



INTERGRATED MARKETING STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE OF PLASTIC MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

In Kenya, it is projected that 260 thousand tonnes of plastic packaging waste are produced year from total plastic package consumption. A total of about 15 per cent (38,000 tonnes) of this is thought to be recycled, with an estimated 18 percent of it being collected for recycling. The general objective of the study was to assess the influence of strategic marketing practices on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to establish the effect of social media marketing on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya and to determine the effect of digital marketing on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. In this study, a descriptive research design was employed. The unit of analysis was 100 plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya while the unit of observation was management employees working in these firms. To make sure that all 100 of the targeted respondents answer, the researcher employed a census technique. A census is a survey that includes every person in a certain population. Questionnaires were used by the researcher to gather primary data. The researcher self-administered the questionnaires by hand delivering them to the organization being studied and then retrieving them after a few days. A pilot study was conducted to test the validity and reliability of the research instrument. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were computed and findings presented in tables and figures. The study concludes that social media marketing has a positive and significant influence on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. In addition, the study concludes that digital marketing has a positive and significant influence on growth strategy and performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya.. Based on the findings, the study recommends that the management of plastic manufacturing firms in Kenya should leverage localized content and engagement. By creating and sharing content that highlights local success stories, partnerships with Nairobi-based businesses, or community involvement initiatives, firms can build a stronger connection with their target audience. This approach not only enhances brand visibility but also fosters trust and loyalty among local customers.

Key Words: Intergrated Marketing Strategies, Social Media Marketing, Digital Marketing, Performance of Plastic Manufacturing Firms

Background of the study

In essence, marketing communication is a component of the marketing mix. The 4Ps of marketing are defined by the marketing mix, and the focus of marketing communications is promotion. It is the message your company will deliver to your target market. You must pay close attention to the many messages you intend to spread via the various media. The only way to communicate with consumers in the past was through printed marketing. However, in recent years, sending messages to customers via email, text message, blogs, television, and company websites has become fashionable. It's crucial, though, that the message you convey via one channel aligns with the one through another (Peltier, Schibrowsky, & Schultz, 2012).

The marketing communications mix is the combination of many promotional tactics used by an organization, including advertising, sales promotion, public relations, internet marketing, direct-marketing tools, and online, digital, and integrated marketing techniques. It helps you convey the value of your brand to customers and establish enduring bonds with them. This course on marketing fundamentals can help you get started in one day if you are a marketing professional, a business owner, or an entrepreneur. We'll examine each of these promotion techniques individually and comprehend the numerous advantages that each have to offer. We'll discuss the necessity of integrated marketing communications as well as the communication goals that businesses should prioritize (Palgrave, 2014).

According to Messah & Immaculate (2011), the integrated marketing communication concept is an improved version of the basic communication model and is based on maximizing effectiveness in the creation and presentation of messages targeted at customers by building databases based on understanding even a single customer and mutual relations. The synergy produced by coordination must be portrayed as operational productivity, cost savings, and message-point efficiency (Odabaş and Oyman, 2003). Furthermore, Linton and Morley (1995) note that the beneficial effects that the integrated marketing communication activities have on the company's market share, revenue, and profitability can boost marketing performance.

For many businesses in Kenya, developing marketing strategy and concentrating on promotional activities have remained difficult (Straughan, 2000). However, in order for any firms to thrive in the competitive business environment, they must concentrate on marketing their services due to the expansion of the service sector (Kotler, 2007). In Kenya, marketing for companies offering laboratory services continues to be a significant difficulty. Since services cannot be isolated from the person providing or selling them, both large and small businesses must implement effective advertising techniques to draw in and keep clients (Nicolaud, 1989). Utilizing a variety of communication platforms to market healthcare services helps draw in and keep clients (Sanchez and Peinado, 2003).

