

# **BUSINESS STUDIES RESEARCH PAPER**

**Author- Aditya Agrawal**

**Jayshree Periwal International School, Jaipur**

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## **I. Introduction**

### **Background**

Small business enterprises are the largest and the most important sector of the India's economy when it comes to employment generation, innovation and growth. MSME's Ministry of India claims that there are more than 63 million MSMEs in India, contributing to 29% of Indian GDP and providing work for 111 million people. However, in the modern environment of constant globalization, the future and productivity of the SMBs depend most of all on their willingness to expand and make the necessary changes, given the current tendencies in the market and technologies offered.

The digitization in India has brought new avenues for venturing into uncharted markets for the small business. The driving forces behind this transition have been the government-led drives like the Digital India that seeks to spread Internet and computer awareness across the country. Therefore digital marketing has become a necessity for small businesses to improve visibility, interact with customers and grow market. Digital marketing on the other hand provides social marketing, search engine marketing, email marketing, and content marketing which provide the business with ways of reaching the customers accurately and effectively.

Year	Internet Penetration (%)	Digital Marketing Spend (INR Billion)
2015	20%	10
2016	28%	15
2017	35%	20
2018	45%	30
2019	50%	40
2020	55%	55
2021	65%	75
2022	70%	90
2023	75%	110

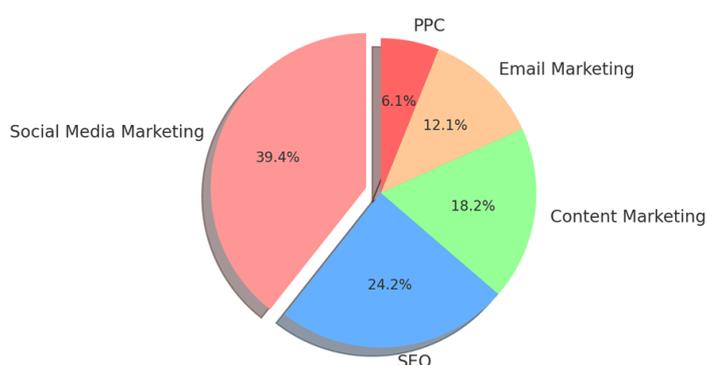
Nevertheless, still today many small businesses in India are either reluctant or slow to embrace digital marketing tools. Small business owners' lack of insight into theory and practice of using the web for marketing, inadequate literacy or low financial capital to enable them to go digital also play into their limited engagement in digital marketing. However, all these strategies may not work in the same way especially depending on the

industry or location or the target customers. Therefore, this research will seek to provide an analysis and further understanding of the impact of digital marketing to the growth of small businesses in India and the factors associated with the digital innovation in this industry.

### Research Problem

India has greatly embraced the digital economy and innovation though, small businesses are still constrained when it comes to optimizing on digital marketing. Small business unfortunately either do not have the expertise or the time to properly manage their social media presence or they simply do not make full use of them. Therefore, it becomes important to conduct research on how digital marketing affects the development of small businesses and provide recommendations on how best they can perform in a world that is increasingly becoming digital. This research aims at understand the existing void between the planned and actual usage of digital marketing tools by the small businesses in India.

Adoption of Digital Marketing Tools by Small Businesses in India



### Research Question

The central research question guiding this study is: How does the implementation of digital marketing bear impact on the small business growth in India?

### Objectives

The primary objectives of this research are:

In particular, to assess the impact of digital marketing initiatives on sales rate, customer reach, and brand exposure of the small businesses.

To analyze how available and emerging digital applications ensure that small businesses engage in the local and global markets.

In order to establish what type of difficulties small businesses encounter while implementing digital marketing techniques and to recommend possible ways to mitigate these challenges.

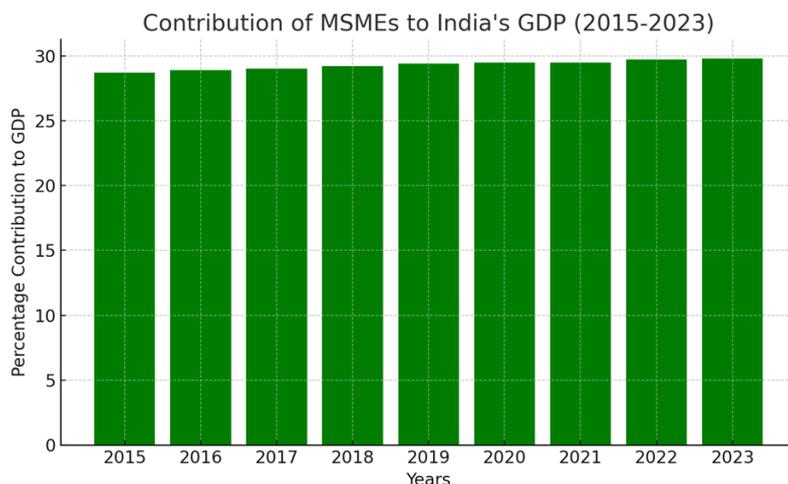
In order to explore how various digital marketing techniques impact business growth factors including increased revenues, market penetration and customer loyalty.

### Scope of the Study

Small business in the Indian context is the subset of study and specifically targets business operating in urban and semi urban areas where they are more likely to have better internet connection and digital tools. Even those operating in the retail, service industry, manufacturing, restaurant, and any other manner of industries are not left out. The study incorporates both the number-based data (trends like sale and customer attraction) and the cipher data (the business owners' opinion on the success of digital marketing). To gather data that will provide an analysis of how small businesses use digital marketing, interviews as well as questionnaires will be administered to small business owners.

