



**School of Commerce  
Department of Marketing Management**

**The Effect of Digital Marketing on Expanding the  
Customer base of Ethiopian Airlines**

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# **THE EFFECT OF DIGITAL MARKETING ON EXPANDING THE CUSTOMER BASE OF ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES**

By

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E-Commerce**

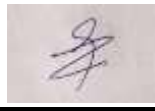
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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Thomas Gebrecherkos Gebremichael, entitled: “The Effect of Digital Marketing on the Expanding Customer Base of Ethiopian Airlines” and submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Science in Digital Marketing and E-commerce, with regulation of the university and the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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# Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis titled “The Effect of Digital Marketing on the Expand of Customer base of Ethiopian Airlines’ has been carried out by me under the guidance and supervision of my advisor Dr. Mulugeta Gebremedhine.

The thesis is original and has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma to any university or institution.

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June 2024

# Letter of Certification

This is to certify that Thomas Gebrecherkos Gebremichael has carried out this research work on the topic “**The Effect of Digital Marketing on the Expanding Customer Base of Ethiopian Airlines.**” Under my supervision. This research is his original work and has not been presented for a degree in any university, and all sources of materials used for the study have been duly acknowledged. Thus, it is sufficient for submission for the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Digital Marketing with Specialty E-commerce.

**Advisor:** Mulugeta Gebremedhin (PhD)

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## List of Abbreviation

<b>AFRAA</b>	African Airlines Association
<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>AR</b>	Augmented Reality
<b>B777-200LR</b>	Long Range
<b>CRM</b>	Customer Relationship Management
<b>EAE</b>	Ethiopian Airports Enterprise
<b>EAL</b>	Ethiopian Air Lines
<b>EASA</b>	European Union Aviation Safety Agency
<b>FAA</b>	Federal Aviation Administration
<b>FTP</b>	File Transfer Protocol
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>ML</b>	Machine Learning
<b>MMS</b>	Multimedia Messaging service
<b>MRO</b>	Maintenance Repair and Overhaul
<b>PPC</b>	Pay Per Click
<b>ROI</b>	Return on Investment
<b>RPKs</b>	Revenue Passenger Kilometres
<b>SEM</b>	Search Engine Marketing
<b>SEO</b>	Search Engine Optimization
<b>SERPs</b>	Search Engine Results Pages
<b>SMM</b>	Social Media Marketing
<b>SMS</b>	Short Message Service
<b>VR</b>	Virtual reality

## Abstract

*This research examined the effects of digital marketing elements on the Expansion of Customer base of Ethiopian Airlines. To fulfil the objectives of this study a descriptive and explanatory research design exerted. Data were gathered from Ethiopian Airlines passenger in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia bole international airport using questionnaire from 384 respondents. Sample respondents were selected through simple random sampling technique. Accordingly, to collect data from sample respondents the researcher has used self-administered closed-ended questionnaire. Out of 384 respondents, workable data was obtained from 375 respondents. The data, then, was analysed through descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS v27. The analysed result indicated that the independent variable that are: Email Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Content Marketing, Mobile Marketing have a positive and significant effect on Expanding customer base of Ethiopian Airlines. The result also indicated that SEO has a positive but insignificant effect on expanding customer base Ethiopian Airlines. Finally, this study suggest helpful action for companies in improving their digital marketing elements and techniques as a means of outperform the intense competition that exist in the global market, they can maximize their market share and customer base.*

**Key Words:** *Digital Marketing, Customer Base, Airlines, Email Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Mobile Marketing, Content Marketing, SEO*

# Unit One

## 1. Introduction

This chapter introduces and provides a brief background information about the topic and the organizations under consideration in this study. It also presents the statement of the problem; the research questions; objectives of the study; significances of the study; delimitations and limitations of the study, definition of key terms and organization of the study.

### 1.1 Background of the study

The development of technology has always been intrinsically linked to digital marketing. One of the most important parts was the beginning, in 1971, when Ray Tomlinson sent out the first message and created the infrastructure necessary for users to send and receive data using many machines with his software. The year 1991 is primarily remembered as the start of digital marketing as it saw the development of the Archie browser, which served as an archive for File Transfer Protocol (FTP) sites. Enough computer memory was already available to store enormous volumes of client data. Businesses started to choose digital tactics over limited list brokers, such as advertising servers. These databases improved the relationship between buyers and sellers, allowing firms to monitor client data more effectively.