The first company to manufacture PVC, PPR, and HDPE pipes and fittings in Kenya and East Africa is Metro Plastics Kenya Ltd. The business was founded in the year 1983. The building sits at Nadume Close off Lunga Lunga Road in Nairobi, Kenya's industrial area. Due to their compatibility with all piping systems made in the worldwide market or imported into the COMESA countries, its branded PVC Pipes and Fittings have a remarkable success.

The business engages in both direct and indirect selling to customers. It extends hospitality to its clients and often counsels them on the most effective implementation techniques. These are some of the most important factors we take into account whenever we deal with customers. Metro Plastic values and takes into account client input because it is crucial to their efforts to provide even better services.

The business serves both domestic and foreign customers. Deliveries of goods are made in accordance with the contract. According on the quantity of items purchased, their pricing is reduced.

Statement of the problem

In Kenya, it is projected that 260 thousand tonnes of plastic packaging waste are produced year from total plastic package consumption. A total of about 15 per cent (38,000 tonnes) of this is thought to be recycled, with an estimated 18 percent of it being collected for recycling. Other nations also experience this amount of recycling, which comes from primarily informal garbage collection networks. According to a UN report on handling urban garbage in poor nations, the rate is somewhere around 15%. Plastics were recycled at a rate of between 10 and 20 per cent in the Western Balkans.

Plastic product output overall decreased by 3.8 per cent in 2017, as a result of the ban on plastic bags, which went into effect in August of that year. Due to legislative and regulatory uncertainties, the ban has resulted in the closure of 40 enterprises, and there is a noticeable aversion to capital expenditure and investment in the sector (KNBS, 2020). Both small and large businesses must use integrated marketing communication strategies in order to thrive in the cutthroat marketing climate. This will lead to long-term connections with customers, performance, and overall productivity (Perreault) (2014). Increased revenue, a larger clientele, and customer loyalty are indicators of a competitive organization's sales efforts in a competitive market (Bello, Etzel & Pits, 201). Increasing competition, globalization, influence, evolving technology, and shifting consumer requirements and preferences are pushing businesses to alter their communication strategies in both domestic and worldwide markets (Palgrave, 2018). Research shows that

Mwangi (2020) conducted research on the practice of assessing the efficiency of advertising in Kenya. The study discovered that advertisements had a positive impact on the operation of the organization. According to the study's findings, it was necessary to assess the efficiency of advertisements using changes in performance, product demand, and sales volumes. Gaceri (2018) carried out a poll to find out how consumers felt about retail media advertising. The study discovered that consumers had favorable opinions of retail media advertising, and Makau (2019) conducted research on the impact of advertising on consumer brand preferences. In the case of Coca-Cola brand advertising, the study found that it was successful in reaching its target audience. The study also suggested that Coca-Cola Company adopt various promotion strategies to increase consumer preference for their products. But none of these studies have examined how strategic marketing practices affect performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya; instead, they have all focused on advertising as one component of the promotion mix. To fill the highlighted gaps, the current study sought to assess the influence of strategic marketing practices on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

The general objective of the study was to assess the influence of strategic marketing practices on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya

Specific Objective

The specific objectives included:

- i. To establish the effect of social media marketing on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya
- ii. To determine the effect of digital marketing on the growth strategy and performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya

Theoretical Review

Resource-Based View Theory

The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory founded by Barney (1991) is a strategic management framework that focuses on the internal resources and capabilities of a firm as sources of competitive advantage. At its core, RBV posits that a firm's unique bundle of resources and capabilities can enable it to achieve sustainable competitive advantage and superior performance in the marketplace. Unlike traditional strategic management approaches that primarily focus on external factors such as market dynamics and industry structure, RBV emphasizes the importance of internal factors in determining a firm's success. RBV theory entails identifying and leveraging a firm's distinctive resources and capabilities to create value and achieve strategic objectives. Resources can include tangible assets such as physical infrastructure, financial capital, and technology, as well as intangible assets such as human capital, intellectual property, organizational culture, and reputation. These resources are considered valuable if they enable the firm to exploit opportunities or neutralize threats in the external environment. Capabilities, on the other hand, refer to the firm's ability to effectively deploy and utilize its resources to perform specific activities and achieve desired outcomes (Koori, Muriithi, & Mbebe, 2020). This theory was relevant in establishing the effect of social media marketing on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya.