### Significance of the Study

All in all it is imperative to mark this research significant especially within the growing technologically advanced India environment



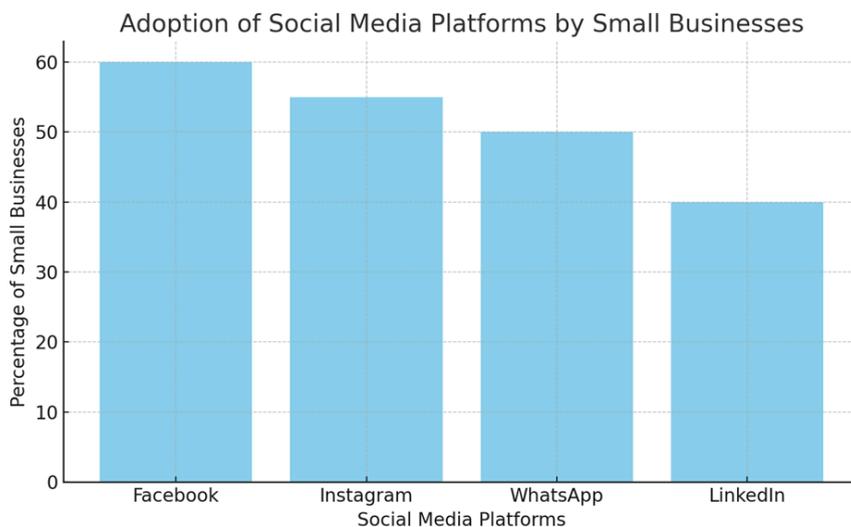
It is imperative therefore for the development of small businesses since the country is continuing to put up an image as a world economy. From this study, self-employed individuals, policymakers, other entrepreneurs and the personnel in the digital marketing sector can gain a wealth of knowledge as to how e-marketing influences the growth of a small business and act correspondingly to encourage this aspect of economic development. Further, the outcomes derived from the given investigation can extend knowledge on digital marketing implementation into small businesses, thus enabling owners of such enterprises to make decisions which contribute to sound business viability.

## II. Literature Review

### Introduction to Digital Marketing Techniques

It represents a wide range of web based tools that are adopted by organizations to push out messages and sales to the public. Such techniques include social media, search engine, content, and e-mail marketing as well as Pay per Click (PPC). Digital marketing is quite different from conventional forms of marketing like using newspapers, magazines or even TV advertisements since it enables organizations to specifically target relevant consumers, and then evaluate the results of a marketing campaign within a short period of time.

Chaffey (2020) stated that through new digital marketing, there is a shift in marketing communication process improving through its effectiveness and efficiency through accurate targeting, measurable results, and value over the traditional modes of selling. The flexibility of the employed approaches may be highly advantageous for small businesses that are often in a pursuit for scalability. For instance, a small business can open an account in the social media platform or content marketing and as they gain more clients, they can invest more. But, this also is an issue for small businesses as to enter the digital sphere, they have to learn new platforms and algorithms (Smith 2019).



In addition, digital marketing tools offer extraordinary freedom to organizations to directly communicate and convert otherwise more impersonal interactions into two-way communication via social networking platforms, e-mail subscriptions and web commentaries and feeds. This is important in fostering loyalty since clients love to engage in business with those they trust for the longest time.

### A Study on the Emergence of Small Business Ventures in India

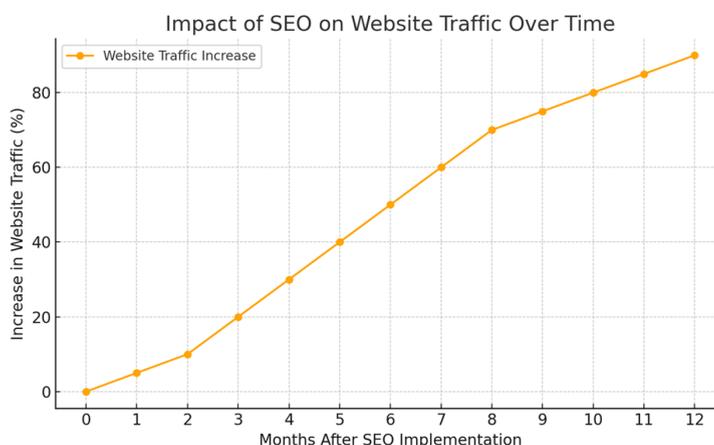
Small business plays a delicate role to the Indian economy by providing employment, innovation and development to regions in the country. The MSME sector of India is the third largest in the world as per the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and it contributes nearly 29 per cent of the country's GDP and around 45 per cent of total exports. This goes on to demonstrate why this sector is crucial and in not only our region but across the world. But then still, small businesses in India have made small contribution, and there are challenges that small businesses have to go through, which hinders their growth.

Rai and Shrivastava (2021) equally post that there is the difficulty of how small business enterprises in India can brand themselves since they have a small amount of money to spend on promotion. A newspaper advert or a television commercial seriously lacks affordability by small business, which makes it hard for them to cover large markets. Meanwhile, because the Indian market is highly diverse, many small enterprises especially those who operate in rural areas often lack the means to obtain state-of-the-art marketing equipment and to be able to reach out to their target consumers.