In order for businesses to effectively connect with clients in the age of online shopping, traditional marketing tactics were superseded by the idea of digital marketing, which drastically altered the marketing landscape. Businesses who want to improve their customer relationship management (CRM) and online purchase intention would utilize digital marketing, which is centered on using online platforms—like social media, search engines, and all smart devices—as a means of gathering data. The use of digital technology in conjunction with conventional marketing communication to accomplish marketing objectives is known as digital marketing. Because the Internet has evolved into a trading arena, businesses that employ digital marketing are gaining traction in maintaining a simple and intelligent trade procedure (Leeflang et al., 2014)

Understanding consumer behavior may be accomplished through customer relationship. It was now feasible to grow client loyalty, draw in new clients, and boost revenue thanks to new

communication technology and digital marketing strategies. Digital platforms are being used to measure the success rates of businesses in all customer relationship management processes that should be implemented to improve customer satisfaction, sales revenues, campaign turnover rates, customer retention, and customer loyalty, as well as to lower service, operation, and marketing costs (Swift, 2001).

Customer relationship management is a way of understanding the behaviour of customers. By the new communication technologies and digital marketing techniques, to attract new customers, to increase customer loyalty and to increase profitability had been possible. The success rates of companies in all customer relationship management processes that should be applied to increase customer satisfaction, increase sales revenues, campaign turnover rates, customer retention and customer loyalty, and to reduce service, operation and marketing costs are being measured by using digital platforms (Swift, 2001).

In the airline industry, digital marketing has proven crucial to satisfying consumer demands and enhancing customer relationships. Would you wish to hear directly from your ultimate consumer instead of via the limited lenses of focus groups and surveys? This is made possible by social media. Do you want your customers to stick with your emerging brand? This is made possible via mobile computing. Would you like to provide a genuinely customized experience by improving your prediction skills? This potential is provided by customer analysis (Westerman et al., 2014, 41).

The significance of digital marketing in the contemporary business environment was underscored by numerous studies emphasizing its role in enhancing customer engagement, fostering brand loyalty, and driving revenue growth (Chaffey, 2017 as cited by Dejene, 2019). However, the unique challenges and opportunities faced by airlines, especially in diverse markets such as Ethiopia, warrant a focused investigation into the tailored strategies and outcomes within this sector.

As elucidated by (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010a), the success of any marketing strategy was contingent upon an intimate understanding of the target audience. In the context of Ethiopian Airlines, a carrier serving both domestic and international routes, reaching and resonating with a diverse customer base was imperative for sustained growth. Furthermore, the global airline industry was characterized by intense competition, necessitating a strategic and

adaptive digital marketing approach to distinguish Ethiopian Airlines and fortify its market position.

## **1.2 Background of the Organization**

Ethiopian Airlines, formerly known as Ethiopian Air Lines (EAL), is the national airline of Ethiopia and is fully controlled by the government of that nation. Its Amharic name is የኢትዮጵያ አየር መንገድ. EAL was established on December 21, 1945, and started operating on April 8, 1946. In 1951, it started operating international flights. In 1965, the business changed its name from Ethiopian Air Lines to Ethiopian Airlines and became a share corporation.

The airline has been a part of the African Airlines Association (AFRAA) since 1968 as well as the International Air Transport Association since 1959. Ethiopia became a member of the Star Alliance in December of 2011. "The New Spirit of Africa" is the tagline used by the firm. Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa is home to Ethiopian's hub and headquarters, it serves a network of 155 passenger destinations-domestic network 22- and freighter destination 68.

The airline had secondary hubs in Togo and Malawi. Ethiopian Airlines is Africa's largest airline in terms of passengers carried, destinations served, fleet size, and revenue. Ethiopian is also the world's fourth-largest airline by the number of countries served.

Ethiopian's inaugural flight took off with five C-47 aircraft, flying from Cairo via Asmara on April 8, 1946. Since then, it has experienced exponential growth, consistently introducing pioneering aviation technology to Africa. Notably, Ethiopian was the first to operate jet airplanes, the B767, B777-200LR, B787 Dreamliner, and B787-9 on the continent. It also led the way by operating Africa's first Airbus A350. Presently, Ethiopian boasts a fleet of over 150 modern aircraft, with an average fleet age of less than seven years. Additionally, it had more than 100 ultramodern aircraft on order.

