THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING SUCCESS ON CUSTOMER LOYALTY

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Abstract:_Customer loyalty is often seen as one of the decisive factors in determining the fate of organizations. In the age of digitization, organizations should think of advanced strategies to increase their competitiveness and market share by employing the potential of digital content and enhancing their digital capabilities. Recently, many digital media have appeared available to organizations to build their brand, reach their target customers and retain them, and promote their products. Digital media represented a real revolution that made it difficult for organizations to survive in the business environment without investing in these means. Therefore, the aim of the study is twofold: 1) to explore the effects of digital content marketing and digital marketing capabilities on digital marketing success; 2) to investigate the impact of digital marketing success on customer loyalty. This research was conducted on a sample of online restaurant customers through a questionnaire distributed to 187 customers. IBM SPSS 25.0 and AMOS 22.0 were used as the main programs for analysing the collected data from 165 online restaurant customers. Structural equation modelling was applied to test the research's hypothesized effects. The results indicated that digital content marketing and digital marketing capabilities had significant effects on digital marketing success based on the perspectives of online restaurant customers in Jordan. Moreover, digital marketing success substantially impacted customer loyalty of online restaurant customers in Jordan. It was concluded that for organizations to ensure a positive effect of digital marketing on customer loyalty, more attention should be paid to critical factors such as digital content and digital capabilities. The study calls for researchers to explore more factors affecting the success of digital marketing. It informs marketing managers that customer loyalty in the digitization era depends on the ability to create, communicate and deliver digital content using digital technologies and the quality of digital content and capabilities that deliver customer value._
Keywords: digital content marketing, digital marketing capabilities, digital marketing success, customer loyalty, Jordan.
JEL Classification: M31, C83, C88, D22

Introduction. Customer loyalty is one of the most vital factors affecting organizational outcomes such as performance. Therefore, drivers affecting customer behaviour gained great attention in the literature (Mohammad, 2019; Alshurideh et al., 2017; Al-Hawary, 2013a; Al-Hawary, 2013b; Massari and Passiante 2006). Recently, the literature on customer loyalty underlined digital marketing as one of the critical factors stimulating customer behaviours like purchase decisions (Mahalaxmi & Ranjith, 2016; Altarifi et al., 2015; Al-Hawary and Harahsheh, 2014). Some studies (e.g., Khan and Islam, 2017; Dilham et al., 2018; Tariq et al., 2022; Eldahamsheh et al., 2021; Adam et al., 2020) found that digital marketing is positively associated with customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. However, studies carried out to explore the factors that play a significant part in digital marketing success are still rare, meaning a gap in the literature. Hence, the importance of this investigation to fill such a gap in the literature.

Digital marketing is much broader than Internet marketing, online marketing, and e-marketing (Al-Shormana et al., 2021; Alshawabkeh et al., 2022; Al-Nawafah et al., 2022). According to Atshaya and Rungta (2016), digital marketing is divided into internet marketing and non-internet marketing. Internet marketing, also called online marketing, is marketing through internet channels, i.e., mobile marketing, social media marketing, and web banners, while non-internet marketing is marketing via offline techniques such as MSS marketing and video marketing. There are many advantages of digital marketing. It allows a high level of interactivity with customers, information quality, effective targeting and segmentation of customers, reaching customers through social media networks, and flexibility (Al-khawaldah et al., 2022; Al-Alwan et al., 2022; Al-Hawary and Obiadat, 2021; Veleva and Tsvetanova, 2020; Al-Hawary and Alhajri, 2020). Nonetheless, the authors indicated some challenges of digital marketing, like lack of customer trust, and publicity of negative feedback affecting the organization's image.

Techniques of digital marketing include social media marketing, pay-per-click advertising, mobile marketing, content marketing, search engine optimization, search engine advertising, web marketing, and television advertising (Kaushik, 2016; Low et al., 2020). The success of digital marketing depends on using such techniques in an effective and efficient manner. In a recent study by Herhausen et al. (2020) about digital marketing capabilities, the authors indicated that the ability of an organization to do digital marketing tasks contributes to its digital marketing success.