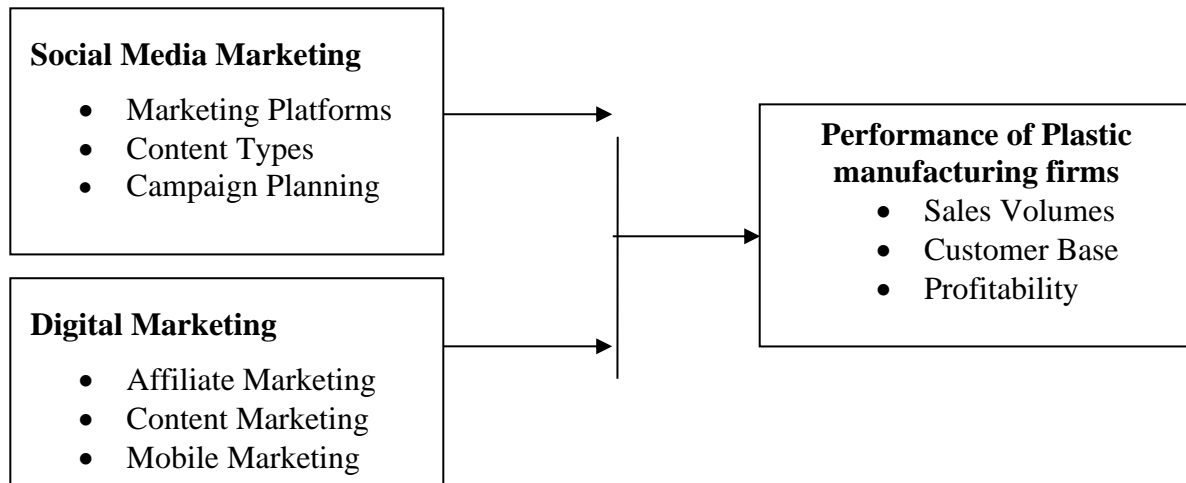
Resource Dependence Theory

Resource Dependence Theory (RDT) founded by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) is a theoretical framework in organizational studies that examines how organizations strategically manage and depend on external resources to achieve their goals and sustain their operations. RDT argues that organizations exist within an environment where they must interact with external entities such as suppliers, customers, competitors, government agencies, and other stakeholders. These external entities possess resources that are crucial for the organization's survival and success. Central to RDT is the concept of resource dependency, which suggests that organizations are dependent on external resources that they cannot fully control. These resources include financial capital, technology, information, expertise, raw materials, market access, and political support, among others. The theory posits that the ability of an organization to secure and manage these external resources effectively influences its organizational behavior, decision-making processes, and strategic actions (Tijjani, Ibrahim, & Haruna, 2023).

Organizations employ various strategies to manage resource dependencies, including forming strategic alliances, diversifying suppliers, lobbying for favorable regulations, investing in technology, and engaging in networking activities. These strategies are aimed at reducing uncertainty, ensuring access to critical resources, and enhancing organizational resilience in a competitive environment. RDT also emphasizes power dynamics in resource exchanges between organizations and their external environment. Organizations with greater resource dependencies may find themselves in vulnerable positions if they lack alternatives or substitutes for essential resources. Conversely, organizations that successfully manage and diversify their resource dependencies can strengthen their competitive position and influence within their industry or market. Moreover, RDT highlights the role of inter-organizational relationships and networks in resource acquisition and management. Organizations often engage in strategic interactions with external stakeholders to negotiate resource exchanges, build trust-based partnerships, and gain access to complementary resources that contribute to their strategic objectives (Mirza, 2022). This theory was relevant in determining the effect of digital marketing on the growth strategy and performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is a diagram showing the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. In this study, the independent variables are social media marketing and digital marketing while dependent variable is performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya



Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Social Media Marketing

Social Media Marketing refers to the use of social media platforms and websites to promote a product or service. It involves creating and sharing content on social media networks to achieve marketing and branding goals. The activities in social media marketing can include posting text and image updates, videos, and other content that engages the audience, as well as paid advertising campaigns to reach a wider audience and amplify the reach of the content (Ochieng, Maore, & Kirmi, 2020). Social media marketing utilizes various platforms to reach and engage with target audiences effectively. Content types in social media marketing play a crucial role in engaging and retaining audiences. These include text posts, images, videos, info graphics, polls, live streams, stories, and user-generated content. Each type serves different purposes: videos can demonstrate product features or tell stories, images can showcase products or evoke emotions, while polls and interactive content encourage audience participation. The key is to maintain variety while aligning content types with audience preferences and platform capabilities to maximize engagement and achieve marketing objectives (Otiso, 2022). Campaign planning in social media marketing involves strategic steps to achieve specific goals. It begins with defining objectives such as increasing brand awareness, driving traffic, or boosting sales. Researching the target audience and competitors helps in crafting messages and content that resonate. Setting measurable goals, determining key performance indicators (KPIs), and establishing a budget are critical. Content calendars outline when and what content will be posted, ensuring consistency and relevance. Monitoring and analyzing campaign performance with tools such as analytics platforms enable marketers to adjust strategies and optimize future campaigns based on real-time data and insights gained from audience interactions (Ndioo, & Kimencu, 2020).

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing encompasses all marketing efforts that use electronic devices or the internet. It leverages digital channels such as search engines, social media, email, websites, and mobile apps to connect with current and prospective customers. The goal of digital marketing is to

reach, engage, and convert audiences using various strategies and tactics tailored to the specific platforms and technologies available. Key components of digital marketing include search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing, and more (Guchu, Kimani, & Onunga, 2022). Affiliate marketing is a performance-based marketing strategy where businesses reward affiliates for generating traffic or sales through their marketing efforts. Content marketing focuses on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience. Unlike traditional advertising, content marketing aims to provide useful information, entertainment, or education to potential customers, rather than directly promoting a brand or product. This approach builds trust and authority over time, as consumers engage with content that addresses their needs or interests. Content formats include blog posts, articles, videos, infographics, podcasts, and more, tailored to resonate with the target audience's preferences and behaviors. Effective content marketing drives organic traffic, enhances brand awareness, and nurtures leads through the buyer's journey, ultimately driving conversions and customer loyalty (Fakha, & Saed, 2023). Mobile marketing refers to promotional activities designed for delivery to smartphones, tablets, and other mobile devices

Empirical Review

Social Media Marketing and Organization Performance

Mirza (2022) assessed on the impact of social media marketing channel usage on business performance in SME's. The research applies quantitative analysis via PLS-SEM for finding out the structural relationships among study constructs. The sample size consisted of 322 respondents who are either owners or workers at a decision-making level belonging to SMEs' in Pakistan. The study found that the two mediating effects of cost reduction and innovation in between social media marketing channel usage and business performance are statistically significant. The study concluded that there is a statistically significant effect of social media marketing channel usage on the business performance of small business enterprises.

Tijjani, Ibrahim and Haruna (2023) conducted a study on the effect of social media marketing on the performance of small and medium enterprises in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State Nigeria. The study used questionnaires and Small and medium-sized enterprises that are officially registered in North East Nigeria SME offices made up the study population. A sample size of 137 business owners who were operating for more than 3 years were selected for the study. The study found a positive relationship between social media marketing and SMEs performance in the Northeast of Nigeria. The study concluded that social media use such as (Facebook and WhatsApp) was significantly related with increase in the performance of business success.

Koori, Muriithi and Mbebe (2020) investigated on the impact of social media marketing on organizational performance of SACCOS in Kenya. This study was based on descriptive research design. The target population was 100 SACCOS affiliated with Kuscco within Nairobi region and a sample of 132 respondents was selected using simple random sampling technique. The study found that social media marketing is positively and significantly related with organizational performance of SACCOS. The study concluded that social media marketing influences organizational performance of SACCOS in Kenya.

