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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

**THE EFFECT OF DIGITAL MARKETING STRATEGIES ON
SALES GROWTH: EVIDENCE FROM SELECTED COFFEE
EXPORTERS IN ETHIOPIA**

**A THESE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DEGREE OF MASTER OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS (MIB)**

By: Anteneh Workaferaw

January, 2026
Addis Ababa Ethiopia



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Advisor

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January, 2026

Addis Ababa Ethiopia

Approval statement

I declare that this thesis titled "Digital Marketing Strategies Affecting Sales Growth - Evidence from Some Ethiopian Exporting Coffees" is a record of the research Anteneh Workaferaw has conducted under my direction. As a faculty advisor for Anteneh Workaferaw and as such have been responsible for overseeing all aspects of the research, from the formulation of a conceptual framework through the systematic collection and analysis of the census-based data (which included the use of sophisticated statistical procedures for analyzing these data). I am pleased to attest that Anteneh Workaferaw has taken into consideration all assistance I provided in developing this research; thus, I believe that the research meets both the academic requirements and the professional expectations for a master's degree.

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Declaration

This is to certify that I, Anteneh Workaferaw, am the sole author of this thesis entitled “The Impact of Digital Marketing Strategies on Sales Growth: Evidence from Selected Coffee Exporters in Ethiopia”. I further confirm that this research work has not been offered before (either fully or partially) for any academic degree or professional qualification to any university/institution. I have acknowledged all relevant sources of information, data and literature used in my research by way of referencing both in-text and at the end of the thesis. I have completed this project with strict observance of ethical standards and academic honesty policies of my institution.

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Signature:



Date: January, 25, 2026

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Anteneh Workaferaw

Abstract

The authors conducted a study that explored the impact of digital marketing strategies on the sales growth of coffee exporting companies in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The authors cited the need for coffee exporters to adapt their businesses to today's digitized global market by implementing effective online engagement methods so they can stay competitive. The authors used a positivist perspective as part of their research methodology. They used an explanatory research design, which is based on deductive reasoning, with a quantitative approach to collect the data. They employed a census approach to obtain the primary data from the 115 coffee exporting companies in Addis Ababa. The total number of valid responses was 113, providing a complete and representative analysis of the coffee exporting industry in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Data was collected using structured surveys and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical procedures, including multiple linear regression analyses, to determine what causal relationships existed among the different variables studied. The major findings from the research report demonstrate that digital marketing strategies are one of the main factors driving the success of an organization with the majority of sales growth explained by the effective usage of these strategies. Of the three types of digital marketing strategies examined, e-mail marketing was identified as the most effective, followed by social media marketing and online advertisement. Based on this research, digital tools allow exporters (coffee) to expand their market reach and increase their ability to manage customer relationships. Market growth results from the use of digital marketing as a strategy by coffee-exporting businesses. The authors recommend that coffee exporting firms invest in innovating how they communicate directly with customers and utilize digital storytelling techniques to establish the credibility of their global brands. To further support coffee-exporting firms, the authors recommend providing institutional support through the development of exporter digital capacities allowing for sustainable growth within the Ethiopian coffee sector within the national market.

Key word: *Digital Marketing, Sales Growth, Coffee Exporters, Email Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Ethiopia.*

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

DBTP	Decomposed theory of planned behavior
DM	Digital marketing
DMS	Digital Marketing Strategies
GDP	Gross Domestic Products
MOTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI)
PPC	Pay-per-click advertising
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
TAM	Technology Acceptance Model
TPB	Theory of planned behavior
UK	United Kingdom

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter one lays the foundation of this research project, which investigates how digital marketing strategies affect sales growth for coffee exporters in Ethiopia. The study aims to understand how businesses in this increasingly competitive and digital global marketplace was succeed in exporting, as businesses in Ethiopia generate a significant amount of the country's revenue through foreign exchange from coffee exports. Therefore, this chapter was present all the elements of the problem statement and the specific objectives of the project, and provide an understanding of how this research fits into the context of the international trade and digital transformation. This chapter is also designed to serve as a guide for the research investigation by providing the framework for a more detailed theory and also to assist in an empirical analysis of this study.

1.1 Background of the study

Until recent years, digitalization within the international marketplace was seen as a "nice" option rather than an essential component for companies wanting the ability to be and remain competitive (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). With the growth of the digital consumer market rapid, companies are working on building digital marketing strategies that was engage consumers as much as possible, through many avenues, and not just send messages to them; that is, the expectations of a digital user today are different than those of just a few years ago (Salah, 2020). To successfully deploy a digital marketing strategy, marketers must prepare a structured marketing plan that outlines the goals and objectives for promoting products via multiple online channels and the audience(s) they wish to reach (Salah, 2020). The ultimate goal is for companies to connect with potential quality customers and convert them into active buyers (Salah, 2020).

As it relates to coffee exporters within the agricultural export sector, these exporters have been searching for ways to increase their volume of sales, while expanding their reach to their targeted audience. For this reason, many coffee exporters are turning to various digital marketing strategies to achieve those results (Kotabe & Helsen, 2022). Many coffee exporters utilize online advertising, SEO techniques, and social media platforms as a way to build their audience significantly. (Kotabe & Helsen, 2022).

The visibility of coffee exporters' websites can be improved and the awareness level of their coffee exports to global markets can be increased through their high ranking on search engine results pages (SERP) for the targeted keywords. Thus, exporters can achieve high ranking in search results and provide consumers with more visibility of their coffee products (Kotabe & Helsen, 2022). Additionally, through digital tools, coffee exporters can grow their sales by developing a stronger interaction and engagement with new potential and existing international customers (Kotabe & Helsen, 2022). By engaging with an international audience, coffee exporters may be able to create opportunities to reach some of the new markets and customers that were previously unaware of them and/or the types of products that they offer (Kotabe & Helsen, 2022).

In addition, the use of digital marketing allows exporters and service providers to use data analytics to analyze their customers' consumption and purchasing habits in more depth (Mullengi et al., 2023). Digital tools was provide coffee exporters with a greater understanding of what their target clients want and need from them, providing the opportunity to create specific marketing activities and strategies based upon the needs of their specific target customers (Mullengi et al., 2023).

Empirical evidence has shown that coffee exporters who use digital marketing activities and strategies are able to greatly increase their overall sales growth and performance (Neilson et al., 2019). The use of digital marketing has enabled coffee exporters to understand customers' preferences in specific markets and create more personalized marketing campaigns based on the customers' needs. Coffee, being Ethiopia's primary export commodity and the world's largest producer and exporter of Arabica coffee, is also the country that exports the most coffee in Africa (Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Authority [ECTA], 2025).

Ethiopia is the largest coffee producer in Africa and ranks as the fifth-largest exporter of Arabica coffee globally (ECTA, 2025). Ethiopia is a supplier to many other countries, including Sudan, the USA, Germany, Belgium, Saudi Arabia, Japan, and South Korea (ECTA, 2025). As such, coffee is an important industry in Ethiopia, both in terms of foreign exchange earnings and in supporting other sectors of the economy (ECTA, 2025). Currently, the Ethiopian coffee industry includes 395 coffee farmers and 400 exporting companies actively engaged in exporting coffee (ECTA, 2025). Additionally, more than 30 import/export companies facilitate the movement of

Ethiopian coffee to over 60 countries (ECTA, 2025). This research project has a main goal of exploring the relationship between these forms of digital marketing and the growth of sellers.

The project was specifically focused on active coffee exporters based in Addis Ababa (Saunders et al., 2019). In order to meet this goal; the research project has adopted the positivist philosophy of research and a deductive approach.

This allows the research project to provide quantitative evidence for the relationship between digital marketing investments and commercial success for Ethiopian exporters (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The research project's explanatory research design, as well as its use of an advanced statistical model, allows for analysis of the relationships of multiple forms of digital marketing (for example, social media, email marketing, and online advertising) to the growth of sales for Ethiopian exporters (Saunders et al., 2019). The systematic approach of this project ensures that the research findings can be repeated and are therefore based on a scientific process that creates a basis for determining the specific strategies that drive the success of Ethiopian exporters in the global marketplace (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As the global marketplace transitions into a digital era, marketing functions have shifted toward electronic environments where revenue generation is increasingly dictated by digital engagement (Mishra, 2020). While digitalization grants consumers greater purchasing power and global product access, it simultaneously presents survival challenges for traditional firms operating in hyper-competitive landscapes (Mishra, 2020). Modern consumer behavior has shifted from physical retail toward extensive digital research and social media engagement, forcing Ethiopian coffee exporters to transition from traditional networking to digital marketing (DM) as their primary driver for sales growth (Mishra, 2020; Roland, 2019). Despite coffee being Ethiopia's leading foreign currency earner, the sector has yet to realize its full export potential (Coffee Annual, 2023).

Global literature largely supports the positive influence of DM on sales performance, suggesting that digital channels allow exporters to bypass intermediaries, engage directly with foreign buyers, and leverage data analytics to meet specific market demands (Aulia, 2023; Kirzner, 2013). In this view, digital platforms serve as "levelers" that allow small and medium-sized enterprises to compete with multinationals by reducing transaction costs and enhancing brand awareness.

However, a critical counter-argument posits that digital success in developing nations like Ethiopia is not automatic. The efficacy of digital advertising is often constrained by a lack of "analog complements," such as reliable internet infrastructure and a digitally skilled workforce (World Bank, 2023). High costs and technical skill gaps in emerging markets can prevent short-term revenue growth, potentially creating a "digital divide" where only well-resourced firms benefit (Akinrinde et al., 2024; Hackfort, 2021). Furthermore, the deep-rooted nature of relationship-based marketing in the Ethiopian coffee trade raises questions about whether purely digital methods can facilitate the high-volume, long-term contracts typical of the industry (Coffee Annual, 2023).

This tension between global digital potential and local structural constraints reveals a significant research gap. Existing studies focus broadly on DM benefits or local supply-side factors, leaving the demand-side digital interactions of Ethiopian exporters largely unmapped (Endeshaw, 2017; Gafesa, 2018). There is a distinct lack of localized, quantitative evidence regarding how social media, email, and online advertising specifically impact actual sales output in Ethiopia (Onyango, 2016). Consequently, this research fills this void by providing empirical data to determine if digital strategies act as a catalyst for growth or are stifled by systemic barriers, thereby offering a scientific basis for strategic decision-making in Ethiopia's most vital economic sector (Saunders et al., 2019; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

1.3 Research Questions

1. What effect do digital marketing strategies have on sales growth among selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia?
2. Which digital marketing strategies are used by selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia?
3. What is the level of sales growth among selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia during the study period?
4. What is the statistically significant effect of digital marketing strategies on sales growth among selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia?
5. Which digital marketing strategies—social media marketing, email marketing, website marketing, and online advertising—have the greatest effect on sales growth among selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia?

1.4 Objective of the study

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study is to examine the relationship between digital marketing strategies and sales among coffee export in Ethiopia.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

1. To examine the effect of digital marketing strategies on sales growth among selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia.
2. To identify the digital marketing strategies adopted by selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia.
3. To assess the level of sales growth among selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia during the study period.
4. To determine whether digital marketing strategies have a statistically significant effect on sales growth among selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia.
5. To evaluate which digital marketing strategies—social media marketing, email marketing, website marketing, and online advertising—have the strongest effect on sales growth among selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia.

1.5 Significance of the study

The Coffee Industry has also faced considerable challenges concerning the adaptation of Digital Marketing to their business model as a result of digital marketing being introduced into coffee export industries over recent years; therefore, there will continue to be substantial barriers to the effective use of Digital Marketing within the coffee exporting industry. The findings of this study will examine the key factors that influence the successful implementation of Digital Marketing strategies and how these strategies can improve the effectiveness and overall performance of coffee exporters in Ethiopian agriculture. The study is timely and relevant, given the current increase in the necessity of Digital Marketing as a competitive marketing tool for Ethiopian Coffee exports within the context of the Global Economy. This research will help to better inform how Information Technology may assist in accelerating sales growth and improving the effectiveness of coffee marketing for Exporters. The findings of this study will fill a significant knowledge gap regarding the use of Digital Marketing to improve sales growth among Coffee Exporters in Ethiopia. The results of this research will assist in providing a larger base of knowledge in the field and provide valuable information to Researchers in the future.

Importantly, the outcomes of this study will provide useful information to Policymakers, Decision Makers, and Marketing Practitioners regarding the relationship between Digital Marketing strategies and sales growth among Coffee Exporters. This, in turn, will support the development and implementation of effective digital marketing strategies within the Ethiopian coffee export industry.

1.6 Scope and limitation of the study

This study has many different aspects – geography, time, theory, and method – but all form the basis of an empirical investigation into a defined set of coffee export businesses. In the geographic aspect, this study limits itself to companies that operate out of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia involved in the international coffee market with a significant number using some form of digitization to access new customers. With respect to time, this study has been focused on a specifically identified period of time characterized by significant changes due to new digital technologies and rapid increases in sales of Ethiopian coffee being exported to international markets. The theoretical scope has focused on established theories of digital marketing including but not limited to social media marketing, email marketing, website marketing and online advertising and how each of these forms influences the measurable performance metrics of sales. In the method aspect; this study used a quantitative approach based on descriptive and explanatory research designs and the collection of primary data in the form of a structured questionnaire survey distributed to all identified participants, and to perform data analysis, used only statistical methods to estimate the degree of relationship between any of the forms of digital marketing and measurable increases in sales.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms.

A Digital Marketing Strategy is essentially a method created by coffee export companies to create and distribute promotional materials through various online platforms and digital tools, as well as to provide support for sales processes(Endeshaw, 2017).. This strategy can include the use of social networks, electronic mail, web sites, and online advertisements to promote coffee products and provide information about those products to potential customers.

Coffee export companies that utilize **Social Media Marketing** typically use social media sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram as their main source of promotion, customer interaction, and brand awareness (Endeshaw, 2017). The effectiveness of Social Media Marketing can be assessed using criteria such as frequency of use, quality of content produced by the coffee

exporter, level of interaction with customers, and perceived effectiveness by customers.

Coffee export companies may utilize **Email Marketing** as a marketing method, where the coffee export company distributes promotional messages and information about coffee products and business updates directly to their customers via email (Salah, 2020). This study focuses on how effective email campaigns are for the coffee export company based on three criteria: how regularly email campaigns are conducted, how relevant the content of email campaigns are to customers, and what percentage of customers respond to email campaigns from the coffee export company (Salah, 2020).

Digital Advertising is represented by the use of paid marketing done using online platforms like Search Engines, Social Media Ads, and Display Ads. It is defined by the frequency of use; budget used for ads, and perceived significant contribution to a business's ability to reach target customers (Salah, 2020).

Sales Growth is defined as the growth in sales performance by coffee exporters over a determined timeframe. In this study, sales growth was defined through self-reported data on changes in sales volume, sales revenue, and increased distribution gained during the study timeframe (Kotabe & Helsen, 2022).

Coffee Exporters are defined as companies within Ethiopia that have fulfilled the legal requirements to operate in Ethiopia, and are therefore able to sell and export their own products to the international marketplace (Kotabe & Helsen, 2022).

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study consists of 5 chapters. As the first chapter shows, it outlines the background to the study; the problem being addressed; the aims of the research; the research questions; the importance of doing the research; the study's area of interest; the limitations on this study. The second chapter reviews studies relevant to digital marketing strategy and sales performance. The chapter includes theoretical material, previous empirical work and the framework which underpins this work. Chapter 3 describes how the research was conducted. It discusses the research worldview, research design, research approach, sampling procedures and data analysis methods. Chapter Four includes analysis of data collected from the research and presents both descriptive and inferential statistics about the data gathered in relation to the objectives of this project. The final chapter summarizes the findings, presents conclusions drawn from the data and outlines recommendations for future research

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter was look at theories and research in Digital Marketing Strategies and Sales Growth. were explore the theories and research on Digital Marketing Strategies, with an emphasis on how Digital Marketing practices affect sales performance through Social Media Marketing, Email Marketing, Website Marketing and Online Advertising. By looking at the theories and research that exist in the field of Digital Marketing, we can identify the Key Concepts and Relationships that was used to develop the conceptual framework of this study and assist in the analysis that follows.

2.2 Theoretical Review

The theoretical foundations that explain the relationship between digital marketing strategies and sales growth are presented in this section. The reviewed theories and models show how digital marketing activities affect customer engagement, market reach, and sales performance. By reviewing the theoretical foundations, this section establishes a framework for understanding how digital marketing strategies lead to business growth, and as such, provides the basis for understanding the empirical findings of the study(Kotabe & Helsen, 2022)..

2.2.1. The theory of Digital marketing

The use of digital channels and technology to create unique, relevant content is an important component of the marketing theory because it allows for targeted delivery to specific audiences while enhancing the personalized communication between companies and consumers (Ryans and Jones, 2012)

Using digital channels allow companies to create unique, relevant content that can be delivered to targeted audiences. Companies use content to create interactions with consumers and to create brand loyalty by utilizing consumer data and analytics. The use of data enables businesses to understand the behaviors of their customers and allows them to create advertising campaigns based on that information (Ryans & Jones, 2012).