With increased digital network connection in India, better internet connectivity, digital marketing is now an effective way of addressing these issues. The more and more use of smartphone devices and cheap data offerings like Digital India has enabled small traders to be online with their customers. Nevertheless, even today, most SBs are ignorant about the possibilities of digital marketing to leverage their advantage. Thus, there is still a digital divide (Rai & Shrivastava, 2021).

### Social Media Marketing Effect

Today, social media marketing is one of the most uncomplicated and inexpensive digital advertising techniques for India's small businesses. B2C platforms that businesses can use to create pages, post content, and communicate with their customers include Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and LinkedIn, amongst others, and most of them require little to no monetary investment. This is especially achievable for small businesses, which cannot afford major advertising approaches that may require huge capital investment.



According to Gupta & Sharma (2022), social media platform has greatly influenced small business development through the provision of affordable marketing opportunities. For example, Instagram helps small businesses to emphasize their products and services, communicate with other users, and cooperate with multi-channel personalities to broaden their audience. WhatsApp, for example, has emerged as a very crucial platform for communicating with customers and managing orders and direct marketing for businesses in some industries including retail and foods delivery.

Making of community of a brand is also a benefit of social media marketing to small businesses. Through status updates, added content, promotional spots, small business can get regular fan who will, in turn, share materials and promote it." This social proof is very useful in enhancing trust, especially in the rather saturated market in India. But according to Gupta and Sharma (2022), for the social media marketing to prove beneficial, the small businesses have to devote some time in managing the social media profiles, customer

engagement, and algorithmic changes, which may take much of the time of a small business owner having many other tasks at their hand.

### SEO and Content Marketing for Small Business

SEO and content marketing are another core strategies of the digital marketing that small business in India can leverage on to market themselves online. In other words, SEO is the process of improving organic visibility of a business website and its contents on the SERPs, while content marketing is the process of using value addition and promotion of content with the aim of attracting and engaging the target customer.

The article by Patel (2021) is helpful as it covers the relevance of SEO for small businesses especially in a saturated niche. Essentially, organic website traffic is an important source of leads for small businesses since many get a good chunk of their traffic from engine giants such as Google. When it comes to actual SEO tactics, proper use of keywords, site speed optimisation and mobile responsiveness, small businesses stand a better chance to rank higher. As this is very relevant today, businesses which depend on their customers to search for products and services online face a big challenge.

This usually goes hand in hand with SEO because through Blog posts, videos, social media posts among others, it establishes brand reliability. This in turn helps small businesses target its audience by becoming a source of information and fun in creating content online. Patel (2021) has also said more=’. ‘Content marketing can also be cheaper for small businesses than traditional advertising, as they can use content marketing to publicise their brands and products. Moreover, another value of content marketing is that it can help take a long-run approach to the customers and permanently keep them.

Digital Marketing Strategy	Primary Benefits	Example Industry
Social Media Marketing	Customer engagement, brand visibility	Retail, Fashion, Food
SEO	Organic traffic, long-term visibility	E-commerce, Technology
Content Marketing	Brand loyalty, customer education	Health, Finance, Consulting
Email Marketing	Customer retention, personalized offers	Subscription Services, SaaS

However, it is critical to have a clear understanding of the customers, their behavior, trends in keywords, and a capacity to create quality content frequently to make proper SEO and content marketing strategies work for businesses. Small business owners may find some of these tasks overwhelming so they will need professional help, making their digital marketing more expensive and complex.

### Difficulties of Using Digital Marketing for Small Business

However there are many issues that act as barriers for small businesses in India to embrace digital marketing strategies. Banerjee (2021) points out several challenges as follows: general technical skills, financial constraints, and dynamic technological environment. The owners are overwhelmed by numerous trends, algorithms and platforms, which cause a low efficiency of work with advertisements.

Cash flow problems are one of the most significant challenges the small companies face especially those with restricted capitals. Digital marketing in most cases is cheaper than traditional marketing because they do not involve expenses like airtime. On the other hand, costs can be incurred when using certain techniques like PPC advertising, Hiring an agency to do the marketing for you. This has often kept small business owners to handle the digital marketing themselves hence causing them pressure if at all, they do not have the skill in it.

Moreover, this packaging creates a problem for the small businesses since digital marketing platforms are dynamic. Currently, social media, SEO, content marketing principles are in constant flux and for many companies the change is not occurring quickly enough. For instance, a simple tweak in the Facebook algorithm means that posts no longer get the same exposure that was expected; this means that even small businesses must pay for advertisement space (Banerjee, 2021).

Also, another area of concern is digital literacy. Technological literacy remains a problem in India, even though the government has continuously sought to increase internet penetration; the black spot is the rural population that cannot effectively engage in digital marketing. This reveals that small businesses across these regions, where this digital divide exists, are likely to benefit differently when adopting digital technologies.

## III. Methodology

### Research Design

The approach used in this research is both the qualitative and quantitative research since data is gathered with the intention of answering two research questions. The rationale for using the mixed-methods

approach is that, in addition to reporting the numerical DM practices and SME trends, it will provide understanding of the small business owners' experiences and measurements in handling DM techniques.

The research procedure starts with a quantitative exploratory study with 100 small business owners from both the urban and the rural area in India. This gives a general insight on how digital marketing is being applied together with its impact to major drivers of growth such as sales, customer acquisition and branding. Furthermore, the quantitative data was complemented by series of semi-structured interviews with a sample of the business owners, to enable development of additional information on the bottlenecks relating to assimilation of digital marketing trends. Secondary data was also collected from reliable sources; including government publications, trade association studies and academic journals in order to give perspectives to the collected primary data.

