior. In the context of digital consumer behavior, rapid changes in preferences, reliance on online platforms, and increasing expectations for service personalization are strong reasons why digital marketing strategies are now crucial (Nuseir, 2019).

The practical relevance of this discussion cannot be ignored. Digital marketing allows modern entrepreneurs, especially MSMEs and startups, to expand market reach at a relatively cost-efficient cost, while strengthening brand positioning. The substantial emergence of the “Digital Economy” highlights the importance of understanding the broader economic implications of digitalization. This term indicates a focus on how digital technologies shape economic structures, industries, and market dynamics (Syukron et al., 2022). Strategies such as social media, SEO, and content marketing have been proven to encourage product innovation, improve

financial performance, and increase customer loyalty (Alghizzawi, 2019). For policymakers, this understanding is also important for designing interventions that support the growth of the digital economy and narrow the digital divide. Meanwhile, for academics, this research opens up space to examine more deeply the integration between digital marketing and entrepreneurship in various industrial and cultural contexts.

Based on this description, this research has several main objectives. First, to understand how digital marketing strategies directly affect entrepreneurial success in a variety of indicators, including innovation, financial performance, customer loyalty, and market position. Second, to identify the latest trends, new technologies, and research gaps that are still open in the field of digital entrepreneurship. Third, to provide insights that can be used as the basis for practical strategies for entrepreneurs, as well as input for academics and policymakers. Bibliometric analysis methods will be used to achieve this goal. Utilizing Google Scholar's diverse and widely recognized database, relevant articles will be selected based on criteria of quality and relevance to the topic. Through this approach, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the relationship between digital marketing and entrepreneurship, as well as offer future research directions. In closing, this article will be systematically compiled by discussing the main digital marketing strategies, indicators of entrepreneurial success, literature synthesis, and recommendations for future research directions. This approach not only confirms the importance of digital marketing in the modern era of entrepreneurship, but also

makes a theoretical and practical contribution to understanding the dynamics of the ever-evolving digital economy.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Digital Marketing and Entrepreneurial Development

Digital transformation has created new opportunities for entrepreneurs, especially in the context of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and startups. Digital marketing is now seen as one of the key instruments for expanding markets, building brands, and maintaining relationships with consumers. Instruments such as social media, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), and content-based strategies drive faster and more relevant connections with consumers. The increased adoption of digital technology allows entrepreneurs to compete in the global market at a relatively lower cost than conventional strategies, as stated by Roblek et al. (2020).

Additionally, entrepreneurs who are able to integrate digital marketing into their business models tend to have higher competitiveness and are more innovative. This is in line with the emergence of the Web 5.0 era which presents new opportunities for entrepreneurs to take advantage of AI-based personalization and higher interactivity with consumers, as described by Enholm et al. (2022). Changes in consumer behavior that are increasingly digital also confirm that technology-based marketing is no longer an option, but a basic need for business sustainability. Digital marketing not only helps businesses survive, but it also thrives in the midst of fierce competition. By leveraging technology and understanding consumer behavior,

entrepreneurs can create more effective and efficient strategies to achieve their business goals.

2.2. The Role of New Technologies in Digital Marketing Strategy

The emergence of new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR), and chatbots has significantly changed digital marketing practices. These technologies support the personalization of the customer experience, service automation, and the creation of more immersive interactions. For entrepreneurs, the use of this technology not only increases efficiency, but also opens up space for product and service innovation. For example, AI allows for faster analysis of customer data, which ultimately results in more targeted marketing strategies, as explained by Hendarsyah (2020). On the other hand, the integration of VR and augmented reality provides a more interactive shopping experience, increases customer engagement, and helps brand differentiation in an increasingly competitive market.

This immersive experience allows consumers to virtually "try" on products before purchasing, building a stronger connection between brands and customers. This shows that the use of new technology is not just a trend, but a key factor in the creation of entrepreneurial added value, as emphasized by Rippa and Secundo (2019). This technology allows entrepreneurs to create unique experiences that are difficult to replicate, differentiating them from competitors. By adopting these innovations, entrepreneurs can build more personal and meaningful relationships with customers, which is critical for business sustainability in the digital age. This

advanced technology-powered marketing not only increases sales, but also strengthens brand loyalty.