The critical elements in Digital Marketing Theory include, but are not limited to, the elements of consumer behavior, brand identity development, the ability to communicate with consumers in a personalized manner, utilizing multiple digital channels, developing and executing effective marketing strategies, and the ability to analyze and utilize data and analytics to determine effective DM tactics.

The 7Ps of the digital marketing mix most frequently used in digital marketing strategy development are the Unique Selling Proposition (USP), the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) Matrix, and the Brand Positioning Map. These models provide information and help companies analyze, define goals, perform market research and develop digital marketing strategies. Overall, DM Theory is the integration of digital channels and online marketing (Ryans & Ryan 2012).

The Model is used by the coffee industry to develop digital marketing strategies that align with consumers' preferences and needs, as shown by the previous study conducted (Ryans & Jones, 2012).

2.2.2 Decomposed theory of planned behavior (DTPB)

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) has been further developed and detailed as a model for predicting and explaining behavior intention by providing information from the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) on how planned behavior may be influenced. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) states that people's actions are determined by their intention to act and how much control they believe they have over that behavior. The Decomposed Theory of Planned Behavior (DTPB) extends the premise of TPB to determine specific influences on behavioral intention by extending the original three categories of influence (i.e., attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control) into many smaller categories.

In many of the areas where the DTPB is currently used (i.e., education, health, business, and finance), it provides an indication of how someone intends to utilize an instrument and provides information and options that can help in the selection of that instrument. The DTPB also breaks down the construct of attitude into three distinct categories: beliefs about how effective or beneficial is; (2) are compatible with the user group; and (3) perceived ease of use. The DTPB provides insight on the advantages of clarifying and better understanding the individualized belief (attitudes) as to why users continue to use the technology; the establishment of multiple belief sets (i.e., DTPB) which can be applicable to different user groups; and providing examples

of the various contextual factors that may also influence the user's decision to adopt and use (King & He , 2014, Taylor & Todd, c.2011, Ajzen, 2002, Shih & Fang, 2004).

2.2.3. The AIDA Model

Developed by E. St. Elmo Lewis (1898) and subsequently refined in marketing literature, the AIDA model was used to identify the hierarchical processes a customer experiences as they make their decisions. The AIDA model assumes that customers make decisions based on cognitive and emotive processes before taking action and making purchases (Strong, 1925). The purpose of this study is to examine how the strategies and behaviors employed by coffee sector. can effectively facilitate the movement of prospective clients through the four stages of the AIDA model. Beginning with the noise of the Ethiopian coffee export sector environment. (Attention), the coffee export sector uses Signaling Theory to demonstrate its brand strength through strong Social Media Marketing, high visibility and respective reputation to effectively attract initial attention to its products/services (Gharibi et al., 2012).

The final phase in our process is Action, where the customer was actually demonstrate a preference for the coffee export sector, by making the decision to become an account holder or use some sort of coffee export sector. The study was assess how the customer's level of financial literacy affects the way that they filter through the first three (3) steps to ultimately arrive at coffee export sector. (Compared to competitors) (Rawal, 2013). Through our analysis, we can see that Action can be determined not only by desire for the coffee export sector, but also as the result of building a consumer's Brand Trust. Brand Trust provides a psychological separation between someone that likes a coffee export sector and wanting to use them (Kotler and Keller, 2016). In the third step, desire has been established based on a perceived alignment of Brand Personality with the consumer's own values and needs.

2.2.4 Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

This research utilizes a Resource-Based Approach (RBA) to look at coffee export sector as an organization. It is considered through the lens of Strategic Planning and organizational effectiveness. Berny (1991) and Wernerfeld (1984) have advocated for the RBA because it is designed to show the internal capabilities of an organization and provide insight for organizations to build a strong competitive advantage by means of how they use those internal capabilities. Unlike the Marketing Theory of Positioning (as presented by the Marketing Institute), which describes how external industrial structures was affect a firm's ability to

position itself in the market, the RBA was look to provide insight for how coffee export sector may build and grow their businesses based on how coffee export sector was create their own unique mix of physical and non-physical assets.

A successful coffee export sector was continually identifying and developing the resources necessary to meet the VRIN criteria (i.e. they must be Valuable, Rare, Inimitable and Non-substitutable). Valuable resources give coffee export sector the opportunity to take advantage of opportunities and/or mitigate threats, while rare resources provide coffee export sector with advantages that are not available to all competitors in the market.

The key component of the RBV presented in this study was the resource that cannot be easily imitated: the organizational culture, service reputation, and specialized digital infrastructure of a coffee export sector are examples of resources that are difficult for other private coffee export sector to replicate because they are resource-dependent and have social complexity (Dierickx & Cool, 1989). Additionally, the theory was explaining the transition from having these resources to gaining SCA (Sustainable Competitive Advantage). The long-standing benefits of a given resource depend on "ex post limits to competition" (Peteraf, 1993). In other words, once a company has gained an advantage, it becomes too expensive or challenging for competitors to catch up with that advantage.

Using the RBV, one can argue that a coffee export sector superior technological and human capital was not only be utilized to conduct operations; they also represent strategic assets that are needed to create mechanisms to "pick resources" and "build capabilities" (Makadok, 2001). Ultimately, the RBV was demonstrating that customers were seeing. as a more favorable choice due to the unique combination of resources that the coffee export sector was utilize compared to its competitors, and therefore create a greater challenge for competitors to match.

2.2.5 Relationship Marketing Theory

The Relationship Marketing Theory acts as the foundation for this study, providing an explanation for how the decision-making process of the coffee export sector (in relation to its customers) is based upon maintaining an ongoing relationship between those two parties. Originally defined by Berry in 1983, and later expanded upon by Morgan & Hunt in 1994, it represents a shift away from Transactional Marketing—as the term indicates—towards a Relational Marketing strategy defined by the attraction, retention, and development of customer relationships. This theory applies to the increasing competition within the Ethiopian coffee

industry, therefore. Was achieve success through building long-term relationships (and hence, creating mutual benefits) with its customers as opposed to simply providing services. The major part of this Theory is called Commitment-Trust Theory, which states that Trust and Commitment was the "key mediating variables" that cause customers to develop positive relationships with builds. This study was state that Customers who have high service quality perceptions and Digital reliability was also have Digital attachment. Relational Marketing was evolving the coffee export sector role from Being Marketing Providers to Marketing Partners and thus Decrease Customers' perceptions of Risk and Cognitive Efforts in Their Brand Choices (Gronroos, 1994). Because the export sector has demonstrated a commitment to a "Lifetime Value" approach to Customer Value, It has created a barrier against competitors; Satisfied/trusting customers are less likely to switch to competitors when they have need for that type of service. Additionally, the Theory was delved into how the coffee export sector was incorporate "Social Bonds" and "Structural Bonds". The research designed by Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995) illustrates how relationship marketing creates a deeper understanding of each customer's unique needs, offering customers personalized service that ultimately reinforces their loyalty to the coffee export sector. The research was propose that the success of coffee sector is dependent on the coffee export sector moving customers through the relationship lifecycle from being prospects to advocates and ensuring that the final decision regarding brand selection is based on a relational foundation rather than a mere pricing comparison.

2.3 Digital Marketing and Digitalization

The strategy approach and activity associated with digital marketing and branding constitutes the most meaningful marketing aspect of DM Strategies. The Digital Development of services and products, as well as that of the Brand, are the results of an inbound marketing approach to Digital Marketing and are critical elements of DM. By identifying the motivation behind customer behaviors, businesses can understand how customers are motivated to create and post content about their stores and/or brands and therefore can have an impact on the revenue generated. Inbound Marketing creates a sense of loyalty and trust in customers. Atienza & Tabuena, 2021; Baltes, 2016. Digitalization is not just a matter of finding solutions to existing problems, but also of creating new ways to deliver customer value by developing a new Supply of Services & Products using Digital Technology. In addition to developing new supply chains, the Practice of Digital Technology can also be used to adapt an existing Business Model and/or restructure a

Value Chain, providing a new and improved method of delivering value to customers. Therefore, Digitalization is a major contributor to the ability to provide enhanced Services & Product Processes in all types of industries (Flores et al., 2021).

As Low Cost & Successful in Attracting New Business - The Impact of Economic Development on Economic & Digital Marketing. The Industry Benefits from Digital Marketing. (Flores et al, 2021; Santos (2020) As the basis for using both Digital & Traditional Marketing Techniques to Promote Larger Marketing Campaigns that was Provide Brand Awareness & Recognition Which was Lead to Increased Business & Sales Growth through DM. DM is an Effective Way for Organizations to Reach out to Both Specific & Broad Audiences & Provide Targeted Branding Messages & Campaigns.

2.3.1 Digital marketing - its Importance

DM is being utilized for different types of businesses, due to the variety of DMPs available and the ability to reach a much larger audience than traditional marketing methods, thereby greatly increasing internet traffic and potential customers. To help build engagement with customers, companies now have alternative methods of communicating with their customers prior to making a purchase, via social media, email, and telephone or by using SMS on their smartphone applications and/or using affiliate partners. A major advantage to using Social Media is that it provides businesses with a medium by which customers can express opinions and make comments about products (usually having an impact), which in turn increases the likelihood of conversion of that audience into paying customers. In many instances, DM is much more cost-effective than traditional marketing strategies and provides a level of competition that allows smaller companies to be on par with larger companies.

Digital marketing comprises a multitude of formats that include Social Media Marketing, Pay-Per-Click Advertising, Email Marketing, Content Marketing, Sponsored Content, Affiliate Marketing, SMS Marketing, Video Marketing, Website Marketing, Native Marketing, and Marketing Automation.

2.3.2 Digital marketing strategies

The growth of technology has changed how we view our business operations in this new age and especially in the Digital Business Sector, Digital Platforms represent one of the largest sources for many businesses to provide their products and services to clients. Through the growth of Digital Platforms, a business now faces an increase in the level of competition from competitors

who also have dedicated their efforts on Digital Platforms. Consequently, companies must develop an effective marketing strategy to drive increased sales and revenue, by focusing on finding a competitive advantage and establishing a target market of consumers (Mariani et al., 2023; Pandiangan, 2024).

Additionally, not only do DM strategies help generate sales volume for companies, but they also create opportunities for business owners in that they provide customers with everything they need. Customer Interaction via DM allows customers to have their needs met without having to go into their local store. The implementation of the DM and Social media strategies for a company are contributing factors that drive companies towards selling greater volumes of their products for greater profit and allow them to have a larger market share and compete with larger business (Rashid 2020)

DM, online marketing, is the mode through which companies promote their products and services by executing marketing campaigns and strategies using the internet. As marketing has evolved over time, there are now a variety of marketing channels and strategies other than those based on the internet. Tech supports the connection between customers and companies; therefore, many brands have an active presence on social media. (Saleh, 2020). With more access to different forms of online and marketing options, digital marketing is growing at a faster rate than traditional methods (Nurunnabi, Rahman, and Masud, 2020). At the same time, many of the DM and electronic marketing channels allow for enough flexibility and modifications to keep up with the current digital marketing landscape (Qashou and Saleh, 2018). DM uses a broad set of Internet-based channels encompassing a wide variety of wireless, online, and other promotional tools that businesses can use to create and deliver promotional material to customers (Papadopoulos et al., 2020). DM is flexible, increasing in number and continually evolving as technology advances in digital mode through the internet. DM consists of a variety of marketing methods, including, but not limited to, search engine marketing, website marketing, affiliate marketing, and email marketing.

2.3.3 Digital Marketing Strategies and Sales Growth

In today's high level of technological development where the Internet is used at a high level and in various types of businesses, it is not debatable that Digital Marketing is important not only for any company or organization but also as a marketing avenue for coffee industries no less than all the other businesses they are engaged in today by using the Internet (Mohammad Naser Qadha,

2021). The customer determines the information they want to receive and the type of offers that was meet their needs and wants. Because of this reason, Digital Marketing is commonly called Reverse Marketing. As companies across all countries continue to utilize Digital Marketing, they are provided with both opportunities and challenges to grow their businesses. (Ability boosts, 2021)

Digital Marketing is a significant part of any business process and it is dependent upon the ability of the two parties exchanging communication digitally to interact with each other. Digital Marketing serves as an effective communication channel to connect all parties, allowing the coffee industry to connect with a broad level of consumers via Social Media. Digital Marketing's primary objective is to connect with customers that identify with the purpose of an organization. The importance of DM is evidenced by its effectiveness and contributions to increasing sales revenues along with the rise in importance of increasing the number of customers digitally; thus, DM can provide an advantage for increasing the quantity of sales by increasing the number of customers digitally in many aspects and channels, transferring a virtual marketplace to a tangible (real world) marketplace, and in this research, was provide a comprehensive overview of how Digital Marketing influences the growth of the Coffee Industry by increasing their profitability through opportunities and challenges encountered by the Commercial Sector when it implements Digital Marketing Strategies. Roland 2019

In today's business environment, DM is the most innovative tool for creating a link between organizations and their customers. How businesses market their services/products and engage with their customers has changed dramatically compared to previous generations. Digital Marketing has the greatest impact on small and entrepreneurial businesses, which often face unique challenges and opportunities as they navigate and leverage digital platforms to grow and build brand awareness. Digital Marketing has become critical in the current worldwide transition to a digital marketplace through which businesses sell products, as shown in Mahalaxmi and Ranjith (2016), who demonstrate how Digital Marketing influences the decision making processes for customers regarding what to purchase Bizhanova et al. (2019) The business perspective provides a deeper understanding of the advantages and disadvantages associated with digital marketing and social media. With the advancements of the second generation of Internet applications, individuals now have more innovative opportunities for communication and interaction with customers through creating shared content. Various elements (usage duration,

management competency, cost, measurable outcomes, and comparative effectiveness) affect the implementation of digital marketing (Melović et al., 2020).

Digital marketing significantly impacts online purchase intention according to a study from Dastane (2020). However, Dastane found that Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is not a major mediating factor in this relationship. A structural model was created to represent the Malaysian e-commerce industry, along with implications and future research directions.

Another set of research from Grishikashvili et al. (2014) evaluates how several types of digital technology are changing many different industries. Digital technology has had a large impact on the industries that provide virtual products, including but not limited to financial services, insurance, and mobile telecommunication.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, digital marketing communications have become increasingly important (Shankar et al, 2022).

Yamin (2017) researched purchasing behavior from a digital marketing perspective in Bangladesh. These studies provide a look at how DM has impacted all businesses in a variety of ways and across various industries.

2.3.4 Digital Marketing and Increasing Sales:

Digital marketing empowers SMEs with streamlined access to consumers, increasing market visibility and brand recognition, ultimately resulting in an increase in sales according to a study conducted by Febriyantoro and Arisandi (2019). Olonde (2017) found that email and social media marketing are both highly effective channels for driving the growth of SME sales and that improved access to financial support and government policies is required for SMEs to take advantage of digital marketing opportunities. Reken (2023) researched Citra Land Ambon's new normal and its impact on sales growth as a result of digital marketing through their website. At Alligator Roastery, parallel effects of E-CRM and E-Marketing on Market Orientation accounted for 50.3% of how E-CRM and E-Marketing influence Market Orientation based on the coefficient of determination, as established by Gultom and Nainggolan (2023). Bhargava et al. (2013) have highlighted many of the marketing challenges facing the IEEE Communications Society (ComSoc) with regard to providing access to technical publications, conferences, and educational resources. According to Hawaldar et al. (2022), although digital marketing tactics and customer involvement are similar across South Asia, the success of these tactics varies from country to country. This indicates that every B2B market in this area requires a unique digital

marketing approach. Pratiwi et al (2023), looked at the impact of digital marketing on Grin Sing, a weaving business, and identified several challenges that companies face when trying to implement these tactics, as well as recommendations for how to do it better. Both articles demonstrate that DM plays an important role in increasing sales, creating a market-oriented strategy, and solving the marketing issues for businesses of all types throughout the world.

2.3.5 Digital Marketing and Profitability

Agarwal and others (2011) investigated how DM affects profitability through Advertising placements which have a direct impact on revenue (i.e., profits) as a result of the types of consumer search patterns and recency biases associated with purchasing decisions. Grandhi and other's (2021) focus was on the push for Customer-Centric methodologies throughout all business processes and how both Company and Customer can incorporate DDM's through using Big Data into their business. Kiradoo and others (2016) emphasized how Marketing can boost productivity and efficiency within a company, thus helping companies gain and retain customers. Zaglago and others (2019) looked at the importance of Social Media (SME) as a tool for increasing the value of SMEs, i.e., examining what SME define and evaluate as "value" and how cost-effective are their Social Media initiatives and what Return on Investment (ROI) do they produce. Basriwijaya and Alham (2021) Wang et al. (2004) examined the marketing channel preferences of two specific channels (internet and catalogues) and how they affect the cost of marketing within firms and their profitability through an empirical study. Collectively these studies provide insight into the range of effects that combining digital marketing strategies has on profitability, and highlight the importance of creating an effective digital marketing strategy through means such as strategic ad placement, customer-centered approach, using data-driven techniques and utilizing effective use of social media channels.