Section	Focus Area	Question Type
Digital Marketing Usage	Tools/platforms used	Multiple choice, ranking
Business Growth Metrics	Sales, customer acquisition, etc.	Likert scale (1-5)
Challenges	Barriers to digital marketing	Open-ended, multiple choice

This study is thus interested in utilizing a mixed-methods research design generally to achieve both a descriptive account of the state of digital marketing for small business and to explore the particulars of the experiences of the business owners in different regions of operation and of different industries.

#### Data Collection

##### Primary Data

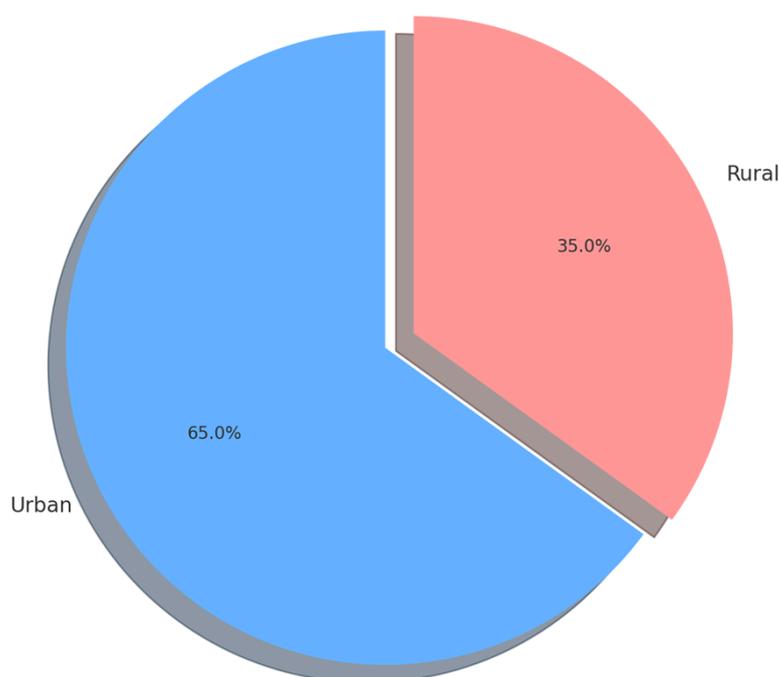
Therefore the quantitative data for this research was obtained from the small business owners through a structured questionnaire and interviews.

Survey: Fill-in structured questionnaires were developed with 100 small business owners selected from the sectors of retail, food and beverage, manufacturing and services. The questionnaire was divided into three key sections:

Digital Marketing Usage: This section gathered information on which of the digital marketing promotion techniques (social media marketing, SEO, email marketing and etc.) are adopted by these businesses, the frequency of adopting them and the preferred media channels.

Business Growth Metrics: The second part was that the company has been able to achieve goals such as sales growth, customer attraction, or brand awareness since employing them as part of digital marketing.

Distribution of Respondents (Urban vs. Rural)



**Challenges:** The last portion discussed the five factors that make it difficult for small business to use digital marketing; these include, lack of capital, lack of knowledge of digital marketing tools, and lack of easy methods on how to use the tools.

The survey was conducted both online using Google Forms and face to face depending on the location of the business and their particular regions Internet connection. The participants for the study were randomly chosen and purposively sampled so that the strategy of data collection covered as many industries and areas as possible.

**Interviews:** In the survey 10 owners of small businesses were contacted and semi structured interviews were carried out with the participants. Interviews enabled them to describe their first hand experience with digital marketing and the difficulties experienced, achievements made, and the tools used to navigate through the challenges. Some of these interviews were conducted in person while others were conducted by video call depending on the respondent's time zone and availability. These questions made it easy to gather detailed responses from the business owners due to the fact that they gave explanations to their answers leading to a thematic analysis of the study.

#### Secondary Data

Secondary data was also gathered from other credible sources to give general information to the study findings. These sources included:

**Government Reports:** Some of the sources used in this study include the following; • The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) presented relevant information on the size, economic impact, and some challenges facing small businesses in India.

**Industry Surveys:** About digital marketing and its penetration among small businesses, information obtained through surveys and reports across organisations such as the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) and the Federation of India Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FICCI).

**Academic Research:** Existing research articles from scholarly databases were also consulted to identify the effects of digital marketing and to make comparisons with other regions or industries. These academic sources were used to develop hypotheses, which erected the theoretical underpinning for the research of the primary data.

#### Data Analysis

##### Quantitative Analysis

The numerical data from the survey responses were then statistically tested from statistical software like SPSS, Microsoft Excel, etc. The analysis focused on the following key aspects:

**Usage of Digital Marketing Strategies:** The number and kind of online media (Facebook, Instagram, Google AdWords, SEO, etc.) used by SMEs were summed up and contrasted.

**Growth Metrics:** The degree of the connection between the extent of the digital marketing usage was evaluated concerning the business development parameters, including revenues' growth, acquisition of new customers, and brand awareness. To analyze the data qualitatively, frequencies and percentages were computed while hypotheses testing involved use of coefficient and correlation analysis to test the relationship between digital marketing usage and business performance.