Based on the studies mentioned above, this study aims to explore how digital content marketing and digital marketing capabilities enhance digital marketing success and investigate the effect of digital marketing success on customer loyalty using data from restaurant customers. The study instructs managers and researchers about the importance of the effective use of digital marketing to prompt customer loyalty.

This study is structured as follows. The next section shows literature review in which definitions and dimensions of research constructs were highlighted in addition to hypotheses development, followed by a section on methodology and research methods, which contains research conceptual model, data collection tool, and measurements were identified. Finally, the study ends up with research conclusions.

Literature Review. Customer loyalty has been defined as a step that precedes customer repurchase behaviour (Minh and Huu, 2016). Customer loyalty is a result of overall customer satisfaction. Hence, loyal customers are satisfied and motivated to purchase products and services (Al-Dmour et al., 2019). Customer loyalty's definitions were categorized into behavioural and attitudinal types (Rashid et al., 2020; Husnain & Akhtar, 2016). According to Massari and Passiante (2006), customer loyalty is conceptualized as an attitude leading to a relationship with a brand and as a behaviour related to customers' past purchases. Hence, both attitudinal and behavioural components should be used to define customer loyalty. In their model of customer loyalty, Costabile (2001), cited in Massari and Passiante (2006), indicated that the behavioural dimensions of customer loyalty are related to his or her purchase practices, while the attitudinal dimensions are concerned with his or her satisfaction, trust, and commitment.

Dimensions of customer loyalty are categorized into two types: attitudinal and behavioral dimensions (Shammout, 2020; Al-Hawary and Hussien, 2016). Oliver (1999), cited in Minh and Huu (2016), indicated that attitudinal loyalty is developed based on customer cognitive sense, customer affective sense, and purposeful customer manner. These three stages result in customer behavioral loyalty. Attitudinal loyalty could be described in terms of customer recommendations or positive word-of-mouth, customer intention to repurchase, and customer willingness to pay higher prices for specific goods or services (Lai et al., 2019; Ong et al., 2016), while behavioral loyalty represents an actual purchase behavior. El-Adly (2019) used customer attitudinal loyalty to measure respondents repurchase intention and positive recommendations. Aldaihani and Ali (2019) used both attitudinal and behavioral dimensions to measure customer loyalty.

An important path of marketing research emphasized factors increasing customer loyalty. Examples of such factors encompass digital marketing (Khan and Islam, 2017; Lopez García et al., 2019; Koeswandi et

al., 2020; Bakhtieva, 2017; Verona and Prandelli, 2002; Yasmin et al., 2015; Choi and Kim, 2004; Muniesa and Giménez, 2020). One of the most significant characteristics of digital marketing in customer loyalty is that the environment of firm-customer interaction is changed with the introduction of digital technologies (Nam and Kannan, 2020; Kannan, 2017). Some determinants of customer loyalty such as customer satisfaction and service quality are well established in the literature (Lai et al., 2009). Still, there is a need to explore more drivers of customer loyalty. Digital marketing has been defined as processes and activities implemented to create, communicate, and deliver customer value via digital technologies (American Marketing Association, 2013, cited in Herhausen et al., 2020). Similar definitions indicate that digital marketing refers to exchanging products and services using electronic devices (Khan and Islam, 2017). Makrides et al. (2020) defined the term as using digital channels for advertising. Yasmin et al. (2015) described digital marketing as digital promotional techniques that direct customer attention to specific goods and services. The success of digital marketing requires paying great attention to numerous factors. According to Baltes (2015), one of the most vital antecedents of digital marketing is the quality of content marketing. Hence, it was regarded as a key factor in digital marketing success. Digital marketing capabilities are also critical determinants of digital marketing success (Herhausen et al., 2020; Low et al., 2020; Phiri, 2020).