July 2017, the airline was reformed by the Ethiopian government into a wholly owned aviation holding corporation. Maximizing efficiency, raising the bar for customer service globally, and making long-term planning simple were the objectives. The Ethiopian Airports Enterprise (EAE), Ethiopian Aviation Academy, Ethiopian In-flight Catering Services, Ethiopian MRO Services, Ethiopian Hotel and Tourism Services, and the Passenger Airline, Cargo Airline, and Logistics Company comprised the original group. Fully accredited by the

FAA and EASA, MRO Services is the largest business of its kind covering the continent and the Med-Eastern area. The division of cargo and logistics is growing to reach an annual capacity of 1.5 million tons. In 2023, the Ethiopian Aviation Academy, which has since been renamed as Aviation University, opened a second campus in Hawassa City for pilot training (Wikipedia, 2023).

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

In the contemporary business landscape, the aviation industry stands as a dynamic and highly competitive sector, characterized by rapid technological advancements and evolving consumer behaviours. As airlines globally navigate this transformative environment, the strategic utilization of digital marketing has emerged as a crucial factor in shaping customer perceptions, driving engagement, and ultimately influencing the success of carriers.

According to industry reports, the global airline industry witnessed a fundamental shift in consumer behavior, with an increasing reliance on digital platforms for travel-related information, booking, and post-travel engagement. Against this backdrop, Ethiopian Airlines had to navigate the complexities of aligning its digital marketing initiatives with the preferences of its diverse customer segments.

The development of digital technology has allowed the emergence of a new environment of social interaction that facilitates and demands, at the same time, a profound transformation of the marketing strategies (Alwan & Alshurideh, 2022). Digital marketing is currently one of such marketing strategies in which many companies are dedicating greater investment (Tariq et al., 2022). This new marketing paradigm has been focused, specifically, on the careful management of the relationship between the customers and the company to have information about the customers, their characteristics, needs, and preferences (Edelman, 2010).

The continued relevance and competitiveness in the marketplace. As highlighted by various scholars, the success of digital marketing in driving customer engagement, acquisition, and brand loyalty is well-established (Chaffey, 2017 as cited by Dejen, 2019). However, the unique characteristics of the airline industry, coupled with the diverse customer segments served by Ethiopian Airlines, necessitate a nuanced examination of the challenges and opportunities inherent in the airline's current digital marketing approach.

There is a need for more research on the measurement and evaluation of digital marketing effectiveness in the airline industry. While some studies have examined metrics such as website traffic, social media engagement, and online bookings, there was limited understanding of how these metrics translate into tangible business outcomes such as revenue generation, customer retention, and brand loyalty (O'Connor and Frew, 2019). Additionally, there was a lack of consensus on standardized frameworks and methodologies for assessing the ROI (Return on Investment) of digital marketing initiatives in the airline sector.

Digital marketing strategies serve as the independent variables in this study, encompassing a spectrum of approaches such as social media marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), content marketing, email marketing, and mobile marketing. These strategies represent Ethiopian Airlines' endeavors to engage with consumers, promote brand awareness, and drive conversions in the digital realm. Yet, the extent to which these strategies influence the airline's customer base remains ambiguous.

By examining the relationship between digital marketing strategies and Ethiopian Airlines' customer base, this research seeks to bridge existing knowledge gaps and provide valuable insights for both academia and industry practitioners. Through empirical analysis and theoretical frameworks, the study aims to elucidate the specific mechanisms through which digital marketing affect customer acquisition, retention, and loyalty within the context of airline operations.

Amidst the research landscape, it was worth noting that to the researcher's knowledge, no thesis has hitherto delved into the intricacies of digital marketing in the Ethiopian aviation industry. This underscores the novelty and pertinence of the proposed study, which seeks to fill this void by shedding light on the nuanced dynamics between digital marketing and the customer base of Ethiopian Airlines.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

1. How does the utilization of social media marketing affect the Ethiopian Airlines' customer base?
2. What is the relationship between search engine optimization (SEO) efforts and the expansion of Ethiopian Airlines' customer base?