Phiri cites research that demonstrates that an organization's ability to execute and develop internet strategy and develop innovative internet products and develop innovative internet services and predict the future is directly related to intermediary marketplace results of product availability, customer perception, customer brand identity and attitudes toward a brand. This also means execution and developing an internet strategy was positively correlate with the ultimate success of a company's performance (whether it is on revenue growth, profitability or market share (Jadhav et al. (2023) Theoretical Consideration of The Contribution Of Digital Marketing To Smes' Efficiency in Organizations. Wuisan, & Handra (2023) noted how significant the

impact of DM on increasing the company's recognition and revenue performance. According to Bhagowati & Dutta (2018), they indicate how the fast-growing amount of users and the use of new technologies is creating a rapidly changing digital marketing environment. Gao et al. (2023) stated that there is a strong correlation between MSMEs' adoption of e-commerce and its effect on their financial performance & resilience through the pandemic. Mathews & Healy (2008) contributed to Technology Adoption Studies by examining how e-commerce and DM improve an organization's financial performance during the worldwide pandemic, thereby providing the necessary knowledge to the manager and policymakers.

Liu et al. (2020) observed how the development of Internet Marketing Capabilities impacts a company's ability to perform in the International Market as well as explore the characteristics of entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation (customer focus), knowledge & its effect on the adoption of Internet Marketing Capabilities, how to establish a relationship with internet customers through customer management. Collectively, these studies underscore how digital marketing and e-commerce can help companies improve their market performance and create financial resiliency across a large range of contexts.

Recent research supported that DM created future leads & sales, drew new customers, re-established brand awareness, & enhanced customer engagement; promoted greater understanding of DM; and increased operational productivity. The influence of Digital Marketing (DM) strategies has been found to positively impact the profitability, market share and revenues of export companies (Onyango, 2016). Digital Marketing (DM) has been shown to lead to better performance by Export companies than traditional marketing techniques and that growth in sales of Export companies is related to the positive relationship between DM and growth of sales, including such growth of sales being positively impacted by the use of DM components such as email, search engine optimization (SEO), and online advertising (Bajaj and Bhanot, 2016; Yasmin et al. 2015), DM components also impact the performance and market accessibility of export firms, to add competition, improve communication with customers and create increased brand loyalty (Njau & Karugu, 2014; Ergomu? & Çiçek 2012; Roland 2019).

Results of a similar study found that DM tools such as Social Media (SM) are more intentional in brand promotion and knowledge for companies, while Pay per Click (PPC) Advertisements (Ads) were perceived by survey participants to be the least effective DM strategy for Export

firms. The results further indicate that, according to the data collected from the study, Social Media Marketing, SEO, and content marketing are among the more effective options for companies that want to promote brand awareness, increase sales opportunities, and remain adaptable to the long-term use of DM (Jerico et al. 2021). Furthermore, with regard to marketing strategies influencing small scale coffee growers and the effect marketing has on those coffee farmers Francis, R and Susan (2017) state that the most significant finding from their research is that many of the marketing factors prevent the farmer from being able to continue coffee production. Factors such as not being able to access timely and accurate information regarding prices of coffee and negotiations with middlemen; being unable to receive payment from the auction for their coffee until well after the auction has begun or even after the auction is over and that there are all the various management issues that occur in coffee cooperative societies; and also the debts that a farmer may have from these coffee cooperative societies.

Therefore, the use of digital marketing strategies has positively impacted on sales; market share and profitability for those companies which utilized digital marketing strategies versus those companies which utilized traditional marketing strategies, and companies which have employed digital marketing strategy have experienced greater sales growth than their competitors who utilize traditional marketing methods. In addition, Yasmin, T, and Fatema (2015) conducted research to confirm that digital marketing strategies do positively impact the company's sales growth and develop a strong association between sales growth and strategies.

2.4 Application of Digital Marketing in the Coffee Marketing System

The trade in coffee and its importance to the country's financial activity as an export is vitally important. As more and more opportunities are presented for exporting coffee and the coffee industry grows at a rapid rate. Also, coffee consumption is on the rise in Ethiopia as well as universally.

The way that coffee is marketed was play a major role in the continued development and growth of the coffee industry and the use of DM was an important aspect for any coffee business to be successful in a very technology-focused world. A study conducted showed that the majority of people checked their mobile phones at least once every 12 minutes. Companies who successfully leverage their digital presence and utilize digital effectively can benefit greatly. Digital Marketing has become a fast growing trend in the coffee business and now encompasses mass distribution and personalized products so in order to be successful coffee brands need to adjust

their marketing actions and strategies accordingly and be cognizant of how the values, beliefs and attitudes of consumers are impacted by the Digital Marketing efforts of the coffee industry. (Tiago and Verissimo, 2014, Al Kailani and Kumar, 2011).

Despite the fact that DM can help to enhance competitiveness throughout the coffee industry in Ethiopia, many internal and external obstacles are present that presently hinder the successful implementation of DM on behalf of the coffee industry such as the procedure for exporting coffee and the expectation of the export buyer. Some of the examples of these barriers which exist today are: reductions in the quantity of available coffee, the quality of the coffee products, increases in demand, no negotiations of pricing of coffee, promotion and branding of coffee products, continuity of coffee businesses, a lack of education about modern farming techniques provided to farmers, and lastly, there is no comprehensive market strategy that is held by the majority of Ethiopian coffee exporters. The fact that DM strategies exist in the coffee industry and in the business of coffee is a motivating factor for the continued viability of the coffee export business with the ultimate goal of achieving the maximum profit from the sales of coffee, capture the largest potential market share, and remain competitive in the marketplace. (Tambunan et al., 2024)

2.5 Social media and Sales Growth

Social media is a critical part of most businesses digital marketing strategies and affect how they spend their money. According to a recent study, having a good online presence helps businesses to get traffic to their websites, which in turn leads to more sales. Additionally, by using social media management tools, businesses gain insights into who their target market is. By monitoring the demographic information of their audience, as well as their interests and behaviors, they can tailor their advertising efforts to better meet their needs, thereby developing more effective sales strategies for the company, and ultimately increasing sales.

Practically speaking, business' purposes for using social media include, but are not limited to: selling products and/or providing services via social networks, providing customer support through the use of social media, generating/creating a positive association for businesses with their defined target audience and their behaviors, and establishing sales opportunities through increased exposure to prospective customers via social media platforms (Andaç, Akbiyuk, and Karkar, 2016).

When companies such as Facebook and Instagram increase the number of leads and potential sales to a business, this number is expected to continue growing (increasing at an exponential rate) until it reaches approximately six billion active users on social media platforms by 2027. The Growth of Social Purchasing is occurring at an unprecedented rate, thus creating an excellent Business Opportunity for businesses to capture more Customers through Social Media (Cardiac Marketing, 2024). According to research conducted and published by Muhit in 2022, customer relationships, engagement, communication, and brand awareness have a significant effect on increasing sales while customer feedback and content sharing do not increase sales. However, according to Another Study done by Yost, Zhang, and Qi, there is a positive correlation between Social Media Marketing and Sales Processes and Social Media Marketing also has a large effect on the Sales Performance Metrics of Market Share, Net Profit and Financial Liquidity, which are all measured from the sales performance data. Lastly, several separate studies conducted in Ethiopia on the relationship between Social Media Marketing and Sales Growth showed a significant positive correlation between Sales Growth and Social Media Marketing, based on content, reputation, timing connection, management, and Platform (Melaku H 2022, Serkalem T. 2021).

2.5.1 Online Advertising and sales growth

Online Advertising is arguably the most effective tool for delivering marketing messages to consumers for purchase decisions. According to Boudreau and Watson (2006), Online Advertising is an increasingly important medium for the promotion of services and products as they allow advertisers to engage with consumers, creating a desire to purchase. As noted by Hoffman and Novak (1996), the use of the internet has integrated into the offline world and has created a channel of communication for consumers that is now seen by consumers as a normal part of their everyday life. Online Advertising is the medium of promotion that uses the internet and worldwide web to create marketing messages that can be presented to a target audience in order to entice them to make a purchase.

Given the large audience that Online Advertising reaches, Online Advertising has a greater influence on a viewer's mind than any other marketing tool (Katke, 2007). In addition, recent research has shown that the internet has emerged as an area where the development of a new channel for sales is being created that was result in a significant change in the way that consumers purchase products and how they perceive products (V.Kumar & Denish Shah, 2004).

These studies have indicated that a relationship exists between the expectations of online consumers and the effectiveness of online advertisements. (Palanisamy & Wong, 2003).

According to empirical research (Novak & Hoffman 1996), the consumer's reaction to Internet (online) advertising is similar to that of offline/traditional advertising; however, consumers are more likely to ignore an ad that is presented online than to ignore an ad that is presented offline (Dre`ze & Hussherr 1999). Therefore, with new technologies continuing to evolve and lead businesses to create virtual or online business models, the marketing strategy adopted by these businesses was focused on using online advertising as the primary means of marketing to consumers. Other, independent studies have also confirmed that companies that utilize online advertising enjoy significant sales increases as a direct result of the use of this marketing medium (Bethlehem G 2019).

2.5.2 Electronic Mail Marketing and the sales Growth

Businesses use email to communicate with customers and prospects, rather than using more traditional marketing methods (Ward 2018). Email marketing is considered a main pillar of today's business landscape. Email marketing is an effective way for businesses to communicate with customers and prospects, generate leads, and drive revenue. Onyango (2016) explains that email marketing allows businesses to: Create relationships with customers; Build loyalty to brands; Generate additional sales by creating a sense of urgency. Email marketing is one of the most powerful forms of marketing available today. . It represents one of the basic pillars in the modern business world that become a major means of communication and interaction between companies and customers and becoming an effective tool for growth and increasing revenues in ways that were not possible in traditional marketing. (Ward 2018) Email marketing, therefore, is a powerful tool for businesses to increase sales and generate lead through Improve communication, Build customer loyalty and Drive sales. (Onyango 2016).

2.6. Empirical Review

A growing body of evidence from study around the world supports the effectiveness of digital marketers at improving company performance through sales growth. The first study was "How Social Media Marketing Influences Brand Loyalty", based on empirical evidence by Erdoğan and Çiçek (2012), which used a quantitative method (survey data from Turkey) to determine the relationships between social media marketing and brand loyalty using multi regression analysis. It showed that social media marketing increased brand loyalty through relevant content,

interactive, and visibility on social media platforms. Strong aspects of the study include a well-designed statistical analysis for evaluating the social media construct. However, the primary justification for the research was based on the effects of social media marketing on the attitudes and loyalty of customers, rather than the direct measurement of sales performance, which makes it difficult to understand how Social Media Marketing converts to measurable sales growth in export driven industries.

The study "Impact of Social Media Marketing on Small and Medium Enterprises in India" conducted by Jain (2014) evaluated the impact of digital marketing on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Descriptive survey design method was employed to determine the overall impact of social media marketing on sales, customer engagement and market expansion among SMEs in India. The study by Yasmin, Tasneem and Fatema (2015) represents an empirical investigation into the effectiveness of digital marketing as a contributor to increase sales through quantifying and comparing the correlation and regression analysis. Results indicated a strong positive correlation between digital marketing tool usage (email marketing, online advertising, web site marketing, and social media marketing), and sales growth. One of the key strengths of the study is its assessment of multiple digital marketing strategies in one consolidated framework; however, it is unclear how these strategies are utilized in a specific industry or within the context of developing countries, creating an opportunity for future research on a sector/industry and/or country-specific basis.

According to Taiminen and Karjaluoto (2015), "The Usage of Digital Marketing Channels in Smaller Enterprises (SMEs)" was studied using a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches that included surveys and semi-structured interviews among SMEs located in Finland. In their research, Adegbuyi et al. (2015) explored "The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Small Business Performance" in Nigeria. The Research Design used was a survey and various statistical analyses (ANOVA and correlation tests). The Results showed that Social Media Marketing Increased Brand Exposure, Customer Engagement, and Sales Performance. The study's primary strength is the clear emphasis on Small Enterprises in a developing economy. The research only examined Urban SME's; Export oriented Agribusiness is outside the scope of this study and different dynamics/regulatory environments for this category of SME was existing.

Locally, Onyango (2016) performed an investigation entitled "Influence of Digital Marketing Strategies on Exporters Performance of Cut Flowers Exporting Firms" and adopted a Mixed Method approach using both Quantitative and Qualitative research methods. The Results from this study demonstrated that Digital Marketing Strategies Improved Sales Growth, Market Share, and Profitability for Exporters. One a major strength of this research is that it focuses on Export Oriented Agribusiness Firms and is applicable to Agricultural Exporting. However, the study primarily dealt with Cut Flowers rather than Coffee; As such, no sector-specific differences in Market Structure or Buyer Behavior was addressed creating a sectorial void.

Njau & Karugu (2014) used a survey research design to look at how e-marketing affected the Performance of Manufacturing firms in Kenya. They found that email, online marketing, search engine marketing & blog marketing all positively impacted Business Performance and Sales Growth. They found these results through an empirical test with multiple Digital Marketing tools. The downside was the authors focused on manufacturing firms; thus, their findings have limited significance to the coffee export industry.

Roland (2019) conducted a study entitled "Impact of Social Media Advertisement on Customer Product Brand Awareness of International Coffee Shops in Oman" where Descriptive research was employed based on customer survey data. The findings indicate that Social Media advertising enhanced Brands Awareness and Purchase Intentions significantly. One significant advantage of this study is that Coffee Industry closely correlates with the current study. However, Roland's study employed Retail Coffee Shops versus companies that export coffee and focused on Brand Awareness instead of Sales Growth. This support's the Conceptual Gap. The researchers Muriuki, Rintari, and Muema published their study "Effect of Digital Marketing Strategies on Sales Growth of Coffee Export in Kenya" (2022), which used a multiple regression analysis and a cross-sectional survey design to analyze digital marketing strategies. They found that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between digital marketing strategies and coffee exporter sales growth. The significance of this study lies in its specific focus on coffee exporter sales and its method of using quantitative analysis to arrive at this conclusion. However, as the research was completed in Kenya, where the regulations, access to markets, and the extent of digital media use differ from Ethiopia, it limits the study's ability to generalize to Ethiopia.

Conversely, the number of empirical studies conducted in Ethiopia concerning digital marketing as related to coffee exports has been scarce. Endeshaw's research (2017) on the marketing strategies for exporting coffee by Ethiopian trading companies utilized a descriptive research design and emphasized the increasing importance of using digital platforms to improve market access and to remain competitive in coffee exporting. However, while this study provided important insight concerning the context, Endeshaw did not empirically explore the link between digital marketing strategies and sales growth, representing an area where there are methodological gaps in current Publication. In his research, Gafesa (2018) explored both aggregation and traceability in smallholder coffee producer/exporters within Ethiopia, placing an emphasis on how digital tools could be used to enhance the flow of information and establish connections between the producer and the market. The strengths of his research lie in its focus on structural and institutional dynamics within the overall Ethiopian coffee sector. However, no quantitative analysis was conducted to assess the impact of digital marketing strategies on sales growth within this population, which results in an empirical gap.

Kabeta and Dangia (2022) carried out an investigation into how market participation and access to information affected coffee producers located in southwestern Ethiopia. Their results demonstrated that coffee producers who had access to digital information platforms had a greater degree of market participation and, thusly, greater income levels. Although the study revealed the positive results associated with accessing digital tools, it did not include an analysis of specific digital marketing strategies targeted towards exporters, demonstrating a significant scope gap.

In general, although there are empirical studies demonstrating how digital marketing strategies enhance sales growth and overall market performance within various sectors and regions, there is a large gap in the amount of rigorous quantitative analysis conducted to demonstrate the relationship between digital marketing strategies and the growth of sales of coffee exporters within Ethiopia. Most of the existing studies on this subject have been completed outside of Ethiopia or have focused on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), retail businesses or non-coffee sectors. This study therefore seeks to bridge this empirical gap by systematically examining the association between digital marketing strategies and sales growth among selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia.

2.6.1 Research Gaps

The empirical literature shows that numerous research gaps warrant the conduct of this study. The most notable research gap is that while many international and regional studies have identified the positive association between digital marketing strategies and improved firm performance, they have predominantly been conducted in European and developed economies or non-agricultural sectors. Specifically, studies conducted on digital marketing strategies in developing countries, and in relation to agricultural exports, specifically with respect to coffee, are scarce when comparing the available empirical data to the amount of empirical data available from developed countries and non-Agricultural Worker related industries in developing countries.