The Content Marketing Institute (Baltes, 2015) defined content marketing as creating and distributing adequate content to attract and acquire specific profitable customers. Using digital technologies to distribute such content renders it as digital content. Bala and Verma (2018) indicated that digital content could be distributed via numerous formats like images, podcasts, webinars, banners, videos, blogs, and how-to guides. In terms of the effect of digital content marketing on digital marketing success, one can say that digital content is one pivotal component of digital marketing (Bala and Verma, 2018). It has significant effects like increasing customer trust in the brand (Holliman & Rowley, 2014) and customer profitability (Kee and Yazdanifard, 2015). Digital content takes the same definition of digital marketing plus the information-sharing dimension (Holliman & Rowley, 2014). In order to investigate the impact of digital content marketing on digital marketing success, the following hypothesis was postulated:

*H1: Digital content marketing has a significant impact on digital marketing success.*

Herhausen et al. (2020) specified four themes of such capabilities, which are online channels (Internet use and e-readiness), social media (social media use), digital relationships (digital CRM capabilities), and digital technologies (IT capabilities). Low et al. (2020) added that digital marketing is applied using different technologies such as search engine optimization (SEO), customer relationship management (CRM), affiliate marketing, social media, search engine advertising (SEA), web marketing, e-mail, web communities, radio, and television advertising. In a study by Phiri (2020), four capabilities of digital marketing were used: digital marketing innovation, digital strategy development and execution, leadership capability, and e-market sensing capability. Kotane et al. (2019) indicated that digital marketing capabilities have many advantages like reducing information uncertainty. In order to explore the effect of digital marketing capabilities on digital marketing success using data collected for the present study, the following hypothesis was presumed:

H2: Digital marketing capabilities have a significant impact on digital marketing success.

In a study on the effect of digital marketing on customer loyalty, Khan and Islam (2017) identified four factors of digital marketing that enhance customer loyalty. These factors are value-added attributes, content attributes, customer service attributes, and 27/7 appearance. Mahalaxmi and Ranjith (2016) examined the impact of digital marketing on customer purchase decisions and found that respondents prefer purchasing products through digital channels. However, such channels do not affect changing their purchase decisions. For Adam et al. (2020), digital marketing plays a significant role in customer satisfaction and loyalty. Dilham et al. (2018) added that digital marketing driven by customer satisfaction and good relationships significantly influences customer loyalty. The following hypothesis was assumed using the present data:

H3: Digital marketing has a significant impact on customer loyalty.

Methodology and research methods. The sample of the current research was drawn from customers of five fast food restaurants. Based on a convenient sampling technique that helps contact available participants (Koerber and McMichael, 2008), 187 customers agreed to participate in the study. Questionnaires were distributed with the help of delivery call centres in the restaurants. Hence, 165 valid questionnaires were collected. As shown in Figure 1, three hypotheses were suggested to explore the impact of digital content marketing on digital marketing success (H1), the impact of digital marketing capabilities on digital marketing success (H2), and the impact of digital marketing on customer loyalty (H3). The figure shows three latent constructs using structural equation modelling (SEM) by SPSS Amos 22.0. i.e., digital marketing content and capabilities, digital marketing, and customer loyalty. Testing the hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3) results in finding answers to three questions related to effects between constructs.
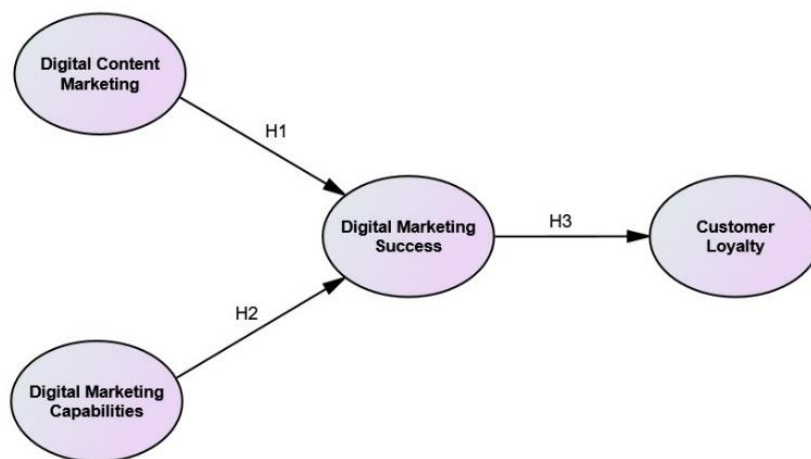
Figure 1. Research conceptual model

Sources: developed by the author.

