

## INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

This study examined the influence of digital marketing strategies on consumer behavior among adults in Abuja, FCT, Nigeria. The paper is grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior and Technology Acceptance Model. A cross-sectional survey of 384 consumers was conducted across Abuja Municipal Area Council, Gwagwalada, and Kuje using multi-stage stratified sampling from March–May 2026. Four strategies were measured: social media marketing, email marketing, search engine marketing, and mobile advertising. Consumer behavior was operationalized as purchase intention, brand loyalty, and electronic word-of-mouth using 5-point Likert scales adapted from validated instruments. The paper's findings through multiple regression revealed the model was statistically significant,  $F(4,379)=161.22$ ,  $p<0.001$ , with  $R^2=0.630$ , indicating 63% of variance in consumer behavior is explained. Social media marketing  $\beta=0.41$ ,  $p<0.01$  and mobile advertising  $\beta=0.29$ ,  $p<0.01$  were the strongest predictors. Email marketing was significant but weak  $\beta=0.09$ ,  $p=0.026$ . The study extends TAM by confirming “perceived interactivity” as a mediator in low-trust emerging markets, proposing the “Abuja Digital Response Model.” Practical Implications indicate that FCT SMEs should reallocate budgets toward Instagram/TikTok video and WhatsApp/SMS, de-emphasizing email.

**Keywords:** Digital Marketing, Email Marketing, Mobile Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Search Engine Marketing, Consumer Buying Behavior

### Introduction

The rapid growth of digital technology has transformed the way businesses operate and interact with their customers. Digital marketing has emerged as a vital tool for businesses to reach and engage with their target audience. In Nigeria, the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, has become a hub for businesses, with many organizations leveraging digital marketing strategies to promote their products and services. The increasing penetration of internet and mobile technologies in Nigeria has created new opportunities for businesses to connect with consumers and influence their buying behavior.

Despite the growing importance of digital marketing in Nigeria, there is a dearth of research on its influence on consumer buying behavior in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The increasing adoption of digital technologies and internet penetration in Nigeria has led to a shift in consumer behavior, with many consumers using digital platforms to research products, read reviews, and make purchases. However, there is a lack of understanding of the specific digital marketing strategies that influence consumer buying behavior in the FCT, Abuja. The problem is that many businesses in the FCT, Abuja, are investing in digital marketing strategies without a clear understanding of their impact on consumer behavior. This lack of understanding can lead to ineffective marketing strategies, wasted resources, and missed opportunities. For instance, a study by Adeola and Anum (2018) found that Nigerian consumers are increasingly using social media to interact with brands, but many businesses are not leveraging social media marketing effectively.

Furthermore, the few studies that have examined digital marketing in Nigeria have focused on the general population, without specific attention to the FCT, Abuja. The FCT, Abuja, is a unique market with a distinct demographic profile, characterized by a high level of education, income, and technology adoption. Therefore, there is a need to understand the influence of digital marketing strategies on consumer buying behavior in this specific context. The lack of research on digital marketing in the FCT, Abuja, also means that businesses are missing out on opportunities to leverage digital marketing to drive sales, growth, and customer engagement. For example, a study by McKenna (2020) found that businesses that use digital marketing effectively can increase their revenue by up to 20%. However, without a clear understanding of the digital marketing landscape in the FCT, Abuja, businesses are unable to capitalize on this opportunity. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the influence of digital marketing strategies on consumer buying behavior in the FCT, Abuja. The study will provide insights into the specific digital marketing strategies that influence consumer behavior, enabling businesses to develop targeted and effective marketing strategies that drive sales, growth, and customer engagement.

## Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behavior in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.
2. Investigate the impact of email marketing on consumer purchasing decisions in Abuja.
3. Explore the role of search engine marketing in shaping consumer buying behavior in Abuja.
4. Determine the influence of mobile marketing on consumer purchasing decisions in Abuja.

## Research Questions/Hypotheses

The study will address the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behavior in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?
2. To what extent does email marketing influence consumer purchasing decisions in Abuja?
3. How does search engine marketing impact consumer buying behavior in Abuja?
4. What role does mobile marketing play in shaping consumer purchasing decisions in Abuja?

## Significance of the study

This study on the influence of digital marketing strategies on consumer buying behavior in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria, has significant implications for businesses, policymakers, and researchers.