Owino and Mutinda (2022) examined on the influence of social media marketing platforms on sales performance of Safaricom Public Limited Company, Kenya. Employment of descriptive research design was done. The study's population consisted of 100 sales managers and 2000 sales representatives from the marketing department of the organization. A simple random sampling method was used to select the respondents. There were 210 respondents in the sample. The study found that social media marketing platforms have a positive and significant influence on the sales performance. The study concluded that Safaricom has used social media

marketing channels to increase revenue, attract traffic to websites, promote its brand, and form long-term relationships with its consumers.

Arika and Moronge (2021) researched on the influence of social media marketing on performance in hospitality industry in Kenya: a case of Kenyatta International Convention Centre. The study adopted a descriptive survey and the targeted population was 70 employees drawn from different departments. The study found that social networking sites and customer acquisition cost have a significant influence on performance in hospitality industry. The study concluded that performance in hospitality industry in Kenya is affected by social networking sites followed by customer acquisition cost.

Digital Marketing and Organization Performance

Kabera and Irechukwu (2022) examined on digital marketing and organizational visibility in Rwanda a case of private sector federation (PSF). The study was conducted using descriptive research design from 126 respondents selected using simple random and census method as sampling technique. The study found that there is a positive and significant relationship between digital marketing and organizational visibility in PSF. The study concluded that digital marketing and organisational visibility has positive and significant relationships.

Ihunwo and Tonye (2023) investigated on the digital marketing strategies and service performance of deposit money banks in Nigeria. This study adopted a cross-sectional survey. The population of this study comprises of 20 registered and capitalized deposit money banks in Nigeria listed under the Nigeria deposit insurance corporation (NDIC) fact book, 2019, domiciled in Port Harcourt. The study found that there is significant and positive relationship between digital marketing strategies and service performance of deposit money banks in Nigeria while technology moderates the impact on digital marketing strategies and service performance. The study concluded that a positive and significant relationship exists between digital marketing strategies and service performance.

Alhshan and Aliyu (2024) researched on investigating the role of digital marketing on the performance of small and medium-scale enterprises in Nairobi. The study used descriptive and co-relational survey design. A total of 150 SMEs were purposively selected from the Nairobi metropolis. The study found that there is a positive and significant relationship between digital marketing and sales performance of SMEs in the Nairobi business district in Kenya. The study concluded that the importance of digital marketing on SMEs showed a positive and significant relationship.

Alubakah and Obuba (2022) assessed on the effect of digital marketing strategies on performance of deposit taking SACCO'S in Kisumu County, Kenya. The study adopted a census survey. Descriptive design was adopted by the study, the population of this study comprised of 13 Deposit Taking SACCOs in Kisumu County, Kenya registered under SASRA. The unit of observation of the study comprised of 65 Chief Executive Officers, Deputy Chief Executive Officers, Finance Managers, ICT Manager or the equivalent and the Operations manager or the equivalent from each deposit taking SACCO in Kisumu County, Kenya. The study found that digital marketing strategies have a positive relationship with organizational performance. The study concluded that digital marketing strategies a positive and significant impact on organizational performance.

Ndegwa (2021) conducted a study on the influence of digital marketing strategies on the performance of equity bank limited in Kenya. The study used descriptive cross sectional census survey. The population of study was from equity bank branches licensed to operate in Nairobi by the Central Bank of Kenya. The study found that electronic marketing strategies have contributed to improved performance of commercial banks. The study concluded that

performance of commercial banks is affected by the electronic marketing strategies selected by the bank.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2019), descriptive research is suitable due to its specialized nature and the ease with which it aids in broad comprehension and interpretation of the issue. The issue with descriptive research, according to Ghauri and Granhaug (2019), is structure and how well it is comprehended. Giving details on a population's or phenomenon's characteristics is the main goal of descriptive writing.