3. To what extent does content marketing contribute to the growth and retention of Ethiopian Airlines' customer base?
4. How effective is email marketing in attracting and retaining customers for Ethiopian Airlines?
5. What is the influence of mobile marketing strategies on Ethiopian Airlines' customer base?

## **1.5 Objectives of the study**

The research objective was a statement of purpose because it was the guide to be accomplished by the researcher in conducting his / her research project (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). The study has the following general and specific objectives.

### **1.5.1 General Objective**

The overarching objective of this thesis was to comprehensively examine and analyze the Effect of Ethiopian Airlines' digital marketing on expanding its customer base. The study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the airline's current digital marketing initiatives in influencing customer loyalty, Retention, acquisition, and brand Image within the dynamic and competitive landscape of the global aviation industry.

### **1.5.2 Specific Objectives**

1. Evaluate the effect of social media marketing on the growth rate of Ethiopian Airlines' customer base.
2. Determine the correlation between the level of search engine optimization (SEO) implementation and the percentage increase in Ethiopian Airlines' customer base.
3. Evaluate the contribution of content marketing initiatives to customer acquisition and retention rates for Ethiopian Airlines.
4. Measure the effectiveness of email marketing campaigns in converting leads into customers and retaining existing customers for Ethiopian Airlines.
5. Investigate the extent to which mobile marketing strategies influence the demographic composition of Ethiopian Airlines' customer base.

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

The thesis addresses a gap in existing literature by specifically focusing on the effect of digital marketing on expanding the customer base of Ethiopian Airlines. While there were considerable research on digital marketing in general, studies focusing on its application and effectiveness in the airline industry, especially in the context of African airlines like Ethiopian Airlines, may be limited. As the aviation industry increasingly adopts digital technologies and strategies to engage with customers, understanding the specific effects of these strategies on customer acquisition, retention, and loyalty becomes crucial. The thesis provides actionable insights for Ethiopian Airlines to optimize its digital marketing efforts for better business outcomes.

Findings from the thesis can contribute to the broader understanding of effective digital marketing practices in the aviation industry, provides actionable insights that can directly benefit Ethiopian Airlines' management by offering specific recommendations to optimize digital marketing strategies, digital marketing professionals can also benefit from insights into the effectiveness of various digital marketing tools in engaging airline customers, potentially benefiting other airlines facing similar challenges and opportunities in the digital landscape. Furthermore, The research conducted for the thesis, including methodology, data analysis, and findings, contributes to the academic body of knowledge on digital marketing and its effect on customer behavior in the airline industry. It may serve as a reference point for future researchers interested in exploring related topics or replicating the study in different context.

## **1.7 Limitation of the Study**

This study may faces several limitations that are important to consider. Factors like economic conditions, fuel prices, and competitor activity can influence customer behavior and airline performance, making it difficult to isolate the sole effect of digital marketing.

Furthermore, methodological limitations also exist. A cross-sectional study design captures data at a single point in time, hindering the ability to establish causal relationships between digital marketing and customer base expansion. These five strategies represent some of the most common and effective digital marketing channels used by airlines globally. They offer a strong foundation for analyzing the overall impact of digital marketing on Ethiopian Airlines'

customer base. Finally, the study's findings might not be generalizable to other airlines or markets due to unique contextual differences.

Despite these limitations, this research can still offer valuable insights and contribute to the understanding of digital marketing's role in expanding Ethiopian Airlines' customer base by acknowledging and addressing these limitations in the methodology and discussion sections.

## **1.8 Scope of the Study**

The research will be limited in terms of theoretical, geographical, and methodological. The study was conceptually limited to customer base as the dependent variable and the five independent variables of digital marketing strategies, email marketing, social media marketing, mobile marketing, content marketing, and search engine optimization (SEO) as the independent variables. Geographically, the study's focus will be limited to examining how Ethiopian Airlines' use of digital marketing has expanded its customer base across five continents. From a methodological standpoint, this study will employ quantitative research techniques together with explanatory and descriptive research designs to gather data from customers of Ethiopian Airlines using questionnaires that they will provide and fill out themselves. Additionally, the study was confined to examining how digital marketing affects customer base expansion; and the study's collection date is set for the 2023/2024 fiscal year, and the sample's respondents will have varying levels of expertise.