**Challenges and Constraints:** The quantitative data also focus on percentage of businesses who faced particular challenge or not (e.g. digital skills, financial constraints) and this was then calculated to assess the key barriers to adopting digital marketing.

### Qualitative Analysis

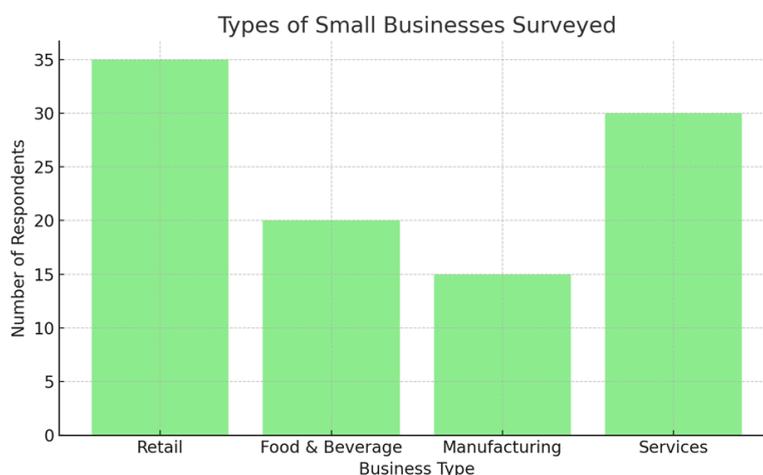
Det kvalitativa materialet från intervjuerna undersöktes tematiskt, med utgångspunkt från besvarade frågor och identifikation av uppkomna rekurrenser och mönstervad avser möjligheter och utmaningar med digital marknadsföring för SMBs. Thematic analysis involved several key steps:

**Transcription and Familiarization:** The performance of the interviews was then transcribed, and subsequently, reviewed with a view to identifying key discussions made by the participants.

**Coding:** Specific words and phrases concerning the digital marketing tactics, problems, and improvement trends were analyzed. The responses were coded with reference to such labels as "social media engagement," "financial barriers," and "customer retention."

**Theme Development:** The codes were classified into categories, for instance, the positives of social media marketing, the negatives of social media marketing, and the efficiency of the digital marketing tools.

**Interpretation:** These themes were then used to define other patterns and findings that could be used to reach wider conclusions about the population of small business establishments in India. Quantitative results were supported by qualitative data that filled the gap of understanding the individual experiences and coping mechanisms of small business owners.



### Triangulation

To minimize the threat to the validity and reliability of the results, the survey data was triangulated with the interview data and with the secondary data from the government report and industry surveys. This was useful to support findings made from analysing the primary data and also made certain that data collected was within shouldered to some ext)

### Ethical Considerations

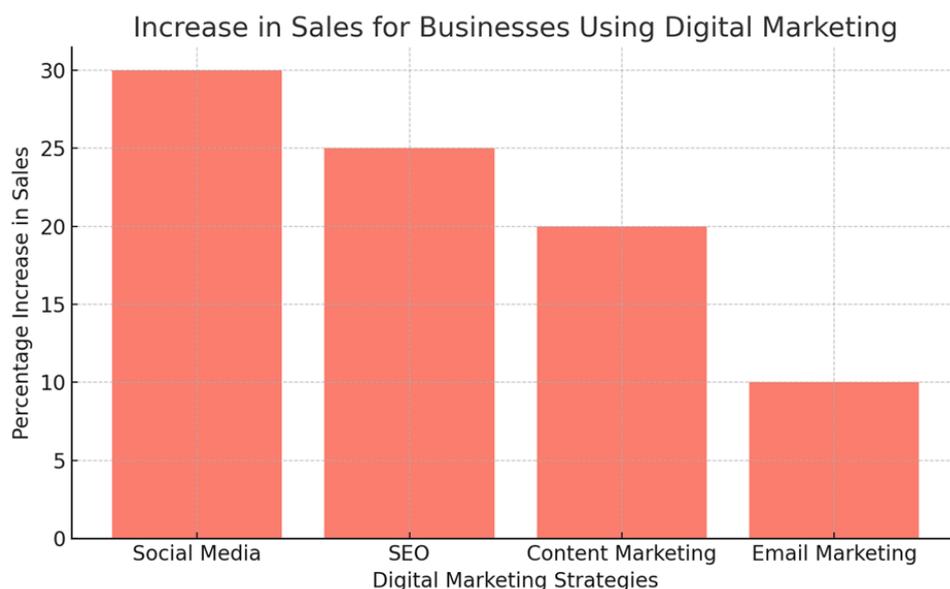
This research also considered the ethical principles so as to provide protection of the participants' identity and anonymity. All the participants in the survey and interviews provided written consent and were also advised the purpose of the research and their right to pull out at any time. Participants were pseudonymized by the use of code numbers, and identification numbers were excluded from the final report.

## IV. Results And Discussion

The Implementation of Digital Marketing among Small Business Organizations

These results simply demonstrate that a large number of the Indian small businesses have incorporated digital marketing into their marketing mix. In more detail, 70% of the respondents said that they engage in the use of some form of digital marketing in their business. The most popular was the social media marketing with 65% of ventures as they utilised Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp to market and sell the products besides interacting with the customers. Social media is very popular because of its low cost that also covers the high coverage in addition to its suitability to small businesses.