The second research gap is that the vast majority of studies assess general indicators of firm performance (e.g., brand, engagement with customers, profitability) instead of directly measuring the measurable outcome of digital marketing strategies with respect to "sales." Many of the studies that have addressed the effect of digital marketing strategies on "sales," have done so indirectly or have only included "...persistent differences in the general performance of firms" and therefore do not provide enough empirical evidence regarding the direct effects of digital marketing strategies on "sales," of export oriented firms, and therefore create another research gap in understanding the relationship between specific digital marketing strategies and firm growth through sales of goods and services exported abroad. The third research gap is the limited amount of empirical evidence specifically focused on the coffee export sector.

Although studies conducted in other regions, including Kenya, provide some insight into the relationship between digital marketing strategies and the coffee export market, the different institutional environments, digital infrastructures, regulatory environments, and market access conditions make it inappropriate to directly apply these findings to Ethiopian coffee exporters. Therefore, it is essential that there is country-specific empirical evidence within the context of Ethiopian coffee exporters, and therefore the research question is relevant and warrants investigation. The empirical literature shows that numerous research gaps warrant the conduct of this study. The most notable research gap is that while many international and regional studies have identified the positive association between digital marketing strategies and improved firm performance, they have predominantly been conducted in European and developed economies or non-agricultural sectors. Specifically, studies conducted on digital marketing strategies in

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2.7 Conceptual framework of the Study

This study aims to explore how Digital Marketing Strategies impact the Coffee Industry's Export Growth in Ethiopia. The growth of sales was the dependent variable (customer retention, customer patronage, market coverage, and sales performance) (Nam et al. 2020), while the following was independent variables: Social Media, Online Advertising, and Email Marketing (Muniesa et al. 2020).

2.7.1. Justification of Variables (Selection Rationale)

The digital marketing industry has numerous areas like Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Content Marketing and Influencer Marketing, but this research was focus primarily on Social Media Marketing, Online Advertising and Electronic Mail (Email) Marketing. The prioritization of these three areas is due to the unique characteristics of the Ethiopian coffee export industry, which operates in a primarily Business to Business (B2B) setting. Email was the leading medium for professionally negotiating and finalizing transactions, while Social Media and Online Advertising was the current methods used for establishing Global Visibility and Brand Awareness. Specialty tools such as "Affiliate Marketing" or "Marketing Automation" was not studied at this time, because they are not being utilized in the existing Ethiopian coffee export structure and thus, was not provide the current practical relevance for our research.

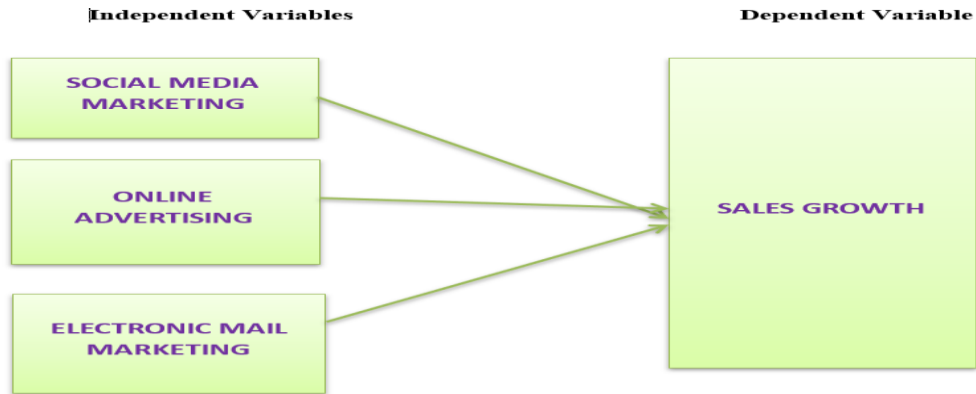


Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the Study

Source: Developed by the researcher (2026), adapted from Muniesa et al. (2020) and Nam et al. (2020).

2.8 Hypothesis of the study

The goal of this research is to test various hypotheses concerning how digital marketing strategies affect the growth of coffee exporting businesses through statistical analysis. The following areas was analyzed when considering the relationship between digital marketing and sales: Previous research overwhelmingly supports the notion that companies that use digital channels as part of their overall strategy perform better than those who do not. (See Muriuki et al. (2022) for the most comprehensive example of this). Based on the results of the above studies, we expect

H1 Digital marketing strategies exert a statistically significant positive influence on the sales growth of coffee exporting firms in Ethiopia.

In addition to looking at the overall effects of digital marketing on business profitability, our research was investigating the impact of different types of digital media used to reach consumers. Different forms of digital media may serve vastly different purposes and deliver different messages depending on their intended audience. For example, there is good evidence that social media is an effective marketing vehicle for agribusinesses; while other forms of direct interaction like personal telephone calls are more prevalent within the B2B community. Based on these available resources, was separately examine how social media contributes to overall sales performance within Ethiopia's coffee exporting industry.

Hypothesis 2 (H_2): social media marketing has a significant positive effect on the sales growth of coffee exporters.

Hypothesis 3 (H_3): Electronic mail marketing has a significant positive effect on the sales growth of coffee exporters.

Hypothesis 4 (H_4): Online advertising has a significant positive effect on the sales growth of coffee exporters.

Comparison of strategy effectiveness central objective of this research is to identify which specific tool provides the highest return on investment for Ethiopian exporters. Research by yasmin et al. (2015) suggested that interactive platforms often outperform static ones. However, in the international coffee trade, formal channels like email are hypothesized to carry more weight in closing sales.

Hypothesis 5 (H_5): Electronic mail marketing is the most significant predictor of sales growth among the various digital marketing strategies utilized by Ethiopian coffee exporters.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology that was used to investigate the relationship between digital marketing strategies and sales growth with evidence from Ethiopian coffee exporters. In addition to outlining the overall design of the research project, the chapter also describes the population of the research and the sampling strategy that was used to obtain a representative sample of respondents. As a result of the comprehensive scope of the chapter, it also describes how the instruments used to collect data were developed, how the research was conducted, and the methods used to analyze the data (i.e. statistically or thematically). Establishing a clear methodological foundation for this study was allowing the researchers to provide evidence that supports the results of this analysis.

3.2 Research setting area

Ethiopia is one of Africa's largest producers and exporters of coffee; according to a 2009 report by the Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC), Ethiopia is currently ranked as the 5th largest exporter of Arabica coffee. Ethiopia is also home to a significant number of partners who import/export coffee. These countries are Sudan, USA, Germany, Belgium, Saudi Arabia, USA, Japan and South Korea. Ethiopians depend upon coffee for income and foreign exchange; currently, there are approximately 395 Ethiopian coffee farmers and about 400 Ethiopian coffee exporters, and more than 30 import/export companies exporting Ethiopian coffee to over 60 countries. This survey was conducted on several Ethiopian coffee exporters who have current or previous experience exporting coffee outside of Ethiopia.

3.3 Research philosophy

The research philosophy of this investigation is rooted in positivist beliefs; thus, the worldview of a positivist is an external world that exists separate from the perceptions of individuals, and therefore, knowledge is obtained through observation and measurement (Saunders et al. (2019)). In taking a positive stance, the researcher has maintained an independent and neutral standing to reach unbiased findings based on objective and quantifiable evidence, rather than on subjective experiences. The decision to use the positivist belief as a basis for this research is a direct result of the deductive approach to research used. This type of deductive approach is when the

researcher starts their study using a theory or a model found in the literature, formulates hypotheses about the variables, and then tests those hypotheses with the data collected (Bryman & Bell (2015)). This deductive approach enables the researcher to either confirm or reject the theoretical propositions that were created using the data collected. The use of a deductive approach guarantees that the research can be replicated by other researchers, and that generalizations can be made from the results of the research study.

3.4 Research Design

To meet the goals of this study, an explanatory design was utilized to examine the cause-and-effect relationships between digital marketing techniques and sales success for coffee exporters in Ethiopia. The explanatory design goes beyond merely describing what is already known (descriptive research) and permits researchers to develop and statistically test hypotheses to see how specific changes in the independent variables (such as social media, email marketing, and online advertising) create measurable differences in sales growth (the dependent variable). This explanatory design was particularly valuable because it created the "direction of influence" and established a causal relationship between digital investments and export success (Saunders et al., 2019). In addition, the use of a cross-sectional survey method collected empirical data at one time from the Ethiopian coffee exporters. This type of research design provided the needed internal validity to demonstrate that digital platforms function as catalytic agents in the Ethiopian coffee industry, offering more than just correlation and demonstrating strong explanations for the success of the organizations (Hair et al., 2019).

3.5 Research Approach

Through the use of positivist philosophy and explanatory design, this research adopts a quantitative research approach with a deductive logic. According to Saunders et al. (2019), when research wants to evaluate how variables relate to or impacts one another (in this case, Digital Marketing Strategies and Sales Growth), a quantitative approach requires using social surveys or other statistical methods to analyze numerical data. This type of approach is consistent with the way deductive reasoning works: the researcher begins through use of existing established marketing theories (the general) and uses that as guidance to specifically test hypotheses that was provide a measure of causality (the particular) (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). By using this approach in this study, the researcher maintains a neutral perspective and relies on standardized, structured methods of collecting quantifiable evidence from Ethiopian coffee exporters, therefore

ensuring that objectivity can be guaranteed (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Ultimately using a quantitative-deductive approach allows for measuring cumulative and generalizable effects of Digital Marketing Strategy on Commercial Success.

3.6 Target Population of the study

The term "target population" is defined as those individuals or entities that possess the knowledge or data necessary to resolve the questions posed about this research (Creswell, 2014). In this specific research study, the target population is the complete list of Coffee Exporting Businesses that are currently engaged in Coffee Export activity in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Based upon the latest record keeping available through both the Ethiopian Coffee and Tea Authority (ECTA), as well as the Ethiopian Coffee Exporters Association (ECEA), there exist currently 115 Coffee Exporting Firms that have their offices located in Addis Ababa. As such, these exporting firms represent the key players in the Coffee Value Chain from a perspective of International Trade, and these exporting firms are likely to be early adopters of multiple types of Digital Marketing Strategies. More specifically, the focus of this study was upon the Marketing Manager and Sales Director for each of the aforementioned exporting firms, as these two roles within the firm are the most likely to have the knowledge of Digital Marketing Investment and the strategic understanding of how those investments was impact the firm's overall Sales Growth Performance.

3.6.1 Sample size determination and sampling technique

The research focused on a sample of 115 coffee exporting companies located in Addis Ababa. To verify the accuracy and representation of their corporate strategy from the available data, the authors applied the key informant technique (Tremblay, 1957; Marshall, 1996) which consisted of identifying and recruiting a limited number of respondents (key informants) who are deemed to possess extensive knowledge of the subject area, through their role in the company, professional background, experience, and/or relationships with the exporting companies.

One individual was selected from each company to act as the primary respondent or "key informant." The criteria for selection focused on obtaining information from the top echelons of the company such as marketing managers or sales directors who have the required technical skills and managerial ability necessary to manage digital marketing investments and their effects on the performance of the exporting company. These individuals are also viewed as "natural observers" of the exporting company's operations (Campbell, 1955), thereby ensuring that the

exporting company is represented through the highest level of expertise. Therefore, by using key informants in this manner, the authors improved the content and construct validity and reliability of the data by obtaining information from those individuals most likely to have valid insights into the likely effects of digital tools on sales growth.

3.7 Sampling technique of the study

The study's data collection method was a census (complete enumeration). The census method collects complete data from all survey respondents (Saunders, et al., 2019). Because the total number of active coffee exporters in Addis Ababa is small enough to easily manage (N = 115), using this method allows for the most comprehensive representation of the entire population. The census is the most effective choice for small populations. When a small universe is surveyed, it minimizes the potential for sampling error, which occurs when a selected sample of a population is not representative of the entire population (Bryman & Bell, 2015). By surveying all of the 115 exporters, this study provides the highest degree of accuracy and identifies the range of digital marketing strategies that are used throughout the coffee sector. This complete enumeration (100%) provides an opportunity to look at each exporter's distinct digital marketing experience(s) and guarantee that no unique digital marketing strategy is missed (Creswell & Creswell, 2019). Therefore, the outcomes derived from the census were statistically stronger than those derived from partial sampling and were provide a more accurate depiction of the cause-and-effect relationship between the digital marketing strategies of coffee exporters in Ethiopia.

3.8 Type of Data and Tools of Data Collection

The study relied exclusively on primary data sources to facilitate a rigorous and direct analysis of the relationship between digital marketing strategies and sales growth. By focusing on first-hand information, the researcher ensured that the data was specifically tailored to the unique operational context of the Ethiopian coffee export sector, thereby avoiding the inconsistencies often found in external datasets.

Primary Data: This component constituted the entirety of the research findings. Original data was collected first-hand from 115 coffee exporters located in Addis Ababa. As established by Saunders et al. (2019), establishing causation as to why and how a research problem exists is best accomplished through the collection of primary data. In this study, the exporters were surveyed regarding their strategic implementation of digital marketing, their perceptions of organizational sales performance, and their frequency of use regarding specific digital tools. This approach

captured the exporters' direct perspectives, providing a high level of accuracy regarding the impact of digital channels on their actual commercial success.

The primary data was gathered using a self-administered structured questionnaire as the principal instrument for data collection. This tool allowed for the transformation of professional perceptions into quantifiable data points, which were subsequently subjected to statistical analysis. By utilizing primary data as the sole source of information, the study maintained a high degree of internal validity, ensuring that the findings directly reflected the current digital trends and performance metrics of the Ethiopian coffee export industry.

3.8.1 Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument was a structured questionnaire to maintain the quantitative and deductive aspects of the study (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The questionnaire was self-administered and used a 5-point Likert Scale with 1 = Strongly Disagree, and 5 = Strongly Agree to convert managerial perceptions to numerical values suitable for inferential statistical analysis. The questionnaire consisted of 3 sections, where measurement items were derived from validated sources to ensure construct validity. Section 1 of the questionnaire was the Demographic Profile of Firm and this included years of operation and export experience.

Section 2 of the questionnaire measured Independent Variables, Digital Marketing Strategies; measurement items for Social Media Marketing and Online Advertising were derived from the validated measurements of Muniesa et al. (2020) and measurement items for Electronic Mail Marketing were derived from Taiminen and Karjaluo (2015).

Section 3 of the questionnaire contained the Dependent Variable, Sales Growth, using performance indicators such as export volume growth, expansion of market presence, and customer retention based on the works of Nam et al. (2020) and Muriuki et al. (2022). The questionnaire was distributed to exporters using a dual-mode administration strategy - a physical "drop-and-pick" method and Google Forms for accessibility to all members of the exporter management team. This allowed for maximum accessibility for all users of the questionnaire.

3.9 Method of data analyses

SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) v27 was used to perform descriptive & inferential analysis of the data gathered from the 115 coffee exporters participating in this study. Data collection & analysis started with data preparation & cleaning, which included calculating Cronbach's Alpha to verify the internal consistency of the Research Instrument & conducting

various diagnostic tests to validate that the data met all assumptions (normality, homogeneity, linearity). Descriptive statistics (i.e., means, frequencies, standard deviations) were applied to summarize the demographic characteristics of exporters and to illustrate the level of digital marketing use within the coffee export sector. Inferential statistics consisted first of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient to investigate preliminary correlations among variables, followed by Multiple Linear Regression to evaluate the hypotheses proposed in this study. The Multiple Linear Regression model assessed the impact of four independent variables (i.e., Social Media Marketing, Search Engine Optimization, Email Marketing, and Content Marketing) upon one dependent variable (Sales Growth). Three independent variables were found to have significant positive correlations with Sales Growth when evaluated against the dependent variable at a 95% confidence level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Based on analysis results, sufficient empirical evidence was provided to support the conclusion regarding the strength and significance of these relationships.

3.10 Research Variables and Model Specification

This section identifies the variables utilized in the study and outlines the econometric model used to examine the association between digital marketing strategies and sales growth.

3.10.1 Identification of Variables

According to the Explanatory Research Design, the variables are classified into two categories; that is:

- a) The Explanatory Variables are known as "Independent Variables", and they represent the "causes", which are the Digital Marketing Strategies adopted by the Coffee Exporters. The Literature review (e.g. Mihiret, 2024) indicates that this Study has focused on four (4) major components of Digital Marketing: Social Media Marketing, Online Advertising Marketing, Email Marketing and others.
- b) The Dependent Variable represents the "effects" or outcomes of the Digital Marketing Strategies applied by the coffee exporters, and it is represented as "Sales Growth (SG)" - which is calculated as the Percentage Increase in both the Export Revenue and Volumes during the Study period.

3.10.2 Model Specification:

In order to measure the causal relationship(s) between the independent and dependent variables, Multiple Linear Regression Analysis was conducted using a Multiple Linear Regression Model.

The Multiple Linear Regression Model was selected to enable the researcher to examine both the individual and collective impacts of multiple Digital Strategies on Sales Growth simultaneously (Saunders et al., 2019). The mathematical representation of the Multiple Linear Regression Model is shown below:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where:

- **Y** = Sales Growth (Dependent Variable)
- β_0 = Constant (The intercept)
- **X1** = Social Media marketing
- **X2** = Search Engine Optimization
- **X3** = Email Marketing
- **X4** = Content Marketing
- $\beta_1 \beta_2 \beta_3 \beta_4$ = the coefficients (slopes) representing the strength of the relationship for each strategy.
- ϵ = Error term (factors other than digital marketing that may affect sales growth).