## **1.9 Conceptual and operational Definition of key terms**

### **1.9.1 Conceptual definition of terms**

Refers to the definition of concepts/terms or variable from the theoretical perspective.

**Digital marketing:** is a type of direct marketing in which buyers and sellers are connected through interactive media, including emails, websites, online forums, interactive TV, mobile communications, and others (Armstrong & Kotler, 2007).

**Customer loyalty:** is the fervent desire to repeatedly purchase and use a favored good or service in the future, even in the face of external factors and promotional campaigns that may tempt consumers to change their minds. (Oliver, 1997).

**Customer Base:** is the group of customers who repeatedly purchase the goods or services of a business and are considered the primary source of revenue for the company. It represents

the regular Customer base of a business who engage in consistent transactions, thus contributing to the company's stability and growth (American Marketing Association 2023).

**Email Marketing:** Email marketing facilitates communication between companies and their Customer base via email. Customers are frequently emailed with information about a company's website, events, special deals, and other noteworthy details. You have the ability to send recipients of several email formats during an email marketing campaign. These consist of emails to subscribers to your blog, emails to users who downloaded content from your website, greeting emails to customers, holiday-themed emails rewarding devoted clients, and customer-friendly advice emails (Desai, 2019).

**Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** is a technique for raising a website's position in search engine results so that it draws in more traffic than just organic (or free) visits. SEO is advantageous for blogs, websites, and infographics (Desai, 2019).

**Social Media Marketing:** By posting the company's information and brand on social media platforms, this strategy can help the business attract more customers. Businesses can run advertisements on several social media platforms, including Pinterest, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook (Desai, 2019).

**Content Marketing:** Is the process of producing and disseminating information assets with the aim of increasing brand recognition, traffic, leads, and sales. A content marketing plan may incorporate several channels like as blog postings, online brochures, infographics, e-books, and whitepapers (Desai, 2019).

**Mobile marketing:** Mobile devices are linked to interactive content created for particular audiences, such as games and applications for phones. Among these include images, music, and message (Merisavo et al., 2007).

### 1.9.2 Operational definition of terms

**Airline:** An airline is a business that offers passenger and freight air transportation services. Scheduled flights are operated by airlines between various destinations. using a fleet of airplanes. They offer transportation services to the general public on a commercial basis (Federal Aviation Administration, n.d.).

## **1.10. Organization of the Study**

This study is organized in to five chapters. The first chapter states the general introduction and background of the study. Chapter two presents theoretical and empirical literatures related to the research area. It also consists of research gap and conceptual framework of the study. The third chapter outlines the research methodology and research design. The research results and discussions are presented in chapter four. The last chapter presents the major findings, the drawn conclusions and recommendation, and wind up the report by highlighting future research areas.

# Unit Two

## 2. Literature Review

A literature review lends credibility to the researcher's claims about the significance of the topic proposed for investigation. It supplements the body of knowledge on a particular issue or may demonstrate that there is a dearth of knowledge on the subject in question (Houser, 2016). It explains to the reader why a particular question is important and allows the author to explain how other scholars both within and outside of that discipline approach the question (Miller & Whicker, 1999).

This chapter outlines the study's conceptual framework, research gap, and reviews of the theoretical and empirical literature.

### 2.1 Digital marketing

The term "marketing" refers to the concept of purchasing and selling a certain product and is derived from the Anglo-Saxon verb "market" (Fuciu & Dumitrescu, 2018). Over time, marketing is a discipline that is always evolving and changing. Many developments and contributions to its fundamental ideas, structures, and characteristics characterize marketing (Erragcha & Romdhane, 2014a). According to Wojciech L. (2017), marketing is evolving and is no longer concentrated on satisfying customers' traditional requirements and wants.

The use of digital platforms like as websites, mobile apps, social media, search engines, and other similar channels to market goods and services to consumers is referred to as digital marketing (Hegde et al., 2023).

Internet, social media, search engines, mobile devices, and other channels can all be used for digital marketing, which is the use of these platforms to reach consumers and promote a brand. It calls for innovative approaches to consumer marketing and an awareness of the influence of consumer behavior (Higashida & Ryoike, 2010).