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) came next, where 40% of the participants' website and online content integration included SEO. SEO helps companies to enhance their visibility on internet by making them rank well on the search engine results pages (SERPs). Companies that concentrate on SEO get a hold of the organic traffic and this maybe lead to permanent profitability without constantly spending on advertisements.



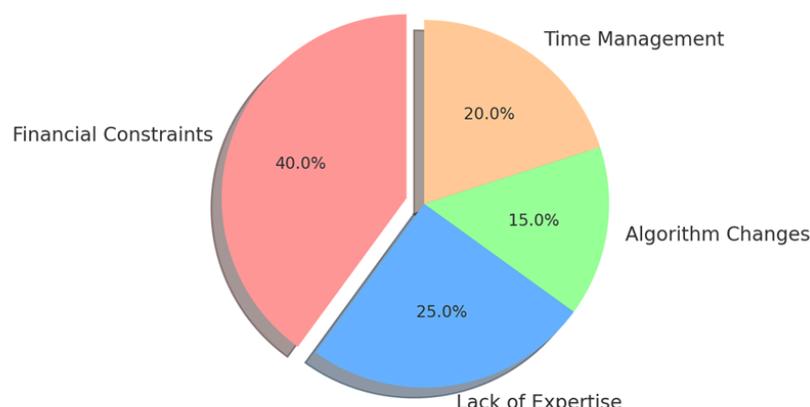
Content marketing was also adopted by a lot of firms and 30% of them created content in the form of blogs, videos, and other means to interact with their clients. This makes content marketing stand out in that it offers helpful content to customer, thereby making them loyal to the business. Such strategies were employed jointly to enhance the impact of customer acquisition and retention successful rate.

In a nut shell, the survey reveal that the use of digital marketing technology is profound among small businesses since majority of them realize its efficiency in triggering business growth. However, all firms displayed a similar trend in adoption of these technologies; the extent of adoption was, however, standardized by the size of the business, the industry in which the business was set, and the literacy level of the owners in computer usage.

#### Impact on Sales and Growth

**Convenience:** The evaluation of the results of the survey reveals that firms that employ digital marketing strategies experience business growth. Specifically, from the respondents who adopted the digital marketing, 75 % of them indicated that they had improved their sales in the past one year. This shows us that digital marketing is essential in efforts to reach out to potential clients and ultimately make sales.

### Challenges Faced by Small Businesses in Implementing Digital Marketing



Companies that employed more than one Internet marketing tools including one that involved use of social media together with search Engine optimization and E-mail marketing saw better results. Average revealed increased sales by 30% indicating that companies that use comparative integrated digital marketing strategy, get better results compared to using a specific platform only. The effective use of various digital aids, it becomes easy for small businesses to gain a wider market reach that will be gospel to the prospective buyers and thus turnout buyers into customers.

There is no doubt, the ability to apply digital marketing for reaching out for new markets or segments which have not been explored before, especially in urban markets was one of the most prominent responses given. Some of those SMEs which in the past relied on informal advertising techniques such as word of mouth discovered that digital marketing allowed them to reach customers across geopolitical borders. This is especially so as India for instance is reporting very high internet usage penetration levels among its population. Having an online location therefore provides the small firms with the opportunity to tap into the new markets, this diversifies their revenues and cuts down their exposure to their own markets.

#### Brand Personalisation and Customer Relations

Digital marketing, therefore, not only promote the sales of products but also go a long way in ensuring that brands and products attained maximum visibility and consumer interaction. According to the survey, firms that effectively adopted SMM and SEO seemed to have higher brand visibility than those that primarily relied on traditional form of advertising. Integrated digital marketing also enables businesses to engage the customers personally through answering their queries, responding to their feedback or promoting the business new products or services electronically and in real time.

Metric	Before Digital Marketing	After Digital Marketing
Website Visits (monthly avg.)	500	1,500
Social Media Followers	200	1,000
Customer Inquiries (weekly)	10	35

Out of the flow of research one of the more particular case is related to a qualitative survey, which concerned one of the small scale fashion brand operating from Jaipur. When following the adoption of an effective Social Media Marketing strategy especially through Instagram and Facebook, the brand experienced the manufacturing of its customers by 200%. That increase was evidenced by the potential customers following, the number of likes, comments, and direct messages received. Another method was the use of the influencer collaborations that also allowed to reach out to more people and gain a trust of the new clients.