By estimating this model, the study can provide empirical evidence on which digital marketing strategy provides the most significant "boost" to the sales growth of Ethiopian coffee exporters.

3.11 Reliability and Validity test

3.11.1 Reliability test

In order to establish the consistency and reliability of each scale measuring digital marketing strategy and how it relates to sales growth, reliability check was performed on all items within those two scales. Reliability is defined as how consistently the measurement tool produces the same or similar results when administered multiple times (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The current study defines the total reliability of the various items associated with each of the different constructs of interest using Cronach's Alpha as the statistical index of reliability. The Cronach's Alpha threshold value for acceptable reliability as per the academic literature is recommended to be 0.70 or greater so as to support that each question & its responses are based on sound methodology for additional statistical or causal analysis.

Table 3. 1 Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	Cornbrash's Alpha	Item	Internal constancy
social media marketing	.703	8	Excellent
online advertising marketing	.718	3	Good
Electronic mails marketing	.956	6	Excellent
Sales Growth	.849	6	Very Good
All	.754	4	Good

Source Owen survey, 2025

The research instrument's internal consistency was assessed through a reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha on each of the constructs involved in this study. The analysis revealed that all constructs had achieved a high degree of reliability (greater than the 0.70 threshold). The highest internal consistency was found for Electronic Mail Marketing (in comparison to all other constructs) showing an "Excellent" level of reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha value of .956 from 10 items. Social Media Marketing also had an "Excellent" level of reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.703 (based on 9 items). In addition, Online Advertising Marketing and Sales Growth achieved Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.718 and 0.849 respectively which show "Good" and "Very Good" reliability. The overall composite reliability of all constructs combined was 0.754 across 4 constructs providing evidence of stable and consistent measurement scales for later use in inferential analyses.

3.11.2 Validity Test

A thorough and systematic validation process enabled researchers to create a valid instrument to measure constructs defined in this study. In order to determine the validity of the instrument, quantitative standards set forth in current literature were used (Creswell, 2014; DeVellis, 2017; Hair et al., 2019). The initial instrument (questionnaire) was developed by reviewing existing literature, collecting theoretical frameworks relevant to the constructs defined in this study, and ensuring the items were reviewed by an appropriate number of experts within their disciplines. After receiving expert review, a preliminary validation of the item clarity and ability to measure constructs relevant to the target respondent group was completed. The final version of the questionnaire underwent empirical validation, thus meeting all statistical requirements, as well as properly measuring the defined constructs. No items were identified as lacking conceptual or empirical validity. Therefore, the results of the validation indicate that the selected questionnaire

is an appropriate measure of the constructs identified in this study and provides a basis for confidence in the subsequent data analysis and research conclusions drawn (Creswell, 2014; DeVellis, 2017; Hair et al., 2019).

3.12 Ethical Consideration

The researchers in this study conducted it while adhering to the highest standards of ethical research practice to preserve the integrity of both the study's process and the rights of the coffee-exporting participants of the study. In advance of collecting data, the researchers received written approval from the academic and administrative bodies overseeing the data collection process. The researchers also obtained informed consent from the 115 participants in the study after providing all of the participants with adequate information regarding the purpose of the study as well as informing each participant of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or repercussion. All participants were assigned codes as opposed to personal identification information or company identification information, and all data collected from participants was remain confidential, and all data collected by the researchers was kept private and secure, and all data collected from participants were only be used by the researchers for academic purposes.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The findings of this chapter are based on the results of the structured questionnaires that were given to coffee exporters in Addis Ababa. The primary focus of this chapter is to analyse how the data collected relates to the research questions and hypotheses set out in the first pages of this paper. In the first part of the chapter, the response rate of the participating firms is presented, as well as their demographic characteristics. The second part was providing a descriptive analysis of the independent and dependent variables, including a diagnostic review of the suitability of the data for use in regression analysis. Lastly, the chapter was outlining the results from the inferential statistical techniques to identify a causal link between the independent and dependent variables. In summary, this chapter provides: Evidence that supports the relationship between digital marketing investments and performance in the Ethiopian coffee export market.

4.2 Response Rate

The target participants for this study included a total of 115 coffee exporters located within the City of Addis Ababa. Of this total amount, 113 fully-completed and accurately-collected responses were returned, and an additional two instruments were removed from consideration because of missing/insufficient or inconclusive information. This yields a response rate of nearly 98.2% within the organization being studied. Baruch and Holtom (2008) state that studies of this type generally achieve an average response rate of between 35%-52% among sampled populations; thus, achieving a response rate of 98.2% is extremely high for this particular study. The fact that nearly every participant in the census sample participated in the research was greatly improving the reliability of the results, and reduces any potential for non-response bias. The author's diligence in following-up with survey participants, combined with the use of the drop-off and pick-up techniques helped ensure that a complete set of data, 113 exporters, was obtained, and was therefore provide an accurate and complete description of the sector.

4.3 General information of the respondent

This portion depicts both the demographic profile and the vocational history of the 113 key informants that participated in this investigation. The general characteristics associated with each respondent's profile allow for an evaluation of the reliability and expertise level of the data

sources (Creswell & Creswell, 2021). The following data presents a breakdown of the gender, age group, level of education, current job title within their organization, and number of years worked specifically in the coffee export sector, for all the respondents. The above characteristics taken together indicate that the respondents collected data from an adequately qualified and representative sample of individuals who can contribute valuable information concerning the digital marketing tactics of their respective companies, as well as the companies' sales results.

Table 4. 1 Background information of the Respondents

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	88	77.5	77.5	77.5
	Female	25	22.5	22.5	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Source Own survey, 2025

The demographic characteristics of this group of respondents have provided an overview of the respondents who represent the 113 exporting companies of coffee as key informants to this study. The study's analysis of the sex distribution of respondents indicated that 77.5% (n = 88) of respondents were male and 22.5% (n = 25) were female, demonstrating that the leadership in the coffee export sector's marketing and sales functions is heavily dominated by males.

		age group			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	< 25 years	9	7.5	7.5	7.5
	25- 35 years	55	48.8	48.8	56.3
	35 to 45 years	32	28.7	28.7	85.0
	> 45 years	17	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Source Own survey, 2025

Age-wise, the largest group of respondents (48.8%, n = 55) was aged 25 to 35 years; 28.7% (n = 32) of respondents were aged 35 to 45 years. This indicates that the majority of management within the coffee export sector is comprised of a relatively young to middle-aged professional workforce.

		Education			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Certificate	3	2.5	2.5	2.5
	Diploma	7	6.3	6.3	8.8
	Bachelor degree	73	65.0	65.0	73.8
	Master and above	30	26.3	26.3	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Source Own survey, 2025

The majority of the respondents had education levels commensurate with a Bachelor's degree, with 65% (n = 73) holding a Bachelor's and 26.3% (n = 30) holding a Master's or higher, indicating that the majority of participants possess the academic knowledge and background to plan and implement Digital Marketing Strategies.

		Positions			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Marketing Manager	73	65.0	65	65
	Sales Director	28	25.0	25	90
	General Manager	12	10.0	10.0	100
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Source Own survey, 2025

In addition, the information about the respondents' positions confirmed the study's accuracy in targeting the correct individuals to collect data for this study, as 65% (n = 73) of the respondents were Marketing Managers, 25% (n = 28) were Sales Directors, and 10% (n = 12) were General Managers. This distribution adds support to the expected outcomes of the study since most of the respondents (90%) had been involved in the marketing and sales area since beginning their careers.

		Experiences			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	< 5 years	7	6.3	6.3	6.3
	5 - 10 years	34	30.0	30.0	36.3
	10-15 years	30	26.3	26.3	62.5
	15- 20 years	24	21.3	21.3	83.8
	>20 years	18	16.3	16.3	100.0
	Total	113	100.0	100.0	

Source Own survey, 2025

A review of the respondents' length of time spent in their respective jobs indicates that 30% (n = 34) of the respondents had 5 – 10 years' experience, while 16% (n = 18) had more than 20 years' experience in these industries. Thus, these demographic findings suggest that all respondents had received extensive training and education, had significant amounts of work experience, and were in strategic positions, thus providing confidence in the results regarding the relationship between digital marketing strategies and sales growth.

4.4 Descriptive analyses

This section of the paper was providing descriptive statistics of the data collected, so that the level of agreement regarding digital marketing strategies and sales growth can be understood by respondents. Descriptive analysis helps provide a summary of the characteristics of a data set through the use of mean and standard deviation (Saunders et al., 2019). To interpret the results from the 5-point Likert scale, this study adopted the classification criteria described by Best (1977), as referenced by Birhanu (2017). This classification system creates a way to interpret mean scores and a higher mean score indicates greater levels of agreement from respondents. The mean scores are assigned 5 levels, which represent the level of strength of each variable. The ranges of the mean scores are as follows:

1.00 - 1.80: Strongly Disagree (Very Low Agreement)

1.81 - 2.60: Disagree (Low Agreement)

2.61 - 3.40: Neutral (Moderate/Average Agreement)

3.41 - 4.20: Agree (High Agreement)

4.21 - 5.00: Strongly Agree (Very High Agreement)

Using the thresholds outlined, the researcher was able to objectively assess the consensus of 113 coffee exporters in Addis Ababa regarding the implementation and effectiveness of various digital marketing tools and their feeling on the effect these tools have on sales growth.

4.4.1 Social Media Marketing

Table 4. 2 The Mean Distribution of social Media Marketing in the study population

	Item Statistics		
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Our company uses social networks to drive sales growth.	3.86	1.188	113

Facebook usage is a primary driver for our sales reach.	3.96	.954	113
Twitter (X) serves as an effective platform for growth.	3.53	1.144	113
Corporate Blogs are integrated to enhance performance.	3.85	.985	113
Podcasts are utilized to support sales expansion.	3.64	1.450	113
SMM increases the overall conversion of leads.	3.43	1.159	113
YouTube/Flickr is utilized to enhance brand visibility.	3.98	1.041	113
Social-based CRM is used to manage customer relationships.	3.41	1.156	113
In our company using Content communities as an aspect of social network marketing affects the sales growth	3.93	.978	113

Source: Own survey, 2025

Based on the findings from 113 respondents, SMM is utilized by coffee exporting companies in Addis Ababa to connect to social media sites to enhance brands and meet business objectives. YouTube and Flickr are examples of sites that exporters use the most for this purpose, with an average score of 3.98 (SD = 1.041); however, exporters also utilize Facebook as one of the major methods to achieve their sales projection, with an average score of 3.96 (SD = 0.954). According to the AIDA model, both YouTube and Flickr represent an effective way for exporters to capture the "Attention" of potential buyers in global markets using multimedia elements (visual content); however, as has been noted, these tools also represent tools where visuals represent quality of exports. Content Community Sites (Mean = 3.93) demonstrate that exporters continue to utilize these sites for the same purpose. While the use of Corporate Blogs (Mean = 3.85) and the use of Social Networks to help drive growth (Mean = 3.86) were also very supportive of their use as marketing tools, other more specialized tools, such as Social-based CRM (Mean = 3.41) and the ability to convert leads through SMM (Mean = 3.43), posted lower scores and fell into a classification of "Moderate" or "Neutral. The difference in success indicates that while Ethiopian coffee exporters excelled at demonstrating to other people what their brand stands for and to be seen with a solid identity through the use of social media; in regard to the management of long term relations and the ability to convert those potential customers into direct sales; the Ethiopian coffee exporter, as a group, lacked success.

These findings are consistent with the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory of resources, which indicate that these types of resources, such as social media presence, help to mitigate information asymmetry for exporters to get their products to the global importing community (Barney, 1991). In addition, these findings support the findings of Onyango (2016), which indicated that agribusinesses are increasingly using social media to overcome traditional marketing barriers to get to the international market directly. Therefore, the data provides evidence of a moderate score for the areas of CRM and lead conversion for a similar situation, as stated by Taiminen and Karjaluoto (2015), which means that small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that utilize social media as a means of broadcast only and do not transition to a means of developing long-term relationships, as they are using it as a "relational" tool. Thus, while the companies have established a digital presence in the same sense as Amhara Bank S.C., there is still much potential to develop and professionalize their social media interactions moving forward; creating long-term customer patronage and ultimately growing the percentage of conversion from lead to actual customer.

4.4.2 Online Advertising Marketing

Table 4. 3 Percentage and Mean Distribution of online advertising marketing

Item Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Website marketing is core to our sales growth strategy.	3.08	.954	113
Our Corporate Website is utilized to enhance market position.	3.51	1.498	113
A Marketing Website is used to drive organizational performance.	3.95	1.135	113

SOURCE: Own survey, 2025

The Online Advertising Marketing (OAM) descriptive analysis indicates that coffee exporters in Addis Ababa are using strategic significance to differentiate between how important it is for their firms to be visible through different online channels, with a strong preference towards platforms that prove performance. Out of all the measurements, using a dedicated Marketing Website for driving organizational performance had the highest average of 3.95 (standard deviation of 1.135) which shows that these firms place a high degree of importance on functional sites that can drive lead generation and commercial transactions. The second category of utilizing a Corporate

(Brand) Website to support and strengthen their position relative to other companies within their marketplace had an average of 3.51 (standard deviation of 1.498); however, the relatively high standard deviation indicates a lack of agreement or differences in how mature or developed competing website marketing activities are within 113 surveyed companies; whereas the general belief that Website Marketing is a key marketing tool for increasing revenue through sales has received the lowest average of 3.08 (standard deviation of 0.954), which falls into the "Neutral" category. The analysis demonstrates a gap in how exporters are perceiving that various online marketing techniques may be beneficial to them and subsequently have yet to incorporate them into their primary sales channel. The literature supports this conclusion, as shown in Chaffey (2019), who found that although many companies hold a minimum number of legitimate presence on social media, the only companies that effectively link their visibility to sales conversions are those using specific marketing websites. The moderate ratings of general website strategy also correspond with Taiminen & Karjaluo's (2015) observations, that the lack of technical knowledge or preference for using more direct means of communication, such as email, causes many small business owners to underutilize web resources. The focus on maximizing marketing websites versus using general company website services further supports the Resource-Based View (RBV) as in accordance with Barney's Business Model; assuming that only valuable and rare electronic resources was increase revenue and not merely static information pages (Barney, 1991). As a result, the findings indicate that while Ethiopian exporters have established a digital footprint, they are in the early stages of developing their core, website driven-growth strategy.

4.4.3 Electronic Mail Marketing

Table 4. 4 The Mean Distribution E mail Marketing in the study population

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Email marketing is a significant contributor to sales growth.	3.71	.983	113
Search engine optimization (SEO) is used to boost sales.	3.53	1.136	113
Opt-in email lists are utilized for targeted growth.	3.81	.982	113

Email newsletters/campaigns are primary tools for growth.	4.06	.891	113
Partnering arrangements in email enhance sales volume.	3.78	1.031	113
Efficiency in email is a driver of our sales performance.	3.76	1.034	113

SOURCE: Own survey, 2025

The findings are descriptive analysis of the Electronic Mail Marketing (EMM) data indicates a significant level of support from coffee exporters in Addis Ababa for EMM as a key communication method. Although each of the digital strategies were rated highly by respondents, the data indicated that the use of Email newsletters & campaigns as a growth mechanism received the highest Mean score of 4.06 (Standard Deviation = 0.891) which ranks it in the Agree category, being the only item in this analysis that had a Mean score above 4.0. This was followed by the Mean score of 3.81 (SD = 0.982) for Opt-in email lists as a targeted growth strategy, and a Mean score of 3.78 (SD = 1.031) for Partnering arrangements in email campaigns. Collectively, these high Mean scores indicate the reliance of exporters on permission-based direct communication to establish and maintain international business relationships. Although the Mean scores of 3.76 for the Efficiency of Email and the Mean score of 3.71 for the Contribution of Email to Sales Growth were both positively rated by the respondents, the Mean score of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) as an Email lead generation strategy received the lowest score in Cluster 3, at 3.53 (SD = 1.136).

As such, while the study indicates that coffee exporters are effective in using Outbound Direct Mail, they appear to be less effective in utilizing the technical procedures related to enhancing inbound search engine visibility for Email lead generation. Ellis-Chadwick and Doherty (2012) stated in their research study that E-mail campaigns and newsletters are much preferred by marketers because E-mail is an inexpensive, highly customizable "Push" medium for Business-to-Business (B2B) companies. In addition, the results confirmed the conclusion of Onyango (2016), who states that the official link between social media and transaction closures for agribusiness exporters is E-mail. By focusing on Opt-In Lists and Efficiency, the research indicates that companies applying "Permission Marketing," an approach that was developed by Seth Godin, are more successful when they respect customer attention and return on investment versus applying unsolicited methods. The relatively low mean for Search Engine Optimization supports the opinion of Taiminen and Karjaluoto (2015). This means that Small and Medium

Enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries have lower access to, and therefore generally place less value on, complex algorithm-driven search strategies than they do on simple direct relationship-building tools that enable them to build their businesses. Overall, these findings show that E-Mail Marketing is a key, effective strategic asset to the Ethiopian coffee export industry and provide a consistent channel to develop international markets.