Digital marketing content was measured using five items based on previous studies (e.g., Bala and Verma, 2018; Lou and Xie, 2020; Baltes, 2015; Andaç et al., 2016). Digital marketing capabilities were measured based on Phiri (2020) and Herhausen et al. (2020) using five items related to capabilities of digital technologies, e-market sensing capability, digital marketing innovation, and digital CRM capabilities. Customer loyalty was measured using five items adapted from Rashid et al. (2020). Using five items, they conceptualized this construct based on positive customer word-of-mouth, customer patronage, customer recommendations, and customer repurchase intention. Respondents were asked to fill out questionnaires on a scale of 5-point Likert scale, in which responses were anchored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Results. EFA was performed using SPSS 24.0. In order to explore factor loadings on their related factors (Khwaja et al., 2020). Firstly, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) was used to check if the questionnaire item is acceptable for EFA. KMO value should be greater than 0.50 and the value of BTS should be significant at $\alpha \leq 0.05$ (Andaç et al., 2016). Secondly, all factors' absolute value was greater than 0.40 (Estiva and Diño, 2020; Khwaja et al., 2020). Therefore, items with factor loadings (FL) below 0.40 were eliminated (Teng et al., 2020; Abazeed, 2020). Figure 2 shows the results of components reduction.
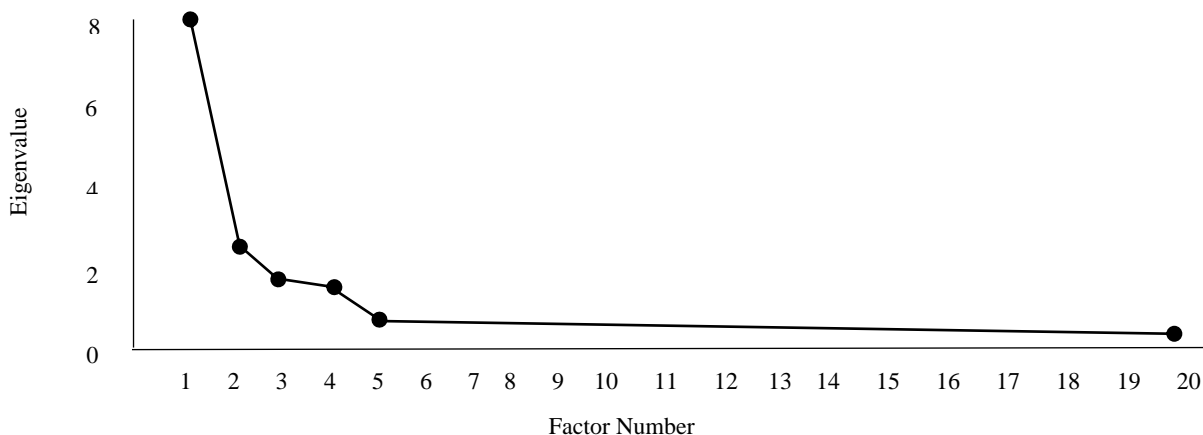
Figure 2. Scree plot of components extraction based on Eigenvalues

Sources: developed by the author based on SPSS outputs.

Table 1 shows that the twenty indicators were loaded on four factors: digital content marketing (Q1-Q5), digital marketing capabilities (Q6-Q10), digital marketing success (Q11-Q15), and customer loyalty (Q16-Q20).

Table 1. Results of reliability and validity

Variables	Items	FL	α	CR	AVE	r (1)	r (2)	r (3)	r (4)	√AVE
(1) Digital content marketing	Q1	0.765	0.861	0.859	0.549	–				0.741
	Q2	0.696								
	Q3	0.755								
	Q4	0.827								
	Q5	0.761								
(2) Digital marketing capabilities	Q6	0.722	0.898	0.897	0.635	0.373	–			0.797
	Q7	0.779								
	Q8	0.821								
	Q9	0.781								
	Q10	0.829								
(3) Digital marketing success	Q11	0.736	0.864	0.862	0.557	0.527	0.642	–		0.746
	Q12	0.720								
	Q13	0.780								
	Q14	0.728								
	Q15	0.764								
(4) Customer loyalty	Q16	0.739	0.857	0.855	0.542	0.563	0.534	0.624	–	0.736
	Q17	0.726								
	Q18	0.711								
	Q19	0.785								
	Q20	0.717								

Note: CR – composite reliability, AVE – average variance extracted, r –correlation, √AVE – square root of the average variance extracted.