Target Population

Target population is defined by Mugenda and Mugenda (2019) as an entire group of unique examples of objects with certain common qualities, to which researchers intend to apply the findings of the study. The study's target demographic was Nairobi's licensed plastic manufacturing companies. Nairobi is home to about 100 of Kenya's registered plastic manufacturing companies, according to a Nairobi City County report from 2020. Owner management or one senior manager from each firm was among the replies. In Nairobi City County, the research conducted a survey of all the registered businesses.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

To make sure that all 100 of the targeted respondents answer, the researcher employed a census technique. A census is a survey that includes every person in a certain population. It is intended to gather data from every person in the population (Mugenda & Mugenda 2018). The researcher chose participants to represent the target population using both random sampling and probability.

Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaires were used by the researcher to gather primary data. A questionnaire, according to Foddy (1994), is a research tool made up of a number of questions and other prompts used to collect data from respondents. Surveys are frequently used to gather vital data about the population. Each question on the questionnaire was written with a specific purpose, research question, or hypotheses in mind. The respondents are given the chance to reflect further on the questionnaire's requirements in order to ensure that no significant information is missed from the study. Both structured (closed-ended) and open-ended (unstructured) questions will be included in the test.

Closed-ended or structured questions have a list of all possible answers from which respondents choose the one that most accurately represents their circumstance. Since they are available right away, they are quicker to analyse and cost less money and time to employ. Unstructured or open-ended inquiries offer the respondent total freedom in how they respond. These open-ended comments let a person to react using their own words. They enable responses with more nuances. Since the researcher does not have to work hard to come up with suitable response categories, they are easier to formulate.

The researcher self-administered the questionnaires by hand delivering them to the organization being studied and then retrieving them after a few days. The researcher would personally introduce the study to the respondents and address any issues or questions that came up, which is advantageous.

Pilot Test

Mugenda (2018) asserts that a pilot test is essential to determining the reliability of a study. Mugenda & Mugenda (2019) state that the pilot sample typically ranges from 1 to 10 per cent; the larger the sample, the lower the proportion. There was a pre-test and pilot survey to determine the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. To ensure enough domain coverage for each construct, the pre-test had a response rate of 10% (ten). 100 respondents made up the larger population from which the pilot sample was selected. The goal of the pilot testing is to determine the precision and suitability of the research design and apparatus and to offer proxies for data needed to choose a probability sample (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2017). The internal reliability of the questionnaire used in this study will be assessed using Cronbach's alpha on the same pilot group, and responses were gathered in order to determine the consistency of the questionnaire. Since the majority of the questionnaire's questions are on a likert scale, this approach is preferable.

Data Analysis and Presentation

The questionnaires were coded and revised for consistency and completeness after being received. Statistical Package for Social Science Version 21 was used to analyze quantitative data using descriptive statistics and inferential analysis (SPSS Version 21). This method provides straightforward summaries of the sample data and digestible quantitative descriptions (Orodho, 2019). Descriptive statistics, together with straightforward graphic analysis, serve as the foundation for almost all quantitative data analyses (Kothari, 2018). The relationship between the independent and dependent variables was determined using correlation analysis. Correlation was used in order to enable the study to forecast how a variable deviates from the norm. To make the data easier to grasp, frequency distribution tables, bar charts, and pie charts were used to illustrate the data.

Performance in manufacturing companies was regressed against four variables: social media marketing, digital marketing, event management and direct marketing. The formula for the equation was as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \epsilon$$

Where;

Y= the dependent variable (Performance)

α - Is a constant; the concept explaining the level of success given and it's the Y value when all the predictor values (X_1 , X_2 , ...) are zero

β_1 , β_2 , – Are constants regression coefficients representing the condition of the independent variables to the dependent variables.

X_1 – social media marketing

X_2 – digital marketing

ϵ - (Extraneous) Error term

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Descriptive Statistics

Social Media Marketing and Organization Performance

The first specific objective of the study was to establish the effect of social media marketing on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on various statements related to social media

marketing and performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. The results were as shown Table 1.