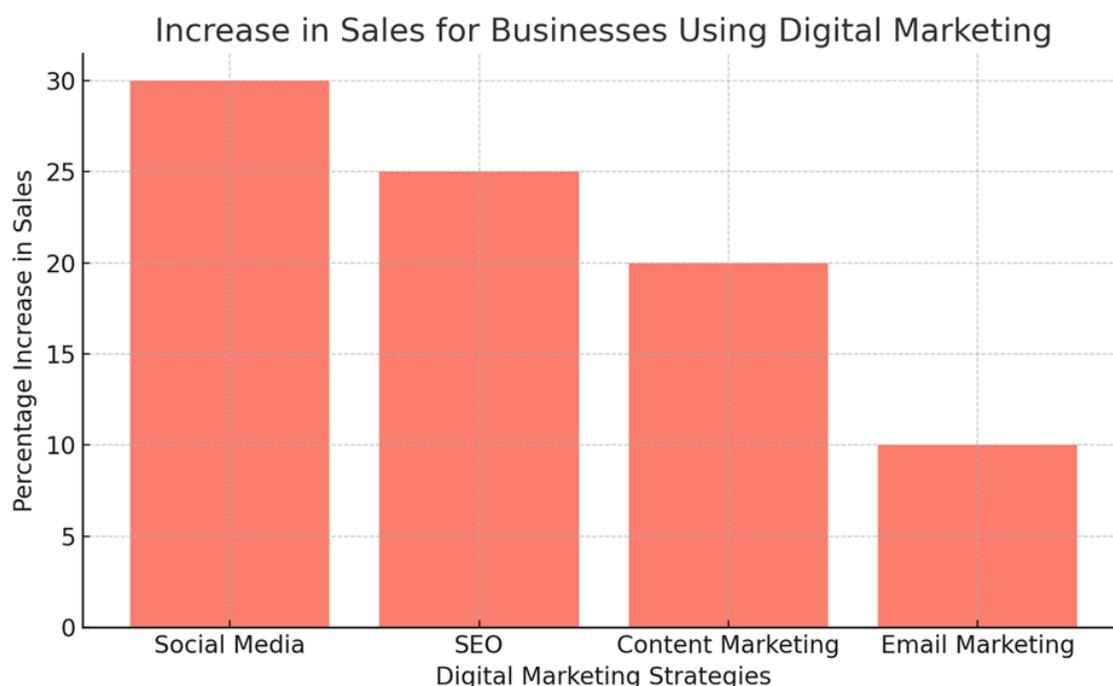
The case finding underlines the necessity of a continuous and natural integration of customers. Organizations which employ posting of useful information, interacting frequently with the public, and

responding to visitors' queries will attract loyal customers. As well, SEO efforts that boosts the position of an organization on search engines also boosts brand awareness of the organization since potential customers are more likely to patronize a business that features on the first page of a search.

#### Self-Implementing School Leaders: 4 Challenges OfImplementation

It is however important to note that small businesses today, wearing the newH digital marketing hat, encounter carefully laid hurdles that limit their ability to utilize marketing strategies in the most effective manner possible. The survey established that 40% of the respondents said that the reason their organization had not adopted effective digital marketing was due to financial challenges. While social media marketing can be efficient with a low cost of organizing, other activities, including paid promotion, collaborating with social media specialists, or implementing highly effective SEO tactics, may be expensive. In particular for small businesses that may be barely breakeven, these costs may be too expensive to effectively capitalize on the opportunities offered by digital marketing.

Besides the financial constraints, another key concern that came out clearly from the respondents for implementing the strategies was lack of technical know how, 25%. Digital marketing as a field requires dealing with multimodal and sophisticated technologies, including Google Analytics & Facebook Ads Manager, and SEO algorithms. A lot of SMB owners themselves do not possess the necessary digital competency to properly engage with these tools, and even if they did, they may not be able to afford to hire proper marketers. Thus, such enterprises may have difficulties in adjusting their web advertising or can lag behind in exploiting different trends.



Yet another issue raised to an extent by 15% of the participants was fluidity of digital marketing algorithms and trends. Applications such as Google or Facebook may change the algorithms many times a year, which can radically reconstruct the effectiveness of the business's advertisement strategy. For instance, updates in the algorithms of use of Facebook such as the one that traditionally filters the content posted by friends and family over that of business pages greatly hinders the going exposure of posts, thus costing businesses more in direct advertisement. Hence, the informational environment continues to evolve, which places a pressure on businesses to continually learn and enhance their current understanding of marketing conducted through computer networks, which is time-consuming and may be beyond the reach of many small business managers.

## V. Conclusion

#### Summary of Findings

Thus, this research has brought out clearly the extents to which digital marketing has boosted the growth of small businesses in India. Measures like Social media marketing, SEO, and Content marketing being employed in businesses have shown improvements in what would be important business indicators like sales,

company visibility, and level of engagements. The small businesses that adopted the use of the digital media especially the social media advertising were able to reach many people, increase the company's awareness and increase the number of customers who returned. Also, companies who adopted SEO and content marketing strategies recorded higher traffic to their websites and higher search engine rank; thus higher conversion rates and, therefore, customer loyalty in the long run.

Metric	Percentage of Respondents Reporting Positive Impact
Sales Increase	75%
Customer Acquisition	70%
Brand Visibility	65%
Improved Customer Engagement	60%

But the study also revealed some barriers that hinder small businesses from embracing the use of digital marketing. This in some way is still a limitation when it comes to financial capital as many of the small businesses say that they cannot afford to pay for the expensive digital marketing strategies and or hire personnel's in digital marketing. One issue is digital literacy – these entrepreneurs are frequently unable to manage the numerous procedures associated with the publicizing tools and channels. Indeed, digital marketing is constantly shifting as search engine platforms and effective approaches are often altered, compounded the challenge for the inexperienced small businesses.