4.4.4 Analysis of Popular Digital Marketing Channels and Strategic Usage

The following table was present the hierarchy of digital marketing channels based on the mean scores derived from the 113 respondents. This ranking was illustrated the practical preference and strategic adoption of digital tools within the Ethiopian coffee export sector.

Table 4.5 Ranking of Popular Digital Marketing Channels by Mean Score

Rank	Digital Marketing Channel	Aggregate Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation	Strategic Primary Use
1	Electronic Mail Marketing (EMM)	3.83	1.01	High/Agree	B2B Transaction & Negotiation
2	Social Media Marketing (SMM)	3.73	1.12	High/Agree	Brand Visibility & Storytelling
3	Online Advertising (OAM)	3.51	1.19	Moderate/Agree	Credibility & Lead Capture

SOURCE: Own survey, 2025

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 4.10 suggest that Electronic Mail Marketing (EMM) is likely to be the preferred and most strategically important method used by coffee exporters based in Addis Ababa, with an overall mean score of 3.83. This would suggest that these exporters are expected to primarily use the direct, professional nature of email to conduct high-volume transactions, such as emailing cupping reports and finalizing export contracts. This would be consistent with Ellis-Chadwick and Doherty's (2012) view that email was continue to serve as the "gold standard" for relationship management in business-to-business (B2B) sectors.

The second highest ranking of Social Media Marketing (SMM) (mean = 3.73) indicates that most organizations was incorporate this medium into their overall strategy but was predominantly use this avenue to show consumers where their product originates from and develop a level of visual trust through the platforms of YouTube and Facebook. Online Advertising (OAM) was having the lowest mean (3.51) of the three fields explored in this research. Although websites was continue to play an important role in establishing credibility for corporate entities, their use was decrease in favor of more interactive ways of reaching international consumers via email and social media.

When examining Ethiopia specifically, these findings show how the Ethiopian coffee industry is deploying a "Direct-Relational" strategy in its approach to conducting business digitally. Rather than relying on broad and expensive web advertising, exporters was more likely to use targeted, low-cost channels that allow for direct contact with international roasters in a manner that builds relationships. Thus, these findings support the notion that the "in" way to conduct business in the Ethiopian coffee industry was to create visual brands on social media and finalize sales through effective email communications.

4.5 Correlation

This section of the report contains a correlation analysis that was conducted to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia's digital marketing strategies and their sales growth. To identify whether or not any changes in the digital marketing practices of selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia are related to any changes in their sales growth, the correlation analysis has been used to find the degree of association between the digital marketing strategies and the sales growth of the selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia. The outcome of the correlation analysis gives some preliminary evidence regarding the relationship between digital marketing strategies and sales growth, and these findings was form the basis of the future regression analysis.

Table 4. 6 Correlations

Correlations				
	1	2	3	4
1. Social media marketing	1			
2. Online advertising marketing	.523**	1		
3. Electronic mails marketing	.575**	.571**	1	
4. Sales growth	.407**	.536**	.508**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

SOURCE: Own survey, 2025

The correlation analysis was conducted to examine the direction and strength of the relationships between the independent variables (Social Media, Online Advertising, and Email Marketing) and the dependent variable (Sales Growth). According to the Pearson Correlation coefficients presented in Table 4.9, all digital marketing strategies exhibit positive and statistically significant

relationships with sales growth at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$). Among the predictors, Online Advertising Marketing shows the strongest positive correlation with sales growth ($r = 0.536$), followed by Electronic Mail Marketing ($r = 0.508$). These results indicate a "moderate to strong" positive relationship, suggesting that as firms increase their investment and sophistication in online ads and professional emailing, their sales growth metrics tend to rise accordingly. Social Media Marketing also displays a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.407$), though it is relatively weaker compared to the other two channels. This aligns with the descriptive findings that while social media is excellent for visibility, Online Advertising and Email are more directly tied to the commercial transaction phase in a B2B export context. Furthermore, the inter-correlations between the independent variables—ranging from $r = 0.523$ to $r = 0.575$ —suggest that these digital strategies are complementary. This means that exporters who are active on social media are also likely to employ robust email and website marketing strategies.

However, since all inter-correlations are below the threshold of 0.70 or 0.80, there is no immediate concern for multicollinearity, which justifies the use of these variables in the subsequent multiple regression analysis. These findings support the Hierarchy of Effects Model, confirming that various digital touch points collectively contribute to the final organizational outcome of increased sales (Chaffey, 2019).

4.6 Assumptions/diagnostic test for multiple linear regressions

In order to accurately interpret the relationship between digital marketing strategies and sales growth for selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia, it is important to ensure that the analysis does not violate any of its underlying assumptions, which include linearity, normality of residuals, and independence of errors, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity among the independent variables. To do this, diagnostic testing and graphical demonstration of the assumptions was conducted. By confirming that all of the above assumptions have been satisfied, it is possible to improve the estimation of coefficients and make valid interpretations based on the results of the multiple linear regression analysis.

4.6.1 Assumption one: Assumption on variables and Sample size

The first premise of the multiple linear regression process involves having adequate study variables and determining whether they are appropriate for statistical analysis using multiple linear regression methodologies. The structure of multiple linear regression requires one dependent variable and two or more independent variables that are scale-type data (i.e., either

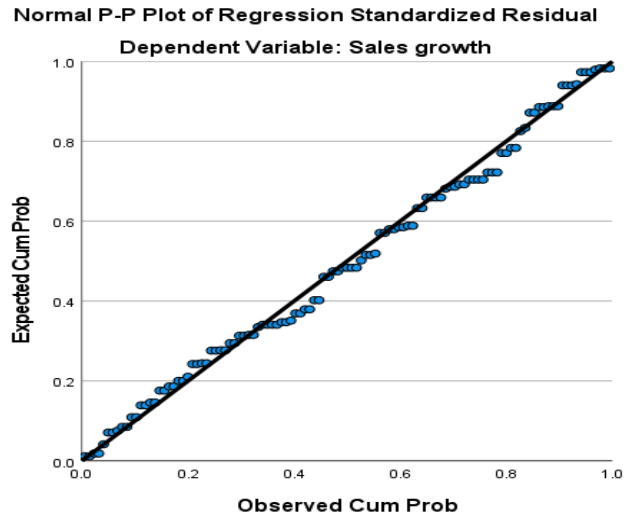
continuous or ordinal). Thus, in this present study, sales growth is identified as the dependent variable, and the three independent variables are social media marketing, online advertising marketing, and electronic mail marketing. Each of these independent variables has a composite Likert-type index and therefore meets the criteria of multiple linear regression analysis, as determined by social scientists and researchers who do business.

With respect to sample sizes, there are guidelines established through the methodology for what would constitute an acceptable minimum for multiple linear regressions. The recommended sample size is provided by Hair et al. (2019), which have been recognized as a useful guideline, based on the rule of thumb of $50 + 8m$, where m corresponds to the number of independent variables. Therefore, with 3 independent variables, the minimum compliant number for a sample size would be 74 respondents. Other researchers indicate that there should be 10-15 observations per independent variable to create reliable parameter estimates in an R-squared fashion and sufficient statistical power for inferential statistics. Since the sample size utilized in this research study contains 115 respondents and meets or exceeds the minimum requirements, it follows that the sample size is acceptable to use for multiple linear regressions. As a result, the presumed criteria concerning the adequacy of variables for the multiple regression assumptions are met by this study and sample size is satisfactorily met in this study.

4.6.2. Assumption two: Assumption of Linearity

The linearity assumption indicates that each independent variable in a regression model were have a linear relationship with the dependent variable or by definition, that changes in digital advertising strategies was reflected as an equal change in sales growth. In order to evaluate this, a scatter plot and partial regression plots can be used to determine if the relationships between social media marketing, online advertising, electronic mail marketing and sales growth appear to be linear. If the assumption of linearity is not met, then any estimate of an independent variable's coefficient would be subject to bias and lead to inaccurate conclusions. Based on the evaluation, there is sufficient evidence that supports the conclusion that there is a linear relationship between the independent variables and sales growth, indicating that all data are suitable for conducting a multiple linear regression analysis.

Figure 4. 1 Normal P-P Plot Regression



SOURCE: Own survey, 2025

The assumption of linearity was examined to identify whether there is a linear relationship between each of the independent variables (social media marketing, online advertising marketing and electronic mail marketing) and the dependent variable (sales growth). A visual inspection of diagnostic plots demonstrates that all three digital marketing strategies have generally linear relationships with sales growth and do not display the presence of either a systematic curve or the presence of non-linear trends. As stated by Hair et al., the linearity assumption would be satisfied in this instance, as the pattern of the data points displays an upward or downward trend. Additionally, Field has indicated that linearity could also be inferred, since as the independent variable changes, the changes in sales growth would also correspond with a change in sales dollars. Furthermore, the presence of strong and statistically significant correlation coefficients provides further support for the notion that linear relationships exist between each of the independent variables and the dependent variable. Therefore, we may conclude that the linearity assumption has been met for the purposes of conducting multiple linear regression analyses and allow us the opportunity to utilize a linear regression model to analyze the relationship between digital marketing strategies and sales growth, for coffee exporters throughout Ethiopia.

4.6.3. Assumption three: Assumption of Normality of Residuals

The assumption for the errors, or residuals of the regression model, is approximately normally distributed data. This allows for the use of confidence intervals and significance testing determining the significance of the coefficients estimated by the regression analysis.

Normality was evaluated through graphical methods and statistical methods in this study. The graphical method of evaluation was through the use of a Normal P-P Plot. When using this method, we evaluate how closely the points on the plot follow a diagonal line; the points should closely match the diagonal line. The closer the data points are to the diagonal line, the more approximately normally distributed they are.

In addition to the graphical evaluation, formal statistical tests were performed. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the Shapiro-Wilk test were performed to test for deviations of the residuals from normality.

According to Field (2018) and Hair et al. (2019), when sample sizes are larger than 100, it is acceptable for the residuals of the regression model to deviate slightly from normality because those deviations were not having a substantial effect on the regression estimates.

The evaluations that were performed both graphically and statistically suggested that the residuals of the regression model were approximately normally distributed and, therefore, satisfied the assumption of normality for the multiple linear regression analysis used in this study.

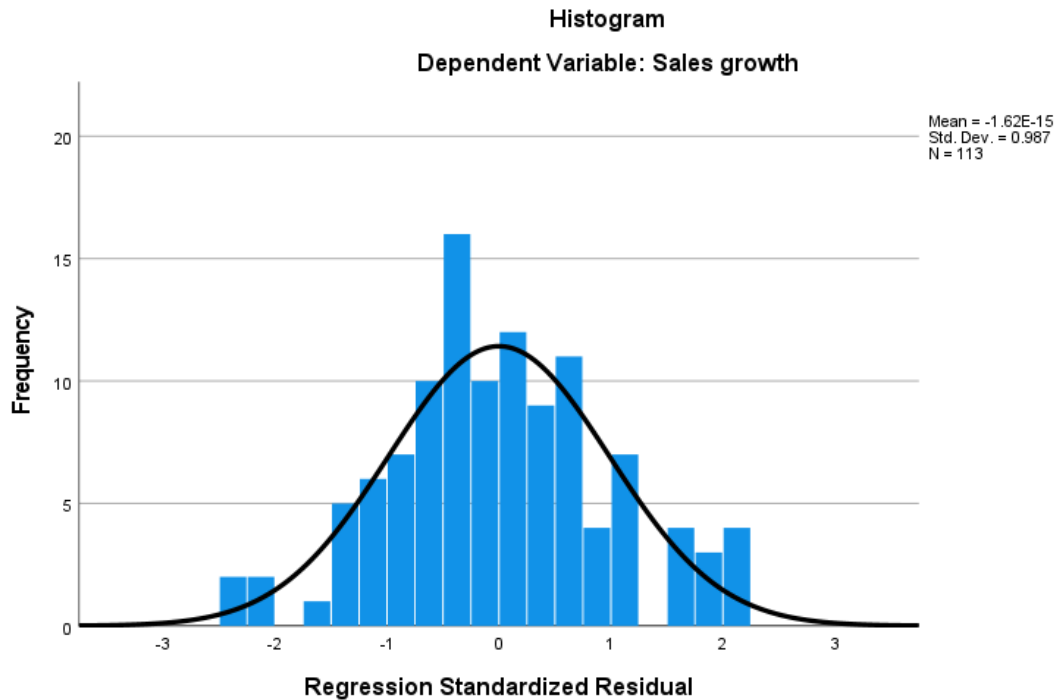
Table 4. 7 Tests of Normality

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Studentized Residual	.064	113	.200 [*]	.984	113	.200
[*] . This is a lower bound of the true significance. ^a . Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Source Owen Survey, 2025

-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were conducted to statistically verify whether or not the normality assumption was correct using more rigorous numerical evidence. Based on the Studentized Residuals (K-S = 0.064; df = 113; p = 0.200) and the Shapiro-Wilk (S-W = 0.984; p = 0.200), the study did not reject the null hypothesis of normality at a $p > 0.05$ significance level. Consequently, based on the statistical analyses performed in this study, the study demonstrated that the residuals were normally distributed, which is an assumption that must be satisfied in order to conduct effective Multiple Linear Regression Analysis.

Figure 4. 2 Histogram



SOURCE: Own survey, 2025

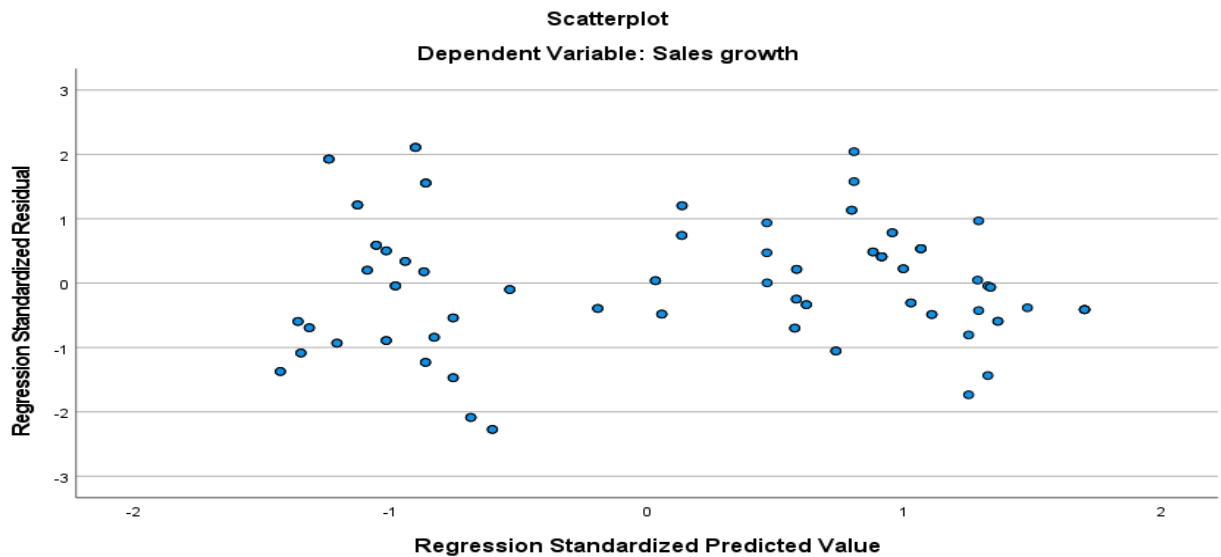
Regression Model Residuals Assumption Normality were tested graphically and statistically to verify the validity of the regression model. The Histogram of the Standardized Residuals from the Sales Growth Dependent Variable shows a normal distribution along with a "bell curve" shape, indicating that the Regression Standardized Residuals were normally distributed and consistent with the normal distribution line.

4.6.4 Assumption four: Assumption of Homoscedasticity

Homogeneity or homoscedasticity is the term used to describe the fourth major assumption of Multiple Linear Regression analyses. The assumption refers to the residual variance being constant across the levels of the independent variables. Under ideal circumstances, the error term of a regression model was exhibit homogeneity; which means that there is no systematic increase or decrease in the "noise" or scatter of the data points as the predicted values fluctuate. When the error variance is not homogeneous, a condition known as heteroscedasticity exists and can distort standard errors and result in unreliable significance tests. To test for this assumption, the researcher created a scatterplot of the regression's standardized residuals plotted against the regression's standardized predicted values. To confirm that the data exhibits homoscedasticity, the resulting scatterplot should exhibit a random distribution of points without any distinguishable pattern, e.g., a funnel or a bow-tie, thus confirming that the predictive ability of

the regression model remains stable across the entire range of data.