2.3. Knowledge Gap in Digital Marketing and Entrepreneurship Studies

Although many studies discuss digital marketing, its direct relationship to entrepreneurial success still shows mixed results. Most of the research focuses on social media or e-commerce, while aspects such as SEO, content marketing, and adoption of new technologies are still relatively underexplored in depth. For example, a study in India found that although digital marketing is on the rise, its application is still limited to popular platforms such as social media, with little attention to SEO optimization and content-based strategies, as revealed by Romprasert and Trivedi (2021). This shows that there is an imbalance in the strategies implemented by entrepreneurs.

In addition, aspects of intersectionality such as gender, digital culture, and education level have also not been widely researched in relation to the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies for entrepreneurship. This gap creates an incomplete understanding of how different entrepreneurial groups can make optimal use of technology. Karpenko and Ivannikova (2021) emphasize that the adoption of digital technology by MSMEs is often hampered by limited resources and skills. This challenge means that the full potential of digital marketing cannot always be achieved by all business actors. Therefore, there is significant room for further research on these factors in the context of modern entrepreneurship. More in-depth exploration is needed to understand how differences in background can affect the success of digital marketing, so that more inclusive and effective strategies can be developed.

3. Method

This study uses a conceptual approach with a qualitative method based on literature review. The selection of this method is based on the need to gain an in-depth understanding of the relationship between digital marketing and entrepreneurial success by integrating various perspectives from the current academic literature. Because this topic is highly dynamic and influenced by rapid technological developments, literature-based research becomes relevant to map trends, gaps, and future research opportunities. The data source used in this study comes from Google Scholar or Researchgate with a publication time span of the last five years. The criteria for article selection include: (1) articles published in reputable journals or international proceedings that focus on digital marketing, entrepreneurship, and technological innovation; (2) articles that directly review digital marketing practices, entrepreneurial strategies, and interactions between the two; (3) articles that are relevant to the context of MSMEs, startups, and the digital economy sector; and (4) articles that discuss the application of new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR), and chatbots in marketing. With this criterion, the study seeks to ensure the quality, relevance, and reliability of the data used as the basis for the analysis.

The data collection process is carried out through systematic searches with keywords such as digital marketing, entrepreneurship, SEO, content marketing, AI in marketing, VR in business, and SMEs digital transformation. From the search results, a selection of titles and abstracts was made to determine the suitability of the research topic. Articles that meet the criteria are then fully reviewed to explore

theories, findings, and recommendations that can support the conceptual framework of this research. In addition, special attention was paid to recent publications highlighting digital transformation post-COVID-19 pandemic, given that the period drove the acceleration of digital adoption in the business world. Literature analysis is carried out through a simple bibliometric approach, by identifying the frequency of the main themes, research trends, and the relationships between concepts that emerge from the article. Themes such as the role of social media, the importance of SEO, content marketing strategies, and the adoption of new technologies are categorized and mapped in the context of entrepreneurship. This method helps in finding common patterns, differences, and knowledge gaps that still exist.

In addition to bibliometric analysis, this study also uses qualitative thematic analysis. Each article is analyzed to find the core concepts, driving factors, barriers, and practical implications associated with digital entrepreneurship. The results of the analysis are then synthesized into a comprehensive understanding of how digital marketing strategies contribute to entrepreneurial success. Focus not only on the technical aspects of the marketing strategy, but also on contextual factors such as organizational readiness, digital skills, and culture of innovation. This conceptual research method with a literature review was chosen because it provides flexibility in summarizing various cross-border and cross-disciplinary studies. This approach does not aim to test hypotheses empirically, but rather to produce a conceptual framework that can be used as a reference for future research and as a practical guideline for entrepreneurs. In other words, this method places academic literature

as the main basis for building arguments, identifying trends, and compiling strategic recommendations for entrepreneurial development in the digital age.

4. Results

The results of the literature review show that the adoption of digital marketing by entrepreneurs has increased rapidly in the last five years, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic which accelerated digital transformation in almost all business sectors. Digital marketing is no longer seen as just an additional tool for promotion, but rather as a core strategy that determines entrepreneurial success. Global trends confirm that the interaction between entrepreneurs and consumers is increasingly shifting to the digital space, with the use of social media, e-commerce, and content platforms as the main channels of communication. In this context, Roblek et al. (2020) underlines that the emergence of the Web 5.0 era has brought a new paradigm in which artificial intelligence (AI)-based personalization and interactivity are the keys to competitiveness that determine business sustainability. This is reinforced by the findings of Romprasert and Trivedi (2021) which show that although digital marketing is growing rapidly in India, many MSMEs are still limited to the use of popular social media, while strategies such as SEO, content marketing, and integration of new technologies are still not optimally optimized.