Sources: developed by the authors based on AMOS outputs.

It could be noted that all factor loadings were greater than 0.60 (Wasiuzzaman et al., 2021). Reliability was measured via Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Mandrou et al., 2020) and composite reliability (Chung et al., 2020), which should be no less than 0.70 (Lou and Xie, 2020; Al-Hawary, 2012). Convergent and discriminant validity was tested based on the average variance extracted (AVE) and the square root of the AVE. According to Lou and Xie (2020), values of the AVE should be greater than 0.50 to ensure convergent validity. The square root of every latent construct should be higher than its correlation coefficient (r) with other latent constructs. Results of reliability show acceptable values of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, i.e., greater than 0.70 (Zhang and Wang, 2021). Furthermore, convergent and discriminant validity criteria were met since all AVE values are greater than 0.50 (Wasiuzzaman et al., 2021), and the square root of AVE values for each construct is higher than the correlation between that construct and other constructs (Helmy and Wiwoho, 2020).

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to confirm the exploratory factor analysis results and examine the model goodness-of-fit. Based on the measurement model (Figure 3) the model approves the results of exploratory factor analysis. Three indices were used to check the model fit, chi-square/degree of freedom (χ^2/df), comparative fit index (CFI), and Standardized Root Mean Residual (SRMR). (Khwaja et al., 2020; Lou and Xie, 2020). Table 2 indicates that both measurement and structural models fit the current data well.
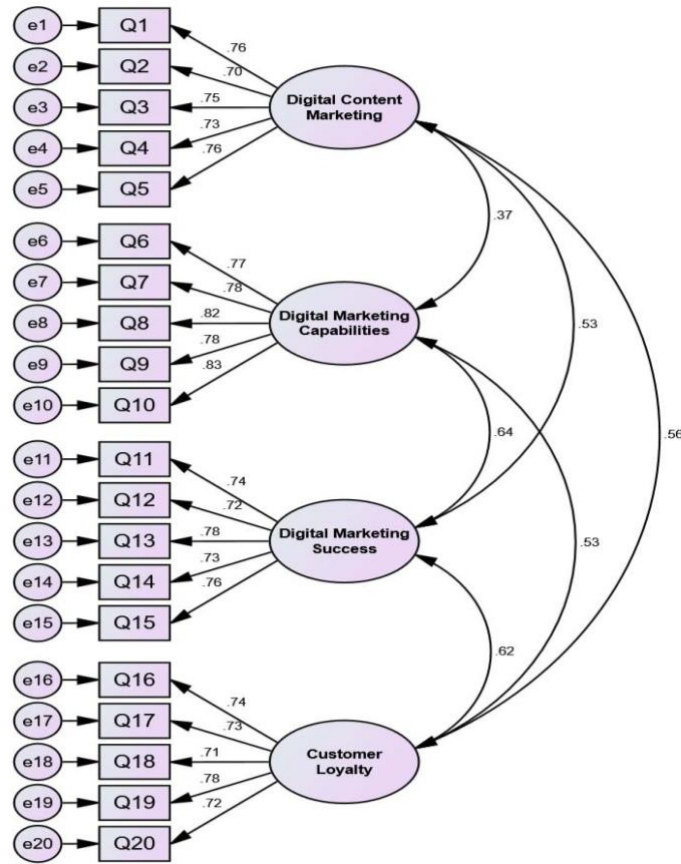
Table 2. Measurement and structural models fit

Model - Indices	χ^2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Measurement model	1.231	0.951	0.933	0.01
Structural model	1.285	0.912	0.930	0.01
Criteria	< 3.0	> 0.90	> 0.90	< 0.080
Results	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted

Note: χ^2/df – chi-square/degree of freedom, GFI – goodness of fit index, CFI – comparative fit index, RMSEA – root mean square error of approximation).