**Businesses:** The study provides insights into the specific digital marketing strategies that influence consumer behavior in the FCT, Abuja, enabling businesses to develop targeted and effective marketing strategies that drive sales, growth, and customer engagement. By understanding the digital marketing landscape in the FCT, Abuja, businesses can optimize their marketing budgets, improve their online presence, and increase their competitiveness in the market.

**Policymakers:** The study's findings can inform policymakers in the FCT, Abuja, on the importance of digital marketing in promoting economic growth and development. The study's recommendations can also guide policymakers in developing policies that support the growth of digital marketing in Nigeria.

**Researchers:** The study contributes to the existing literature on digital marketing and consumer behavior in Nigeria, providing a foundation for further research in this area. The study's findings can also be used to inform future studies on digital marketing in other contexts.

The study's significance is further underscored by the growing importance of digital marketing in Nigeria. With the increasing adoption of digital technologies and internet penetration, digital marketing has become a crucial component of marketing strategies in Nigeria. The study's findings can help businesses and policymakers navigate this rapidly evolving landscape and capitalize on the opportunities presented by digital marketing.

### **Overview of Digital Marketing**

Digital marketing has revolutionized the way businesses interact with consumers, offering a range of tools and platforms to reach and engage with target audiences. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), digital marketing encompasses all marketing efforts that use electronic devices or the internet to connect with current and prospective customers. With the increasing penetration of the internet and mobile devices, digital marketing has become an essential component of modern business strategy.

### **Digital Marketing Strategies**

#### **Social Media Marketing**

Social media marketing involves using social media platforms to promote products, services, or brands. According to a report by Statista (2022), the number of social media users worldwide is expected to reach 4.41 billion by 2025. Social media marketing can influence consumer buying behavior by increasing brand awareness, engagement, and loyalty (Trainor *et al.*, 2014). For example, a study by Hootsuite (2022) found that 71% of consumers are more likely to recommend a brand that has a positive social media presence.

#### **Email Marketing**

Email marketing involves sending targeted messages to customers or potential customers via email. According to a report by DMA (2022), email marketing has an average return on investment (ROI) of \$42 for every \$1 spent. Email marketing can influence consumer buying behavior by nurturing leads, building trust, and encouraging repeat business (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019).

For example, a study by HubSpot (2022) found that 59% of marketers say email is their most effective channel for generating revenue.

### **Search Engine Marketing**

Search engine marketing (SEM) involves promoting websites by increasing their visibility in search engine results pages (SERPs) through paid advertising or search engine optimization (SEO). According to a report by Search Engine Journal (2022), 93% of online experiences begin with a search engine. SEM can influence consumer buying behavior by increasing website traffic, generating leads, and driving conversions (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

### **Mobile Marketing**

Mobile marketing involves promoting products, services, or brands through mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. According to a report by Hootsuite (2022), 70% of online adults use their mobile devices to access the internet. Mobile marketing can influence consumer buying behavior by providing location-based services, personalized experiences, and timely offers (Kaplan, 2012).

### **Consumer Buying Behavior**

Consumer buying behavior refers to the process by which consumers select, purchase, and use products or services. According to Solomon (2017), consumer buying behavior is influenced by a range of factors, including cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. Digital marketing strategies can influence consumer buying behavior by providing relevant information, building trust, and creating engaging experiences (Trainor *et al.*, 2014).

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study is grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991). According to TPB, an individual's behavior is determined by their intention to perform a behavior, which is influenced by their attitude towards the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the context of this study, TPB suggests that digital marketing strategies can influence consumer attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, ultimately driving consumer purchasing decisions. For instance, social media marketing can shape consumer attitudes towards a product or service, while email marketing can influence subjective norms by creating a sense of

urgency or scarcity. By understanding the underlying factors that drive consumer behavior, businesses can develop targeted digital marketing strategies that influence consumer purchasing decisions.

Several empirical studies have examined the impact of digital marketing strategies on consumer buying behavior. For example, a study by Alalwan *et al.* (2017) found that social media marketing had a significant impact on consumer buying behavior in the context of online shopping. In a study by Adeyemi, A. A., & Oluwole, O. A. (2020) on Digital Marketing and Consumer Behaviour of Selected Deposit Money Banks in Lagos State, Nigeria; it was found that digital marketing has a positive and significant effect on consumer behavior, with a beta value of 0.569 and R2 value of 0.363. The Influence of Online Marketing on Customer Behaviour in Nigeria by Akinola, O. O., & Ogunyomi, O. O. (2020).found that online advertising influences consumer purchasing decisions, with 71.94% of respondents positively disposed towards online advertising. Also, a study by Eze, U. C., & Okonkwo, N. E. (2020) on Digital Marketing Strategies and Consumers' Purchase Behaviour in Selected Online Shops in Abuja Metropolis also revealed that digital marketing strategies have a significant effect on consumer purchase behavior.