From the results, the respondents agreed that their organization currently utilizes multiple social media platforms for marketing purposes, including (list platforms) ($M=3.915$, $SD=0.776$). In addition, the respondents agreed that they prioritize these platforms based on target audience demographics and engagement metrics to maximize their reach and impact ($M=3.908$, $SD=0.836$). Further, the respondents agreed that they have found that visual content such as images and videos tends to generate higher engagement rates across all platforms ($M=3.870$, $SD=0.972$).

The respondents agreed that tailoring content for different platforms, such as creating interactive polls on Instagram and informative articles on LinkedIn, helps in maximizing engagement ($M=3.812$, $SD=0.705$). The respondents also agreed that audience segmentation and research play a key role in identifying target demographics and tailoring campaign messaging accordingly ($M=3.802$, $SD=0.608$). In addition, the respondents agreed that insights gathered from audience research inform their campaign strategies and content development process ($M=3.786$, $SD=0.897$).

Table 1: Social Media Marketing and Organization Performance

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our organization currently utilizes multiple social media platforms for marketing purposes, including (list platforms).	3.915	0.776
We prioritize these platforms based on target audience demographics and engagement metrics to maximize our reach and impact	3.908	0.836
We have found that visual content such as images and videos tends to generate higher engagement rates across all platforms.	3.870	0.972
Tailoring content for different platforms, such as creating interactive polls on Instagram and informative articles on LinkedIn, helps in maximizing engagement	3.812	0.705
Audience segmentation and research play a key role in identifying target demographics and tailoring campaign messaging accordingly.	3.802	0.608
Insights gathered from audience research inform our campaign strategies and content development process	3.786	0.897
Aggregate	3.849	0.799

Digital Marketing and Organization Performance

The second specific objective of the study was to determine the effect of digital marketing on the growth strategy and performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on various statements related to digital marketing and the growth strategy and performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. The results were as shown Table 2.

From the results, the respondents agreed their organization leverages affiliate marketing as a strategic component of their digital marketing efforts to expand reach and drive conversions ($M=3.955$, $SD=0.672$). In addition, the respondents agreed that they carefully select affiliate partners based on their relevance to their target audience, brand alignment, and ability to generate qualified traffic ($M=3.855$, $SD=0.839$). Further, the respondents agreed that content marketing plays a pivotal role in their digital marketing strategy by providing valuable information ($M=3.842$, $SD=0.898$). The respondents also agreed that their content strategy focuses on understanding and segmenting their target audience to create relevant and compelling content ($M=3.815$, $SD=0.712$).

From the results, the respondents agreed that they prioritize delivering a seamless user experience across various mobile devices and platforms to enhance engagement and conversion rate ($M=3.758$, $SD= 0.969$). In addition, the respondents agreed that tactics such as mobile apps, SMS campaigns, and responsive/mobile-friendly website design are key elements of their mobile marketing approach ($M=3.723$, $SD= 0.732$).

Table 2: Digital Marketing and Organization Performance

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our organization leverages affiliate marketing as a strategic component of our digital marketing efforts to expand reach and drive conversions.	3.955	0.672
We carefully select affiliate partners based on their relevance to our target audience, brand alignment, and ability to generate qualified traffic	3.855	0.839
Content marketing plays a pivotal role in our digital marketing strategy by providing valuable information	3.842	0.898
Our content strategy focuses on understanding and segmenting our target audience to create relevant and compelling content.	3.815	0.712
We prioritize delivering a seamless user experience across various mobile devices and platforms to enhance engagement and conversion rate.	3.758	0.969
Tactics such as mobile apps, SMS campaigns, and responsive/mobile-friendly website design are key elements of our mobile marketing approach	3.723	0.732
Aggregate	3.825	0.804

Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics such as correlation analysis and regression analysis were used to assess the relationships between the independent variables (social media marketing and digital marketing) and the dependent variable (performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya).