Digital marketing has become the backbone for entrepreneurs in the modern era. This rapid growth is driven by changes in consumer behavior that increasingly rely on digital devices to find information, shop, and interact with brands. Digital marketing strategies offer a variety of advantages over conventional methods, such

as more cost-efficient, wider audience reach, and the ability to measure results in real-time. This advantage is very important for MSMEs and startups that often have limited budgets and resources. The use of social media occupies an important position in the digital marketing strategy of modern entrepreneurs. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook provide an intensive interaction space between brands and consumers, allowing businesses to build emotional closeness with customers through authentic storytelling. Karpenko and Ivannikova (2021) stated that MSMEs that actively utilize social media tend to be more successful in increasing customer loyalty compared to those that still rely on conventional marketing strategies. Through social media, entrepreneurs can publish relevant and interesting content, hold giveaways, or interact directly through comments and private messages. This not only increases brand awareness, but also creates a loyal community around the brand.

Content marketing strategies that combine educational, interactive, and visual content are considered effective in building brand awareness and expanding audience reach. By providing valuable content, entrepreneurs can position themselves as experts in their field, build consumer trust, and organically attract new leads. However, challenges still arise because many small business actors do not have sufficient technical capacity and resources to optimize the potential of content marketing. Rippa and Secundo (2019) added that financial limitations and digital literacy are the main obstacles for small entrepreneurs to utilize social media effectively, so that even though great opportunities are available, the results still depend on the internal readiness of each business actor. This indicates that even

though digital platforms are easily accessible, the right strategy and adequate resources remain the key to achieving maximum results.

In addition, digital optimization strategies through SEO (Search Engine Optimization) are also an important focus in the literature. SEO plays a role in increasing business visibility organically on search engines like Google. With the right SEO strategy, small entrepreneurs can appear on the first page of search results, which helps them compete with larger companies that have larger advertising budgets. Kumar et al. (2021) emphasized that the low use of SEO among MSMEs leads to a limited reach of potential consumers that can be achieved through online searches. Many small businesses still rely on paid advertising or social media promotions, but are unaware of the huge potential of organic traffic generated by SEO. In fact, the right SEO strategy allows entrepreneurs to build innovations in keyword-based marketing models, so that products or services can be more easily found by consumers according to their needs. Hendarsyah (2020) added that the integration of SEO with data analytics can help businesses understand consumer behavior more accurately, which in turn strengthens marketing effectiveness while encouraging the birth of product innovation. Thus, even though SEO strategies are widely known, their implementation in the entrepreneurial sector still requires knowledge capacity building and practical application.

The results of the study also highlight the importance of utilizing new technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), and chatbots in digital marketing strategies. This technology opens up opportunities for entrepreneurs to deliver a more personalized, efficient, and interactive customer

experience. AI, for example, can be used to analyze consumer purchasing patterns, automate marketing campaigns, and provide targeted product recommendations. The use of AI can help entrepreneurs understand individual preferences, predict trends, and tailor marketing messages in real-time. According to Karpenko and Ivannikova (2021), the use of smart technology is able to reduce operational costs and at the same time increase marketing effectiveness for MSMEs that have limited resources. AI can automate repetitive tasks, such as email delivery or ad targeting, so entrepreneurs can focus on developing larger products and strategies.

Meanwhile, VR and augmented reality (AR) allow consumers to experience the product virtually before purchasing, which creates stronger emotional engagement and increases purchase intent. This technology is particularly relevant for industries such as fashion, interior design, or property, where consumers can visualize products in depth without having to be physically present. Rippa and Secundo (2019) added that chatbots that operate 24 hours a day can help speed up responses to customer inquiries, increase satisfaction, and strengthen long-term loyalty. Chatbots are capable of providing instant answers, processing simple orders, and directing customers to the right support team, ensuring that consumer needs are always met. Thus, new technologies are not only complementary, but strategic factors that contribute directly to the success of digital entrepreneurship.

Literacy also confirms the positive relationship between the implementation of digital marketing strategies and the financial performance and innovation capacity of entrepreneurs. Businesses that consistently integrate digital marketing are reported to experience increased sales, promotion cost efficiency, and wider access

to global markets. Digital marketing allows businesses to reach audiences in different parts of the world without having to open physical branch offices, which is very advantageous for MSMEs looking to expand. Roblek (2020) highlights how the combination of e-commerce strategies with AI-based technology can open up new opportunities for entrepreneurs in creating innovative products while strengthening the brand's position in the market.