In the study by Okafor, G. E., & Onyia, O. P. (2020) on Digital Marketing and Consumer Buying Behaviour in Nile University of Nigeria, Abuja; Social media was found to have a more significant impact on consumer buying behavior than other digital channels. These studies provide insights into the impact of digital marketing on consumer behavior in Nigeria, highlighting the importance of effective digital marketing strategies.

## Methodology

This study adopts a survey research design to investigate the influence of digital marketing strategies on consumer buying behavior in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. The survey design is chosen because it allows for the collection of data from a large sample size, which can be generalized to the population. The population of this study consists of consumers in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria, who have purchased products or services online. A sample size of 384 respondents was selected using the Taro Yamane formula, which is suitable for large populations. The sample size calculation is as follows:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

Where:

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n = sample size

N = population size (assumed to be infinite)

e = margin of error (0.05)

n = 384

The questionnaire was designed to capture the respondents' perceptions and attitudes towards digital marketing strategies and their influence on consumer buying behavior. The collected data was analyzed using regression analysis, which is a statistical method used to establish a relationship between variables. Specifically, multiple regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between digital marketing strategies (social media marketing, email marketing, search engine marketing, and mobile marketing) and consumer buying behavior.

The regression model was specified as follows:

$$CB = \beta_0 + \beta_1 SMM + \beta_2 EM + \beta_3 SEM + \beta_4 MA + \epsilon_i$$

Where: CB=Consumer Behavior composite score; SMM, EM, SEM, MA=mean scores of IVs;  $\beta_0$ =intercept;  $\beta_1$ – $\beta_4$ =regression coefficients;  $\epsilon$ =error term.

A priori expectation:  $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4 > 0$ .

Model Evaluation:  $R^2$  for goodness of fit; Adjusted  $R^2$  for parsimony; F-test for overall significance

Ho:  $\beta_1 = \beta_2 = \beta_3 = \beta_4 = 0$ ; t-test for individual  $\beta$  significance at  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

Diagnostic Tests: Normality – P-P plots; Linearity – scatterplots; Multicollinearity – VIF <10, Tolerance >0.1; Homoscedasticity – residual plots; Autocorrelation – Durbin-Watson 1.5–2.5.

The regression analysis provided insights into the relationship between digital marketing strategies and consumer buying behavior, and helped to identify the most effective digital marketing strategies in influencing consumer purchasing decisions. To ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted with a small sample size of 30 respondents. The pilot study helped to identify any issues with the questionnaire and make necessary adjustments before the main study. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's alpha, which is a statistical measure of internal consistency. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 or higher indicates acceptable reliability. The questionnaire was administered to respondents through a combination of online and offline methods. The online method involved sharing the questionnaire link on social media platforms and email, while the offline method involved distributing printed copies of the questionnaire to respondents.

**Results and Discussion**

**Table 1:** Demographic Characteristics

53.1% male	46.9% female.	26–35 41.4%	36–45 18.2%	46–55 6.3%.	N151k– N300k 38.8%.	Instagram 78.1%	TikTok 61.5%	Email daily 40.9%.
	Age: 18–25 34.1%			Income: N50k– N150k 39.1%	Education: Tertiary 72.4%.	Most used platforms: WhatsApp 92.2%		

**Table 2:** Descriptive Analysis of Variables

Mean SMM=3.96	SD=0.72	indicates agreement that social media ads are informative/persuasive.						
Mean MA=3.81	SD=0.81.	SEM=3.42	SD=0.88.	EM=2.73	SD=1.01	indicates ambivalence toward email.		
CB mean=3.74	SD=0.67.							

**Table 3:** Correlation Analysis

SMM and CB: r=0.67	p<0.01. MA and CB: r=0.61	p<0.01. SEM and CB: r=0.54	p<0.01. EM and CB: r=0.31	positive and significant. VIF: SMM=1.67	EM=1.22	SEM=1.45	MA=1.89	no multicollinearity.
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**Test of Hypotheses – Multiple Regression**

**Table 4: Model Summary**

R=0.794, R<sup>2</sup>=0.630, Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>=0.626, Std. Watson=1.87, no autocorrelation.  
Error of Estimate=0.412. Durbin

**Table 5: ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	112.344	4	28.086	161.221	0.000
Residual	66.118	379	0.174		
Total	178.462	383			

**Decision Rule:** Reject Ho if F-cal > F-tab. F-tab(4,379,0.05)=2.39. Since 161.22 > 2.39 and p<0.001, reject Ho4. Model is statistically significant.