Correlation Analysis

This research adopted Pearson correlation analysis determine how the dependent variable (performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya) relates with the independent variables (social media marketing and digital marketing).

Table 3: Correlation Coefficients

		Organization Performance	Social Marketing	MediaDigital Marketing
Organization Performance	Pearson	1		
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
Social Media Marketing	N	80		
	Pearson	.828**	1	
	Correlation			
Digital Marketing	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003		
	N	80	80	
	Pearson	.838**	.297	1
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.060	
	N	80	80	80

From the results, there was a very strong relationship between social media marketing and performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya ($r = 0.828$, p value $=0.003$). The relationship was significant since the p value 0.003 was less than 0.05 (significant level). The findings are in line with the findings of Mirza (2022) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between social media marketing and organization performance.

Moreover, there was a very strong relationship between digital marketing and performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya ($r = 0.838$, p value $=0.002$). The relationship was significant since the p value 0.002 was less than 0.05 (significant level). The findings are in line with the findings of Kabera and Irechukwu (2022) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between digital marketing and organization performance.

Regression Analysis

Multivariate regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between independent variables (social media marketing and digital marketing) and the dependent variable (performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya).

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.866 ^a	.750	.751	.10482

a. Predictors: (Constant), social media marketing and digital marketing

The model summary was used to explain the variation in the dependent variable that could be explained by the independent variables. The r -squared for the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable was 0.750 . This implied that 75% of the variation in the dependent variable (performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya) could be explained by independent variables (social media marketing and digital marketing).

Table 5: Analysis of Variance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	14.328	2	7.164	155.739	.002 ^b
Residual	3.578	77	.046		
Total	17.906	79			

a. Dependent Variable: performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya

b. Predictors: (Constant), social media marketing and digital marketing

The ANOVA was used to determine whether the model was a good fit for the data. F calculated was 155.739 while the F critical was 3.115 . The p value was 0.002 . Since the F -calculated was greater than the F -critical and the p value 0.002 was less than 0.05 , the model was considered as a good fit for the data. Therefore, the model can be used to predict the influence of social media marketing and digital marketing on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.342	0.089		3.843	0.002
social media marketing	0.397	0.101	0.398	3.931	0.001
digital marketing	0.387	0.097	0.389	3.990	0.000

The regression model was as follows:

$$Y = 0.342 + 0.397X_1 + 0.387X_2 + \varepsilon$$

According to the results, social media marketing has a significant effect on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya ($\beta_1=0.397$, p value= 0.001). The relationship was considered significant since the p value 0.001 was less than the significant level of 0.05. The findings are in line with the findings of Mirza (2022) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between social media marketing and organization performance

The results also revealed that digital marketing has a significant effect on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya ($\beta_1=0.387$, p value= 0.000). The relationship was considered significant since the p value 0.000 was less than the significant level of 0.05. The findings are in line with the findings of Kabera and Irechukwu (2022) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between digital marketing and organization performance

Conclusions

The study concludes that social media marketing has a positive and significant influence on performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. Findings revealed that marketing platforms, content types and campaign planning influence performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya

In addition, the study concludes that digital marketing has a positive and significant influence on growth strategy and performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. Findings revealed that affiliate marketing, content marketing and mobile marketing influence performance of plastic manufacturing firms in Nairobi County, Kenya

Recommendations

The study recommends that the management of plastic manufacturing firms in Kenya should leverage localized content and engagement. By creating and sharing content that highlights local success stories, partnerships with Nairobi-based businesses, or community involvement initiatives, firms can build a stronger connection with their target audience. This approach not only enhances brand visibility but also fosters trust and loyalty among local customers.

In addition, the study recommends that the management of plastic manufacturing firms in Kenya should implement a comprehensive digital marketing strategy. By optimizing their website for relevant keywords and investing in targeted PPC campaigns, these firms can improve their online visibility and attract more qualified leads. SEO will ensure that the firm's website ranks higher in search engine results for terms related to their products, making it easier for potential customers to find them

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