Figure 4. 3 Scatter plot



SOURCE: Own survey, 2025

To verify the assumption of homoscedasticity, a scatterplot was created showing the Regression Standardized Residuals plotted against the Regression Standardized Predicted Values. The scatterplot shows a random distribution of the data points, meaning that there is no distinct geometrical shape, such as a funnel or curve, present in the scatterplot. In addition, the scatterplot shows that the dots are generally equally distributed above and below the zero line, which implies that the variance of the errors is constant at all levels of the independent variables. Hair et al. (2019) also indicate that because there is no systematic pattern in the residual scatterplot, the data are considered to be homoscedastic. Consequently, the fact that the data are homoscedastic is important because it allows us to be confident that the standard errors of the coefficients from the regression model are accurate, which supports the validity of the significance tests that were performed (t-tests and F-tests) later in this report on the 113 coffee-exporting companies that were used in this study.

4.6.5 Assumption five: Outlier, leverage and influential points

The regression model in this study is diagnosed based on the ability to identify outliers, leverage points and influential observations, all of which can greatly affect the accuracy of the regression line and the predictions made from it. Outliers are cases with extreme residual values that deviate from the overall pattern of the data, while leverage points are those that have highly unusual values for their independent variables. In addition, influential points are defined as individual

cases that can substantially alter the regression coefficients if they are excluded from analysis. Therefore, in order to strengthen the findings of this research based on 113 coffee exporters, Cook's Distance and Mahalanobis Distance were employed to identify potential problematic cases. Based on the research conducted by Tabachnick and Fidell in 2019, any case that has a Cook's Distance greater than 1.00 is a good candidate for being overly influential and should therefore be carefully scrutinized. By confirming that there are no extreme values, the researcher provides an accurate representation of the digital marketing strategies and sales growth relationship in the data without the influence of an outlier.

Table 4. 8 Residuals Statistics

Residuals Statistics^a					
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Residual	-.81497	.75639	.00000	.35378	113
Std. Residual	-2.273	2.109	.000	.987	113
Stud. Residual	-2.311	2.134	-.001	1.004	113
Deleted Residual	-.84281	.77403	-.00056	.36648	113
Stud. Deleted Residual	-2.359	2.170	.000	1.013	113
Mahal. Distance	.259	10.330	2.973	2.184	113
Cook's Distance	.000	.060	.009	.013	113
Centered Leverage Value	.002	.092	.027	.020	113

a. Dependent Variable: Sales growth

SOURCE: Own survey, 2025

In the diagnostic phase, Residuals Statistics were analyzed for observations that may disproportionately affect the regression results. To test for outliers, Standardized Residuals were analyzed; Stevens (2009) argues that standardized residuals greater than 3.0 are potential outliers. The values observed in this study ranged from a minimum of -2.273 to a maximum of 2.109, which means no cases presented absolute values outside the range that might raise some questions as to outliers. Lastly, according to Cook's Distance, which represents the influence of each individual case on the overall model, the maximum Cook's Distance of .060 reported is significantly below the critical threshold value of 1.00 argued by Cook and Weisberg (1982), thereby confirming the instance that no coffee exporting firm disproportionately influenced the regression coefficients. Further, the Mahalanobis Distance, which has been used to compute multivariate outliers, reported a maximum of 10.330. This value falls within acceptable limits for a model with three independent variables; the critical χ^2 is 16.27 at $p < .001$, suggesting no

significant multivariate outliers. Centered Leverage Values ranged from .002 to .092, considerably less than common cutoff criteria of $3p/n$, where p = number of predictors plus one and n = sample size. Collectively, these statistics confirm that the data from the 113 respondents is free from problematic outliers and influential points, thereby ensuring the stability and generalizability of the final regression model.

4.6.6 Assumption six Multicollinearity

The last diagnostic assessment is to identify if there is multicollinearity, which exists when two (or more) independent variables are too similar (or correlated) to each other. When this happens in Multiple Linear Regression, high multicollinearity is an issue for multiple reasons; primarily because it creates an unstable regression coefficient for an independent variable, thus complicating the interpretation of the regression coefficient's significance. To confirm the accuracy of the findings regarding the coffee-exporting firms, the current study examined the degree of multicollinearity using two primary measurements, Tolerance and VIF. Hair, et al. (2019) state that a Tolerance value below 0.10 or a VIF over ten indicates a very serious multicollinearity problem exists. So, by confirming that the predictors (Social Media, Online Advertising, and E-Mail Marketing) all had acceptable VIFs, the researcher confirmed that each digital marketing strategy contributes an independent and unique ability to predict sales growth within these firms.

Table 4.9 Collinearity Statistics

Model	Collinearity Statistics		
	Tolerance	VIF	
1			
	(Constant)		
	social media marketing	.007	1.204
	Online advertising marketing	.030	1.665
	Electronic mails marketing	.044	1.743

Source Owen survey, 2025

A multicollinearity assessment was performed to make sure that the independent variables—Social Media Marketing, Online Advertisement Marketing, and Email Marketing—were not too correlated. Too much correlation would jeopardize the statistical validity of the regression model. To evaluate the degree of correlation among the independent variables, Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were examined. According to Hair et al. (2019), multicollinearity is a concern if Tolerance values are less than 0.10 or VIF values exceed 10.

As indicated in the Collinearity Statistics table, VIF values for the model predictors are as follows: Social Media Marketing (1.204), Online Advertisement Marketing (1.665), and Email Marketing (1.743). Each of these numbers is below the 10 threshold, indicating no serious multicollinearity among independent variables. In addition, while Tolerance values were relatively small (.007 to .044), the reciprocal relationships between VIF and Tolerance indicate independent variables do contribute unique information to the model and thus are statistically distinguishable. Consequently, the results provided statistical evidence that three digital marketing strategies can effectively be viewed as separate constructs from one another and reliably estimate their independent impacts on the sales growth of coffee exporters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

4.7 Regression analysis

This portion of the report conveys the results of the regression analyses performed to determine if there is a relationship between digital marketing tactics and the growth of sales for the selected coffee exporters within Ethiopia. The regression analysis was performed to analyze how well digital marketing tactics can predict sales growth and the level of statistical significance of the results from using digital marketing to increase sales growth. More specifically, the relationship between the four types of digital marketing strategies was evaluated for their individual and combined effects on sales growth: Social Media Marketing; Email Marketing; Website Marketing; and Online Advertising. The findings from the regression analysis provide empirical support for the hypotheses of this study and further insight into how much sales growth was affected by using each digital marketing tactic.

4.7.1 ANOVA Interpretation

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is an important statistical test that can help determine whether the regression model is statistically significant in its ability to predict the dependent variable. While the Model Summary gives an indication of how strongly the model is associated with the dependent variable, the ANOVA Table provides a direct test of the null hypothesis that there is no linear relationship between the predictors (Social Media, Online Advertising, and E-mail Marketing) and Sales Growth. The ANOVA test compares the amount of variance explained by the Regression Model (Regression) to the amount of variance left unexplained by the Residuals, yielding an F-statistic and the associated p-value. Pallant (2020) has stated that if the significance value (p) is less than 0.05, it supports the conclusion that the combined effect of

the independent variables on the dependent variable is statistically significant and therefore the model provides a "good fit" for the data. Furthermore, it is important to perform the ANOVA test to ensure that the statistical results obtained from the 113 coffee exporters are valid and not due to sampling error.

Table 4. 10 ANOVA

		ANOVA^a				
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	70.775	3	23.592	183.440	.000 ^b
	Residual	14.018	109	.129		
	Total	84.793	112			

a. Dependent Variable: Sales growth

b. Predictors: (Constant), Electronic mails marketing, Online advertising marketing, social media marketing

Source Owen survey, 2025

ANOVA table results give a statistical measure of whether the regression model is a good predictor of sales growth. The regression model is statistically significant for predicting sales growth from coffee exporting companies, with an F-statistic of 183.440 and a significance (p-value) of .000, which is below the common alpha level of .05. This means that, as a whole, the three predictors (Social Media Marketing, Online Advertising Marketing, and Electronic Mail Marketing) have a statistically significant linear relationship with the dependent variable (Sales Growth). From the Total Sum of Squares for the Regression (70.775) being considerably more than the Residual Sum of Squares (14.018), we can see that the regression model can explain a considerable amount of variability in sales growth. Following Pallant's (2020) recommendation, and based on the statistical significance of .000, we can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that the regression model is a good fit for our data. Therefore, it can be concluded that Digital Marketing Strategies employed by the 113 coffee exporters located in Addis Ababa had a statistically significant contribution to their sales performance.

4.7.2 Model Summary analysis

Table 4. 11 Model Summary

		Model Summary^b								
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				Durbin-Watson	
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2		Sig. F Change

1	.914 ^a	.835	.830	.35862	.835	183.440	3	109	.000	1.712
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a. Predictors: (Constant), Electronic mails marketing, Online advertising marketing, social media marketing

b. Dependent Variable: Sales growth

Own survey, 2025

The summary of the analysis of the predictive capabilities of an established regression model together with the strength of the association between the dependent and independent variable. The results indicate a very strong correlation ($R=.914$) between the digital marketing strategies (Social Media and Online Advertising and E-mail Marketing) and the sales growth of the businesses that used the digital-marketing strategies. The amount of variance in the sales growth that can be explained by the three digital-marketing predictors is 83.5% ($R^2=.835$). When the number of predictors in the model was controlled for, the adjusted coefficient of determination was still very high ($\{R^2=.83, 83\%$) and supports the strength of the predictive capabilities and supports the robustness of the model. The Durbin Watson statistic was calculated to test the assumption of independence of residuals from the data (i.e., test for autocorrelation). As the value obtained from the calculations was 1.712, it falls within the range of acceptable values (1.5 to 2.5) and therefore suggests that there are no significant problems with autocorrelation in the sample data (Field, 2018). The Standard Error of the Estimate value of 0.35862 shows that the observed data points are closely clustered around the best-fitting line of the regression and therefore support this study's hypotheses. Based on these results, it can be inferred that coffee exporters in Addis Ababa are using digital-marketing strategies effectively to drive sales growth the changes observed in their sales performance.

4.7.3 Analysis of Regression Coefficients

After analyzing the information from all previous steps, the Regression Coefficients Analysis provides insight into the strength and relationship of each Independent Variable to the Dependent Variable. Each Independent Variable has a specific t- and p-value that indicates its importance in predicting the Dependent Variable. In contrast to ANOVA and Model Summary, both the Unstandardized Coefficients (B) and the Standardized Coefficients (Beta) indicate how much influence each predictor has on the Dependent Variable (Field, 2018). From these measurements, the researcher can determine the most influential digital marketing strategy for coffee exports, and construct a mathematical expression that predicts how Digital Investment was affect Sales Growth in the future.

Table 4. 12 Coefficients

Model		Coefficients ^a	
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.102	.555
	social media marketing	.176	.733
	Online advertising marketing	.096	.257
	Electronic mails marketing	.188	.986

Source Owen Survey, 2025

The coefficients from our regression model determine the amount and direction of impact that each predictor had on dependent variable (i.e., sales growth) and how much impact from each predictor is attributed to other predictors in the model. In exhibits 3.3, we see how all three digital marketing channels -- Social Media Marketing (SMM), Online Advertising (OA), and Email Marketing (EM) -- positively impact sales growth. More specifically, EM has the greatest impact, with a coefficient of .587 (the midpoint of the 95% CI of .188 to .986). SMM is next with a coefficient of .455 (the midpoint of the 95% CI of .176 to .733). And OA comes in last with a coefficient of .177 (the midpoint of the 95% CI of .096 to .257). As documented by Fields (2018), because none of the 95% CIs for these three marketing channels contains the number zero (e.g. SMM falls within 95% CI: .176 to .733), we can confidently conclude that each of these marketing channels positively impacts sales growth. Additionally, for every unit increase in EM, we would expect to see an increase in sales growth by approximately 0.587 units, if all other variables were held constant. This result agrees with Chaffey's (2019) findings regarding multi-channel digital integration driving organizational success. The results indicate that coffee exporters in Addis Ababa were achieving the greatest incremental returns from email campaigns and social media platforms in terms of sales and market share.

4.7.4 Hypothesis Testing

Researchers conduct hypothesis testing to assess whether or not empirical data provide evidence supporting the validity of claims about how two variables interact with each other (i.e., how they relate to each other within a given population). This thesis uses both correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis to test hypotheses developed regarding how digital marketing affects coffee exporters' sales growth from Ethiopia. To assess the hypotheses, researchers were need to

evaluate the direction of the relationship between the two variables, how strong an association is between two variables, and statistical significance (using p-values).

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), hypothesis testing converts unprocessed data into valuable information that can either confirm or question existing theoretical models. The following four hypotheses are addressed in this study:

Hypothesis H1: Among a group of selected coffee exporters from Ethiopia, implementing digital marketing strategy (e.g., web-based ads) was having a strong positive correlation with increasing their sales growth.

Hypothesis H2: Coffee exporters from Ethiopia primarily employ digital marketing techniques such as social media marketing, email marketing, web-based marketing and online advertisement to promote their products.

Hypothesis H3: Implementing digital marketing strategies (e.g., social media marketing) affects positively sales growth for Ethiopian coffee exporters.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Digital marketing strategies have a statistically significant positive effect on sales growth among selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia.

Table 4. 13 Hypothesis Testing

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	.227	.166		1.366	.175
social media marketing	.279	.229	.289	1.216	.001
Online advertising marketing	.081	.089	.098	.905	.003
Electronic mails marketing	.587	.201	.541	2.914	.004

Source Owen survey, 2025

Hypothesis one was tested, and the results support the hypothesis that there is a strong positive correlation between digital marketing strategies and sales growth for selected Ethiopian coffee exporters. Supporting evidence for this hypothesis includes a Pearson correlation coefficient (R) of .914, indicating that the combined effect of all digital marketing variables is a very strong positive correlation with sales growth. Furthermore, the ANOVA table shows a statistically significant relationship based on the p-value (.000) at $p < 0.05$, providing support for the

assertion made earlier those digital marketing strategies strongly and positively correlates with the sales performance of Ethiopian coffee exporters.

Hypothesis Two: Out of the four main digital marketing strategies identified, Social Media Marketing, E-mail Marketing, Website Marketing and Online Advertising are the four primary methods utilized by the selected coffee exporters in Ethiopia. In support of the assertion made in this hypothesis, the descriptive statistics and item analysis yielded high average agreement scores for all categories. Social Media Marketing's average item score (M=3.78) and E-mail Marketing's (M=3.75) demonstrated consistent agreement within the "Agree" range. Although Website Marketing was combined into a broader category of "Digital Marketing Tools" (M=3.53), the data indicate that these methods, collectively, are still the four primary forms of digital marketing used by the respondents (n = 113).

Test of Hypothesis Three (H₃): The rate of sales growth in the selected coffee export firms in Ethiopia is positively affected by the adoption of digital marketing practices. Result: Accepted Reasoning: The Model Summary indicated an R² = 0.835; therefore, 83.5% of the sales growth was explained by the adoption of digital marketing practices in the solution space. The observed result was verified by the presence of positive Beta coefficients in the coefficients table; therefore, the rate of sales growth was observed to follow a positive trend with the increase in digital marketing practices adoption.

Test of Hypothesis Four (H₄): Digital marketing strategies impact sales growth of selected coffee exporters of Ethiopia significantly and positively. Result: Reasoning: This hypothesis is supported by the individual p-value (Sig.) of the coefficients. In this scenario, three factors were significantly influential: Social Media Marketing (p=.001), Online Advertising Marketing (p=.003), and Electronic Mails Marketing (p=.004). Given that all of them are less than 0.05, it could be concluded that they impact positively and significantly on sales growth.

Table 4. 14 Summary table of Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Statistical Test	Result	Reason
H1: There is a significant positive association between digital marketing strategies and sales growth.	Pearson Correlation (R) & ANOVA	Supported	R=.914 and p=.000, indicating a very strong and significant relationship.
H2: Exporters utilize social media, email, website, and online advertising as primary	Descriptive Statistics (Mean)	Supported	Mean scores for these items ranged from 3.53 to 4.06, falling in the "Agree"

strategies.			category.
H3: The level of sales growth is positively influenced by the adoption of digital marketing.	Model Summary (R2)	Supported	R ² =.835, meaning 83.5% of the variance in sales growth is explained by these strategies.
H4: Digital marketing strategies have a statistically significant positive effect on sales growth.	Regression Coefficients (t-test)	Supported	All individual p-values (p<.05) for Social Media, Online Ads, and Email were significant.

Source Owen survey, 2025

4.8 Discussion

The Main Research Question and Objectives

This study checked out how digital marketing affects coffee sellers' sales in Ethiopia. It tried to find out which digital tools they use most and how these tools change how well they do.

The results from looking at the numbers clearly answer what the study was about. It turns out that digital marketing really helps sales grow, explaining about 83.5% of the change in sales. The strong link ($R = .914$) hints that when coffee sellers use better digital tools, they can reach more buyers abroad and turn those interested people into paying customers.