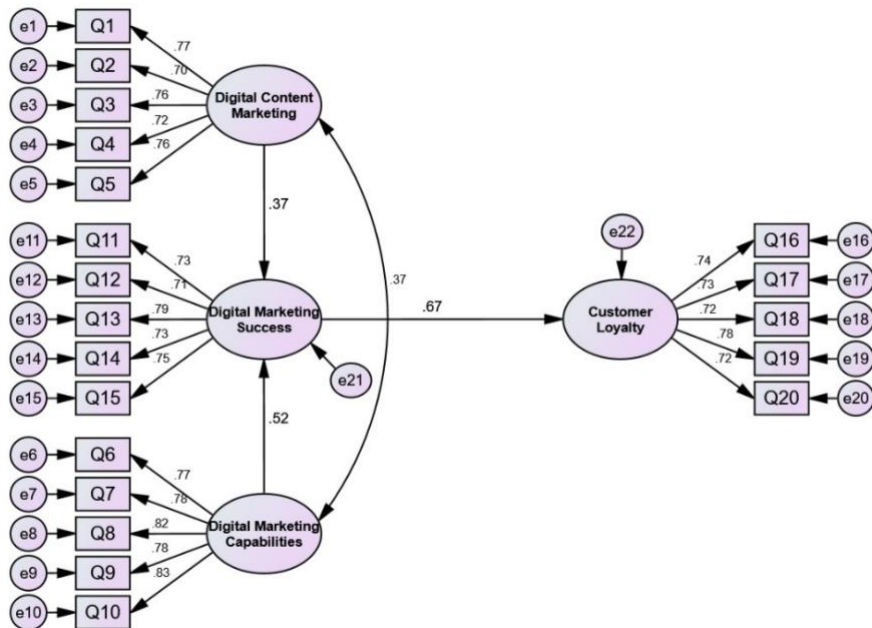Sources: developed by the author based on AMOS outputs.

Figure 3. Research measurement model
Sources: developed by the author based on SPSS outputs.

The structural model in Figure 4 was configured based on the measurement model to test research hypotheses. The model fit (Table 2) deems the model's results acceptable. The results of the structural model (Table 3) illustrate that all hypotheses were supported. Digital content marketing has a significant impact on digital marketing success as stated in H1 ($\beta = 0.346$, CR = 4.421, P = 0.000).

Figure 4. Research structural model
Sources: developed by the authors based on SPSS outputs.

Likewise, digital marketing capabilities has a significant impact on digital marketing success as suggested in H2 (β = 0.465, CR = 5.889, P = 0.000), and digital marketing has a significant impact on customer loyalty as postulated din H3 (β = 0.632, CR = 6.599, P = 0.000).

Table 3. Results of hypotheses testing

Hypothesis	Estimate	SE	CR	P
Digital content marketing → Digital marketing success	0.346	0.078	4.421	0.000
Digital marketing capabilities → Digital marketing success	0.465	0.079	5.889	0.000
Digital marketing success → Customer loyalty	0.632	0.069	6.599	0.000

Note: SE – standard error, CR – composite reliability, P – significant level.
Sources: developed by the author based on AMOS outputs.

Conclusions. The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of digital content marketing and digital marketing capabilities on digital marketing success, which in turn was assumed to show a significant effect on customer loyalty. The results found that digital content marketing significantly affected digital marketing success. The result agrees with Baltes (2015), who stated that content marketing quality is crucial for digital marketing success. The results also showed a significant effect of digital marketing capabilities on digital marketing success. In line with this result, previous studies (e.g., Herhausen et al., 2020; Low et al., 2020; Phiri, 2020) regarded digital marketing capabilities as pivotal drivers of digital marketing success.

Moreover, the results pointed out that digital marketing success significantly affected customer loyalty. Similarly, Adam et al. (2020) argued that digital marketing positively relates to customer satisfaction. For Dilham et al. (2018), digital marketing significantly improves customer satisfaction and engenders customer loyalty.