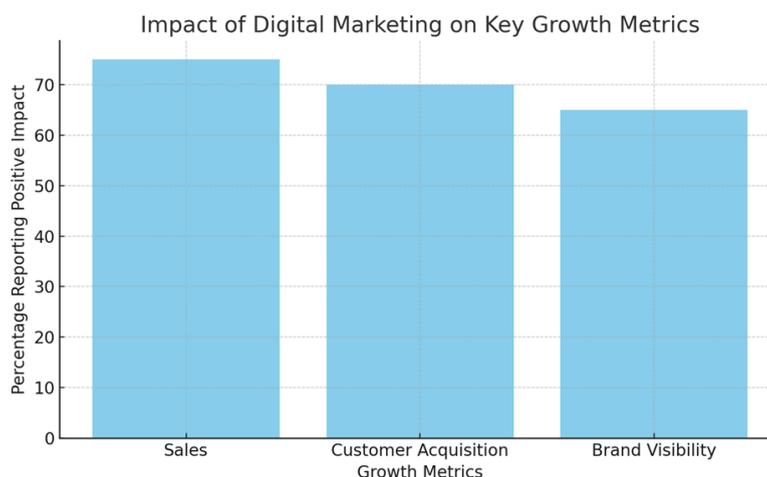
However, this study provide clear evidence of the opportunities available for digital marketing to enhance the effectiveness of small business in India to compete favorably in a competitive and more recently digital economy. In essence, the targeted application of digital marketing techniques can greatly increase the exposure, stall-client relationships, and long-term revenues of small businesses.

#### Consequences Which Small Businesses May facing

The implications which come from the results of this study are given below, which are highly relevant to small business in India. Based on these advantages of digital marketing, it is crucial for the owners of small businesses to invest in digital marketing. For many business owing to limited capital, the first important steps include working with such social nets as Facebook, Instagram, or WhatsApp. These tools are relatively inexpensive and give high returns with regard to customer contact and subsequent brand exposure. Small businesses can use these platforms to form an online community, market their products or services and have direct contact with the customers.

Moreover, the opportunities for Internet advertising should be complemented with SEO and content marketing as well. Hence, businesses will benefit from the available SEO techniques of keyword-targeted website, fast-loading website, or quality content suitable to their target market regardless of their small budgets. Blogging, video sharing, creating social media accounts help to address the needs of cost-conscious companies that require maintaining the flow of customer engagement and brand authority.

Due to all the questions connected to technical requirements, small businesses might have to look at working with either a consultant or agency specializing in digital marketing. Hiring a marketing company to handle certain aspects of digital marketing goes a long way in overcoming these hurdles of expertise, which are major difficulties for most business people in this regard since they are able to find expert advice on how to accomplish their marketing goals through the use of the particular and most effective techniques of the modern world in this ever advancing technological world. For the companies that may not be in a position to invest heavily in agency services, they can opt to seek advice or opt for single session training to enhance on their digital marketing skills.



Last but not the least, the only thing that small business must have is a learning attitude, the ability to learn, and a preparedness to unlearn what one has been learning for a while now. One should note that the environment of digital marketing is often dynamic and companies that will embrace changes and be the first to embrace the changes will stand the better chance of giving their competitors a run for their money in the long run. Business owners should try to know more about the update that may exist in digital platform, new tools, customers' needs so that they will be in a better position to make right decision concerning their businesses' marketing strategy.

#### Conclusion and Suggestion for Future Research

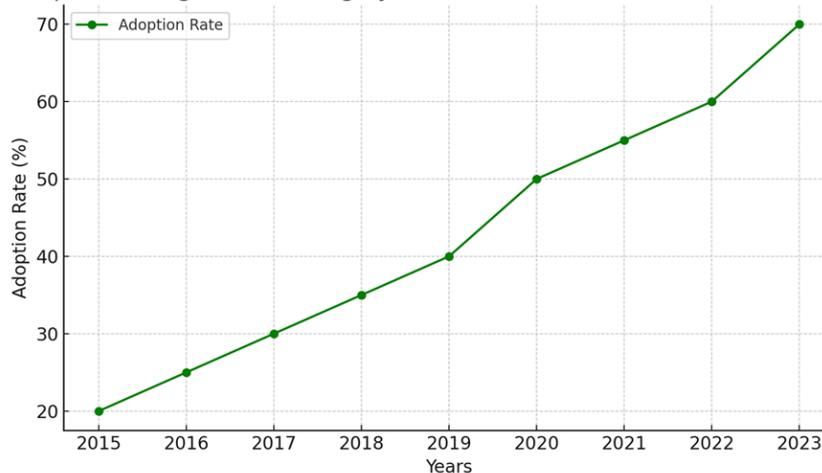
Altogether, the comprehensiveness is not perfect, and there are several prospects in the investigated topic for further research:

First, future research could look at the impact on small business growth in the long-run of digital marketing. This study has largely focused on some of the short-term effects of digital marketing strategies namely sales and customer acquisition. Other effects for example the impact of consistent efforts in digital marketing on business performance, customer loyalty and business scalability were left out.

Second, this research mainly focused on small business firms operating in urban and semi-urban areas where internet services as well as digital technologies are more accessible. Future research could analyze how Indian rural small businesses can efficiently utilise digital marketing. The major issues encountered in rural business include low access to the internet and low electronic literacy compared to their urban counterparts; nevertheless, the advantage of adopting digital marketing in reaching out to other markets cannot be overemphasized.

However, more focused research works may bring finer details into understanding how increasing digital marketing within specific sectors is received. For instance, enterprises involving sales and hospitality industries may be more or less affected by such digital marketing than manufacturing or service industries. Awareness of such sectoral differences would aid in targeting specific sectors with appropriate and contextualised solutions to digital marketing problems.

Adoption of Digital Marketing by Small Businesses Over Time (2015-2023)



Finally, an understanding of how technologies in the likes of artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and data analytics can improve the use of digital marketing for small business could be a subject of study in the future. These technologies are more likely becoming more affordable to range and probably present little up and coming ways that new small businesses could bring their marketing strategies better concerning the best approaches on customer behavioral patterns for better results.

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