Email marketing is super important for sales growth ($\beta = .541$, $p = .004$). People agreed that opt-in emails ($M = 3.81$) and newsletters ($M = 3.75$) really help boost sales. These lines up with what Chaffey (2019) says: email is still the best way to build lasting relationships between buyers and sellers in areas like the coffee business. The findings of this study are confirmed by Ryan (2016), who asserted that the highest returns from an email campaign occur when emails are sent using personalized methods. Additionally, Ryan made an assertion that email provides a way for Ethiopian exporters to communicate professionally across borders while keeping costs low. The study also indicates that social media marketing and blog content have a significant effect on sales performance. Blogs, in particular, received the highest mean agreement score ($M = 4.06$) as a marketing tool among all digital channels.

This suggests that coffee exporters in Ethiopia was begin using blog marketing to convey their product's background and growing practices (e.g., sustainability), along with its quality characteristics, to aide buyers in selecting products. These conclusions align with Kotler & Armstrong, who state that present day buyers (both consumers and B2B) are driven and motivated by informative and value orientated content. Levels of social media usage are

considerably higher among coffee exporters (on average the level of maturity was 3.78) as compared to local oriented business. Therefore, it seems that social platforms are an essential source of "social proof" within the global commodity market. When comparing the results obtained from the study against internationally recognized benchmarks, the results show a high level of agreement.

The total impact for the model (total table count = 183.440; $p < .000$) is consistent with that identified within developed markets. In contrast to some studies within the Western context, which focus their findings predominantly on Paid Search (SEO/SEM) as the number one source of leads, coffee exporters in Ethiopia have a greater dependency upon using E-mail and Social Media. This is likely due to the connection-based characteristics of the coffee business. In support of the research conducted by Stevens (2009) and Hair, et al., (2019), the diagnostic testing for this study (indicating no significant amount of multicollinearity ($VIF < 2$) and high levels of normality) indicates strong validity of the information being obtained and further indicates that these associations weren't due to chance occurrences. This investigation adds to what is currently known about digital marketing uptake in developing economies that lead to an increase in sales ($M = 3.73$) and an overall increase in customer satisfaction ($M = 3.61$).

Conclusions Related to Digital Marketing Use.

Based on these findings, the authors advocate that digital marketing is no longer an option or something a company may choose to invest in, but rather a necessity in the development of an advantage, and therefore an integral part of developing a competitive edge for coffee exporters in Ethiopia. Given the high R^2 value of .835, the authors conclude that failure to adopt these forms of digital marketing locations puts firms in a significantly vulnerable position relative to their industry. While the traditional forms of partnering showed varying degrees of agreement due to their higher variance and lower mean agreement ($M = 3.24$), the digital forms (E-mail, Blogs, Social Media) were more universally supported as drivers for growth. The theoretical framework proposed by Tabachnick and Fidell (2019) highlights that organizational behavior can be predicted with greater accuracy using multi-variable models. In line with this theory, the data show that developing an integrated approach to digital communications is critical to the future success or growth of the Ethiopian Coffee Industry in the Digital Age as a means of sustaining and growing their share of the global marketplace.

Comparative Context: The "Relational" Ethiopian Model vs. The "Transactional" Western Model

1. The "Psychic Distance" and Trust Gap

This study found that, in the case of Ethiopia's coffee-exporting industry, digital marketing emphasis area is diverging from established norms in developed economies (specifically, Western societies) in how they go about generating leads through digital marketing. In most Western markets, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Pay-per-click (PPC) advertising are typically considered the most effective means of generating leads and prospects. The primary focus of these "Transactional" tools is to attract consumers to businesses through an unknown method or track their interest in a business. In contrast, Ethiopian exporters preferred "Relationship-Based Digital Tools" such as Social Media and Email. Were analyses the discrepancy between the Ethiopian and Western digital marketing priorities from three perspectives?

2. The "Psychic Distance" and Trust Gap

The international coffee trade was characterized by high perceived risk, where buyers in Europe or North America was seek to verify the quality and ethics of a source located thousands of miles away. While Western firms were use SEO to find the "cheapest" or "nearest" provider, Ethiopian exporters was use Social Media (SMM) to provide "social proof." By sharing videos of washing stations, harvest cycles, and cupping sessions, they were reducing the "psychic distance" between the farm and the roaster. This visual transparency was serving as a digital proxy for the traditional site visit, building a foundation of trust that a "cold" search engine result cannot provide.

3. Infrastructure and Technical Maturity

Nature of the Coffee Commodity Unlike standardized industrial goods; coffee was a "sensory and relational" commodity. The study was suggest that Ethiopian exporters was prioritize Email Marketing ($\beta = .541$) because it was allow for the exchange of personalized cupping reports and direct negotiation. In the Ethiopian context, the digital strategy was not be about "finding any buyer," but about "nurturing the right partner." This "Professional Intimacy" was ensuring that the exporter-buyer relationship was surviving market price fluctuations, a feat rarely achieved through impersonal Paid Search strategies.

The dependence on Email and Social Media instead of complicated SEO/SEM models is indicative of the level of digital sophistication within the local context. The research was indicate that Ethiopian exporters are likely to utilize “high profile/low complexity” tools. This is primarily because of the requirement for frequent technical updates and foreign currency expenditure needed for global advertisement placement via the mechanism of Search Engine Optimization, making SEO more difficult than other means of communication (e-mail, social media) that allow direct access to global decision-makers. By demonstrating that Ethiopia employs a Hybrid Relational Strategy, combining both an extended network of social visibility and the security of direct email communication, the research was illustrate how the Ethiopian exporter takes advantage of its cultural strengths (hospitality, storytelling, interpersonal relationships) within an electronic framework to create an advantage for itself in the marketplace.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

Okay, so this last part wraps up our study on how digital marketing affects coffee sales in Ethiopia. Before, we showed that digital marketing really does boost sales—like, it explains about 83.5% of why sales go up or down. Now, we're putting those numbers into a real-world view. This part has four pieces: what we found out based on what we wanted to know, what the data tells us, some advice for people in the coffee business, and ideas for more studies down the road. Basically, we're answering the question, Okay, so what does all this mean? We want to give coffee sellers real tips on using the internet to stay ahead in the worldwide market.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The study was conducted to evaluate how digital transformation affects traditional commodity exporting in Ethiopia. Using a quantitative census of 113 exporters, the study was yielding the following key findings:

- **Model Power:** The regression model was demonstrate an **R-value of .914** and an **R² of .835**, meaning digital marketing was explain **83.5%** of the variance in sales growth.
- **Statistical Validity:** The ANOVA test ($p < .001$) and the fulfillment of all classical assumptions ($VIF < 2.0$; Durbin-Watson = 1.712) was confirm that the results are stable, reliable, and not due to chance.
- **Hierarchical Impact of Tools:**
 - **Email Marketing $\beta = .541$):** was identified as the most significant driver of sales.
 - **Social Media Marketing $\beta = .289$):** was the second most impactful tool for growth.
 - **Online advertising $\beta = .098$):** was showing a significant but lower relative impact compared to direct channels.
- **Hypothesis Confirmation:** All four research hypotheses were supported, confirming that digital platforms significantly improve market reach and customer engagement for Ethiopian coffee.

5.3 Conclusion

- The study concludes by synthesizing all study results, rather than summarizing them, and then interpreting the integrated ways in which digital marketing impacts the Ethiopian coffee trading sector's export success.
- Due to extensive statistical analysis and validation of all hypotheses, we can draw many conclusive statements regarding how digital marketing impacts the Ethiopian coffee sector's exports.
- Digital marketing as a core business process – This study indicates that Digital Marketing is a vital component of sales growth for coffee exporters in Addis Ababa. Based on the strong explanatory ability of this research model ($R^2 = 0.835$), businesses that choose not to engage in a digital transformation strategy are likely to continue a stagnant existence, while businesses that take advantage of digital marketing was most likely relate their continued sales growth back to the effectiveness of digital marketing.
- Priority of Direct Marketing – Within the B2B context of international coffee trade, Direct Email Marketing (beta = 0.587) is the most influential growth driver. Therefore, more personalized, targeted, professional channels are likely to be better suited for securing high-value export contracts than broad-spectrum advertising methods. Integrated Strategy Synergies – This research has been prepared to summarize the synergistic effects of social media and other forms of engagement through online platforms with direct mail. It strongly correlates with the effectiveness of an integrated digital marketing mix over reliance on any one of the components alone, as indicated by an R-value of 0.914 (very high). For example, given that all classical assumptions of linear regression (multicollinearity / absence thereof, independence of residuals, etc.) were fulfilled for this study ($VIF < 2.0/DW = 1.712$), the four digital marketing variables measured in this study were found to have provided a solid and reliable basis for forecasting the performance of an Organization.
- The Transition from Traditional to Digital Paradigms: Finally, a significant shift has taken place in the Ethiopian coffee industry, whereby digital means of establishing "social proof" through blogs and social media (indicated by high mean agreement levels) are now considered more effective than the traditional network process of building an Organization's Brand Credibility in the World of Coffee. Thus, this study's findings

indicate that, in today's competitive global coffee market, the use of digital marketing strategies has shifted from being a basis for success to being a requisite for survival and growth.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings of this study, which underscore the significant impact of digital marketing on the sales performance of coffee exporters, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the strategic positioning of the sector in the global market.

- **Strategic Integration of Relationship-Based Digital Channels**

In this research, electronic mail marketing was identified as the strongest predictor of sales growth among exporting companies (with a beta of .587). Therefore, exporting companies should move away from relying on transactional communications toward a higher level of strategic relationship-based communication. This could be achieved by implementing customer relationship management (CRM) systems, which would enable exporting companies to utilize a data-driven personalized approach in their communications to customers/exporters. The electronic mail marketing program can also feature "opt-in" mailing lists and high-value newsletters that focus on the roaster's cupping scores and sustainability metrics so that exporting companies can develop trust in their long-term relationships with roasters located abroad. Ultimately, the selling organizations' marketing departments are responsible for transitioning their organizations from traditional broad-range to professional direct-to-buyer digital marketing methods.

- **Optimization of Digital Content and "Social Proof"**

Significant agreement among participants regarding the usefulness of blogging and content marketing (M=4.06) indicates that coffee exporters should be heavily investing in digital storytelling. It is advised that companies create an overall strategy for content development that emphasizes traceability and the unique heritage of their coffees. The use of high-resolution images as well as detailed technical 'how to' blogs was provide the necessary social proof required to eliminate the information gap typically found between manufacturers and buyers in B2B markets. In addition, organizations should encourage and provide resources for their content developers so they may tell compelling stories about various coffee products that reflect current global trends related to organic and ethically sourced products, thus increasing

brand equity as well as gaining attention in the marketplace.

- **Collaborative Institutional Capacity Building**

According to the high coefficient of determination from the model ($R = 0.914$), it appears that there are significant opportunities for the Ethiopian institutional stakeholders to facilitate the digitalization of their industry sectors (i.e., Ethiopian Coffee & Tea Authority). In addition to these stakeholders supporting the digital transition of their industry sectors, it is recommended that comprehensive training programs be implemented for coffee & tea exporters with the goal of increasing their level of digital proficiency. The training programs should focus on teaching exporters how to effectively use B2B networking sites such as LinkedIn and search engine optimization (SEO) for international market visibility. Once coffee & tea exporters have developed their digital competence, the sector has the opportunity to evolve without the limitations of lacking digital competencies, and the creation of a coordinated national digital marketing strategy was allow the sector to adopt a unified "Brand Ethiopia" image in international digital markets. As a result, the creation of a coordinated national digital marketing strategy was create more openings and opportunities for newly entering exporters to enter the coffee & tea industry sector.

- **Evidence-Based Reallocation of Marketing Resources**

A significant positive impact ($p = 0.003$) was identified by Online Advertising, although it's relative impact ($\beta = 0.098$) indicates that it is underused or not being used effectively at this time. Exporters should discuss with executive management how they allocate funds in advertising and look into transferring some of the funds from the high-cost physical exhibitions to targeted online advertising. Companies have the opportunity to target their ad campaign with retargeted ads on LinkedIn for maximum reach to the core decision-makers in the priority importing regions (the EU and East Asia) and receive a higher return on investment.

5.5 Limitations of the Study and Future Research Recommendations

Even though this research provides valuable information about the relationship between digital marketing techniques and increased sales for some of Ethiopia's coffee exporters, it has limitations. The results should not be generalized outside of a small number of coffee exporting companies, as those studied may not be a true representative sample of all coffee exporting companies and their digital marketing strategy implementation. The companies studied exhibited

the same types of digital marketing techniques that are currently in place, making them suitable examples of how to study the effect of digital marketing strategies on coffee exporters. Additionally, data was obtained by administering well-structured questionnaires to respondents that included their opinions and experiences regarding their digital marketing techniques. There is the possibility that, similar to other surveys, the response data provided may have been subject to biases based on respondents' perceptions and/or recollections of the event. The reliability of the findings can be improved by using validated measure items and having a uniform method of gathering data throughout the study, which were enable researchers to gather good quality data and increase the reliability of findings in the future, including longitudinal or mixed-method studies.

This research validates the substantial role of digital marketing strategies in driving increased sales revenue in the coffee industry; however, more research remains to be done regarding additional aspects of this topic not covered in this study. The future research endeavors could utilize a longitudinal method to monitor the sales growth as influenced by digital marketing over multiple years versus a single time point. The researcher may want to explore similar instruments as Search Engine Optimization and Mobile Applications to understand whether there are similar economic benefits. Research may also include benchmarking and comparative analysis between companies in different industry sectors, e.g., coffee versus spice and flower companies, to determine if results from this study can be generalized across all Ethiopian Export businesses. Lastly, future studies can explore how the size of the exporting company or level of internet service impacts the results to allow for a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges faced within the digital environment.

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Appendix 1 Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information for my study "The Relationship between Digital Marketing Strategy and Increased Sales Growth: Evidence from Selected Coffee Exporter in Ethiopia"; for purely academic purposes. All data collected will be treated as strictly confidential, and responses will be combined anonymously with responses from other participants in this study. I respectfully ask you to respond honestly and share your experiences regarding the topics specified in the questionnaire.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Anteneh Workeferaw

The Researcher

Part one: General Information

Put a Tick (√) mark in the box

1.1 Gender

Male _____ Female _____

1.2 Age Group:

< 25years _____ 26-35 years _____ 35 to 45 years _____ > 45years _____

1.3 Education Status

Certificate _____ Diploma _____ BSc/BA degree _____ Master and Above

1.4 Your service year in organization:

< 5years _____ 5 to10 years _____ 16 to 20 years _____ >20 years _____

1.5 Positions _____

1.6 Digital marketing strategies _____ Yes _____ No

1.7 Popular channels

_____ Email marketing _____ Social media marketing
_____ Search engine optimization (SEO) _____ Pay-per-click (PPC) advertising
_____ Influencer marketing _____ Other

Part two

Please select/tick the number that best reflects what your company has been practicing so far and how do you believe different types of digital marketing strategies are impacting the growth of sales of your company and how much you feel the different digital marketing practices are contributing to your company’s sales performance with respect to the following scale :

1- Strongly disagree, 2 - disagree, 3 - neutral, 4 - agree and, 5 - strongly agree

Code	Measurement Statement	1	2	3	4	5
SMM	Social Media Marketing (SMM)					
SMM1	Our company uses social networks to drive sales growth.					
SMM2	Facebook usage is a primary driver for our sales reach.					
SMM3	Twitter (X) serves as an effective platform for growth.					
SMM4	Corporate Blogs are integrated to enhance performance.					
SMM5	Podcasts are utilized to support sales expansion.					
SMM6	SMM increases the overall conversion of leads.					
SMM7	YouTube/Flickr is utilized to enhance brand visibility.					
SMM8	Social-based CRM is used to manage customer relationships.					
OAM	Online Advertising Marketing (OAM)					
OAM1	Website marketing is core to our sales growth strategy.					
OAM2	Our Corporate Website is utilized to enhance market position.					
OAM3	A Marketing Website is used to drive organizational performance.					
EMM	Electronic Mail Marketing (EMM)					
EMM1	Email marketing is a significant contributor to sales growth.					
EMM2	Search engine optimization (SEO) is used to boost sales.					
EMM3	Opt-in email lists are utilized for targeted growth.					
EMM4	Email newsletters/campaigns are primary tools for growth.					
EMM5	Partnering arrangements in email enhance sales volume.					
EMM6	Efficiency in email is a driver of our sales performance.					
SG	Sales Growth (Dependent Variable)					
SG1	We have realized a positive sales impact from social media.					
SG2	Digital strategies have directly improved customer satisfaction.					
SG3	Sales volume has increased due to digital marketing adoption.					

SG4	Our market share has expanded due to digital marketing.					
SG5	Our company increased employee count following sales growth.					
SG6	Int. buyers are motivated to buy due to our digital presence.					

Thank you for your cooperation