Based on these results, it was concluded that digital marketing is one of the biggest drivers of customer loyalty in the digitization era. It shows influences on both attitudinal and behavioral components of customer loyalty, which means that elevating customer interaction with the brand and, at the same time, increases his or her intention to purchase. Digital marketing, if effectively and efficiently applied, leads to more satisfied customers who become loyal customers on the ground of their satisfaction experience. Therefore, organizations are required to pay great attention to digital marketing in order to improve customer loyalty. However, ensuring the positive impact of digital marketing on customer loyalty depends on critical factors required for digital marketing success such as digital content and digital capabilities. Organizations must ensure that their digital content and digital capabilities are sufficient to create, communicate and distribute value to customers and therefore make certain of their satisfaction in the first place and so their loyalty.

The current study is one of the first to empirically provide evidence on two of the critical antecedents of digital marketing success: digital content marketing and digital marketing capabilities. Furthermore, the study enriched the literature on customer loyalty by investigating the impact of digital marketing on customer loyalty. Besides, the study informed marketing managers that digital marketing capabilities and the quality of digital marketing content are critical factors in ensuring digital marketing success. The ability to create and distribute digital content using digital technologies does not guarantee that the organization actually implements digital marketing. Perhaps the most important word in the American Marketing Association's (2013) definition of digital marketing is the «value» the organization should deliver to its customers.

Despite the important results found in the current study, it is limited to the small sample size of customers who agreed to participate. It is also limited to the hypothesized effects between digital content marketing and digital marketing capabilities and success and the effect of the later construct on customer loyalty. The mediating role of digital marketing in the relationship between both digital content marketing and digital marketing capabilities and customer loyalty was not assumed. Therefore, larger samples should be used from different sectors to generalize results. Researchers are called to investigate the effects of digital content marketing and digital marketing capabilities on customer loyalty through digital marketing.

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Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.
Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

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Вплив ефективності цифрового маркетингу на лояльність клієнтів

Лояльність споживачів часто розглядається як один із вирішальних факторів у визначенні долі організацій. Стрімкий розвиток цифровізації спонукає організації до розробки передових стратегій щодо підвищення конкурентоспроможності та збільшення частки ринку за рахунок використання потенціалу цифрового контенту та розширення цифрових можливостей. Автором зазначено, що останнім часом організації отримали доступ до низки цифрових засобів масової інформації. Це дозволяє їм створити власний бренд, охопити цільових клієнтів та утримувати їх, а також просувати свої продукти. Цифрові медіа стали справжньою революцією та вимагають від організацій додаткових інвестицій у їх розвиток. В основі даного дослідження лежить мета визначити: 1) вплив цифрового контенту-маркетингу та можливостей цифрового маркетингу на його ефективність; 2) вплив ефективності цифрового маркетингу на лояльність клієнтів. Для досягнення поставленої мети було проведено анкетування 187 клієнтів онлайн-ресторанів Йорданії. Емпіричне дослідження проведено за допомогою моделювання структурних рівнянь, які було застосовано для перевірки гіпотез дослідження. За отриманими результатами встановлено, що цифровий контент-маркетинг і можливості цифрового маркетингу мають значний вплив на ефективність цифрового маркетингу. До того, ефективність цифрового маркетингу суттєво впливає на лояльність клієнтів онлайн-ресторанів в Йорданії. Результати дослідження дають підстави стверджувати, що для забезпечення позитивного впливу цифрового маркетингу на лояльність клієнтів, організаціям слід приділяти більше уваги таким критичним факторам, як цифровий контент та цифрові можливості. У статті зазначено, що перспективним напрямком подальших досліджень є вивчення більшої кількості факторів, які впливають на ефективність цифрового маркетингу. Результати дослідження інформують маркетологів, що лояльність клієнтів в епоху цифровізації залежить від здатності створювати, передавати та доставляти цифровий контент за допомогою цифрових технологій. Суттєве значення мають якість цифрового контенту та можливості, які забезпечують цінність для клієнтів.

Ключові слова: цифровий контент-маркетинг, можливості цифрового маркетингу, ефективність цифрового маркетингу, лояльність клієнтів, Йорданія.