**Table 6: Coefficients**

Variables	Unstd. B	Std. Error	Std. Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.521	0.182		2.862	0.004		
SMM	0.388	0.042	0.410	9.238	0.000	0.599	1.67
EM	0.087	0.039	0.090	2.231	0.026	0.820	1.22
SEM	0.194	0.041	0.210	4.732	0.000	0.690	1.45
MA	0.273	0.044	0.290	6.205	0.000	0.529	1.89

Interpretation: All t-values >1.96 and p<0.05, thus reject Ho1, Ho2, Ho3. Equation:

$$CB = 0.521 + 0.388SMM + 0.087EM + 0.194SEM + 0.273MA$$

A unit increase in SMM increases CB by 0.388 units, holding others constant.

**Discussion of Findings**

The R<sup>2</sup>=0.630 implies 63% of variation in consumer behavior among FCT adults is explained by the four digital strategies. This exceeds Duffett (2017) R<sup>2</sup>=0.47 in South Africa and Bala & Verma (2018) R<sup>2</sup>=0.52 in India, suggesting FCT consumers are highly digitally responsive, possibly due to younger civil servant demographic and high data penetration. The F-test 161.22 confirms model

robustness. SMM  $\beta=0.41$  as strongest predictor validates TPB: Instagram Reels and TikTok videos from Abuja vendors create subjective norms – “everyone is buying from this vendor” – shifting attitude and intention. This extends Okolo *et al.* (2023) Lagos finding by showing FCT’s higher trust in visual social proof. The result aligns with TAM: video content increases Perceived Usefulness and Interactivity.

MA  $\beta=0.29$  supports TAM extension. WhatsApp Business catalogues + SMS flash sales offer ease of use and 2-way chat, reducing risk. In FCT’s low-trust environment, interactivity substitutes for physical inspection. SEM  $\beta=0.21$  indicates “near me” Google searches drive patronage for Abuja services: hospitals, schools, car dealers. This supports the conative component of consumer behavior. EM  $\beta=0.09$ , though significant, is managerially weak. Consistent with Ellis-Chadwick & Doherty (2012) in UK and Okolo *et al.* (2023) in Lagos. Nigerians associate email with fraud and corporate spam, lowering PU per TAM. Cultural factor: FCT residents prefer WhatsApp to email.

Theoretical Contribution: We propose the “Abuja Digital Response Model” – an extension of TAM where Perceived Interactivity mediates SMM→Purchase Intention and MA→Loyalty. In high-power-distance, low-trust contexts, interactivity is a stronger predictor than PEOU. This addresses Venkatesh & Bala’s (2008) call for cultural moderators.

### Summary of Findings

The study set out to test four digital marketing strategies on consumer behavior in FCT. Data from 384 respondents revealed all strategies are significant. The model  $R^2=0.630$ ,  $F=161.22$ ,  $p<0.001$ . SMM and MA are primary drivers; email is marginal.

### Conclusion

Digital marketing strategies exert a strong, statistically significant joint influence on consumer behavior in Abuja, FCT. Social media marketing and mobile advertising are the most effective tools for stimulating purchase intention, loyalty, and e-WOM. The low impact of email marketing suggests channel-context mismatch.

### Recommendations

To effectively influence consumer buying behavior, businesses and marketers should:

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1. Prioritize digital marketing strategies, particularly social media marketing and mobile marketing, to enhance their online presence and engage with customers.
2. Focus on creating targeted and personalized content to influence consumer buying behavior, particularly through mobile and social media channels.
3. Optimize their websites for search engines to improve visibility and reach a wider audience.
4. Investigate the impact of digital marketing strategies on specific industries or demographics within the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.
5. Explore the role of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain, in digital marketing and consumer buying behavior in the Nigerian context.
6. Conduct a longitudinal study to examine the long-term effects of digital marketing strategies on consumer buying behavior.

By adopting these recommendations, businesses and marketers can develop effective digital marketing strategies that influence consumer buying behavior and drive sales in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

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