By analyzing sales and consumer behavior data from e-commerce platforms, entrepreneurs can identify market gaps, understand consumer preferences, and develop new products that match demand. Meanwhile, Enholm et al. (2022) found that the use of consumer data in digital marketing encourages business actors to be more responsive in developing products according to market needs. These findings show that digital marketing not only functions as a means of communication, but also as a driver for the creation of a dynamic innovation ecosystem in modern entrepreneurship. The data generated from digital marketing campaigns becomes a valuable resource that can be used for strategic decision-making, from product development to pricing strategies.

5. Discussion

The results of the literature review show that digital marketing has become one of the strategic factors that determine the success of entrepreneurs, especially in the context of MSMEs and technology-based startups. These findings are in line with global dynamics that show a shift in consumer behavior from traditional patterns to digital-first behavior. Social media, SEO, content marketing, and new

technologies such as AI, VR, and chatbots not only serve as promotional instruments, but also as catalysts that accelerate the process of entrepreneurial innovation. This confirms the view that competitive advantage in the digital era is not only determined by product quality, but also by the extent to which business actors are able to integrate digital marketing technology into their business strategies (Hendarsyah, 2020).

However, there is still a gap between the potential of digital marketing technology and real implementation in the field. Most MSMEs are still limited to the use of popular social media and have not optimized much data-driven strategies such as SEO and sustainable content marketing. This condition shows that there are challenges in digital literacy as well as limited human and financial resources. Kumar et al. (2021) emphasize that without digital capacity building, it will be difficult for businesses to compete sustainably, especially as new technologies such as AI and VR increasingly become the standard in modern business interactions. Therefore, there needs to be support from the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem, including governments, educational institutions, and technology providers, to help MSMEs improve their digital competencies.

The discussion also showed that the adoption of digital marketing technology has far-reaching implications for entrepreneurial strategies. First, from a financial aspect, digital marketing integration has been proven to reduce promotional costs while increasing global market reach. Second, from the aspect of innovation, digital technology encourages entrepreneurs to be more responsive to changing consumer needs, so that the products and services produced become more relevant. Third,

from the aspect of brand positioning, creative content-based strategies and AI personalization strengthen brand image and increase customer loyalty. These findings reinforce the view that the success of entrepreneurship in the digital era is not only determined by the ability to create innovative products, but also by the ability to build sustainable relationships with consumers through digital channels (Rippa & Secundo, 2019).

Thus, this discussion emphasizes that digital marketing is a vital element that cannot be separated from modern entrepreneurship. However, the effectiveness of its implementation is greatly influenced by contextual factors such as the readiness of human resources, the level of digital literacy, and policy support. Further research is needed to explore how differences in gender, education, and digital culture affect the way entrepreneurs adopt digital marketing. In addition, future research directions also need to be focused on the integration of new technologies, including generative AI and the metaverse, which have the potential to revolutionize the way businesses and consumers interact. With a deeper understanding, digital marketing can not only be seen as a promotional strategy, but rather as a key foundation in building innovative, inclusive, and sustainable entrepreneurship.

6. Conclusion

This study confirms that digital marketing plays a fundamental role in the success of modern entrepreneurship, both at the level of MSMEs and technology-based startups. Digital transformation triggered by the development of the internet, social media, and new technologies has changed the way businesses interact with

consumers as well as the way consumers make purchasing decisions. Digital marketing no longer functions as an additional instrument, but has become the core of business strategies that determine the competitiveness of entrepreneurs in the digital economy era. Strategies such as social media, SEO, and content marketing provide ample space for entrepreneurs to increase visibility, strengthen brand positioning, and build long-term relationships with customers. However, there is still a significant gap between the potential of digital marketing and implementation in the field. Most MSMEs still face limited resources, digital literacy, and technology support to optimize data-driven marketing strategies and technology-based innovations such as AI, VR, and chatbots.

In fact, the integration of this technology has been proven to be able to increase efficiency, strengthen customer loyalty, and encourage the creation of innovative products that suit market needs. Thus, closer collaboration is needed between entrepreneurs, academics, governments, and technology providers to build a more adaptive and inclusive digital entrepreneurship ecosystem. This research makes an important contribution in showing the close relationship between digital marketing and entrepreneurial success. The practical implications are the need for entrepreneurs to adopt digital marketing strategies as a top priority, while the academic implications encourage further research on the integration of new technologies as well as socio-cultural factors that affect the effectiveness of digital marketing. With a more comprehensive understanding, digital marketing has the potential to be the main driving force for sustainable entrepreneurial growth in the digital era.

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