**Table 1:** Pros and Cons of Digital Marketing

Pros	Cons
1. Real-time Tracking: Provides accurate and immediate results for marketing efforts.	1. Internet Dependency: Heavily reliant on internet access, limiting reach in areas with poor connectivity.
2. Precise Audience Targeting: Allows precise audience targeting for personalized marketing.	2. Market Saturation: High competition and clutter make it challenging for ads to stand out and engage consumers.
3. Global Reach: Enables reaching a global audience and transcending geographical boundaries.	3. Trust Issues: Some consumers may distrust online content due to the prevalence of scams and fraud.
4. Personalization: Offers the ability to create personalized marketing campaigns tailored to individual preferences.	4. Negative Brand Perception: Negative comments or actions by individuals or small groups can harm a brand's image.
5. Cost-Efficient: Often more cost-effective than traditional advertising methods.	5. Limited Conversion: Many prospects may not have a purchasing authority, making actual sales conversion uncertain.

The swift advancement of technology has significantly transformed the way businesses engage with their target audience, leading to the shift towards digital marketing (Grewal et al., 2020).

Organizations can employ digital marketing tactics to boost client interaction, build brand loyalty, and ultimately push business success by utilizing the most recent technical innovations (Luo et al., 2019).

"The digital revolution has fundamentally changed the concepts of space, time, and mass," said Kotler. "In today's world, a company does not have to physically exist; it can be virtual and it can be anywhere. Messages can be transmitted and received simultaneously. Objects such as books, music, and movies can be sent as "bits" rather than physically" (Kumar et al., 2000). Digitalization, which entered our lives in parallel with the information age and is defined as a digital revolution, enables the use of brand new platforms as a marketing tool.

In 2022, many nations kept loosening travel restrictions, which led to a loosening of international policy. As a result of this breakthrough, the global air passenger count increased and eventually neared pre-pandemic levels, indicating that travelers were eager to take to the skies once more. Still, fragmented regulations and residual restrictions in several markets hindered the international aviation industry's comeback.

Revenue passenger kilometers (RPKs) for the entire industry grew dramatically from 41.7% of 2019 RPKs in 2021 to 68.5% in 2022. While domestic traffic globally witnessed an earlier rebound and slower increase since the second half of 2021, the majority of the recovery momentum in 2022 was driven by the growth in international RPKs. Following China's economic reopening, the recovery picked up speed in the first quarter of 2023. In March 2023, industry total RPKs achieved 88.0% of their 2019 levels, a notable improvement mostly due to domestic developments.

As a major participant in the African aviation market, Ethiopian Airlines operates in a setting with particular opportunities and constraints. The airline serves a varied range of customers, including both domestic and international travelers, with its extensive route network that spans multiple regions. In a time when digital channels are the primary means of connection, Ethiopian Airlines' digital marketing strategy's efficacy becomes a focus of analysis.

The understanding of the diverse effects that digital marketing can have on an airline's Customer base serves as the driving force behind this study. Effective digital tactics are essential for increasing brand visibility, optimizing client acquisition, and building long-lasting relationships, according to previous studies (Chaffey, 2017 as referenced by Dejen,

2019). But applying these ideas to the airline industry—and Ethiopian Airlines in particular—requires a careful investigation to fully grasp the special opportunities and difficulties that exist in this setting.

Insights from (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010a) further emphasize how crucial it is to recognize and address the unique traits of the target market when developing marketing strategy. Building brand credibility, influencing customer decision-making, and spreading information are all made possible by digital marketing, which is especially important in Ethiopia, where investor awareness of the stock market is rather low (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010a).

The purpose of this study is to add to the body of knowledge by focusing on the effect that Ethiopian Airlines' digital marketing has had on growing its Customer base. The study aims to provide actionable insights for the optimization of digital marketing in the aviation industry by closely examining how well digital initiatives align with customer preferences, assessing the effectiveness of customer acquisition strategies, and examining competitive positioning in the digital landscape.

To put it briefly, the study of how digital marketing affects Ethiopian Airlines' Customer base fills a significant vacuum in the literature and has application for the airline's strategic planning and ability to survive in an increasingly digitalized aviation landscape.

Understanding consumer behavior can be achieved through customer relationship management (Swift, 2001). New communication technologies and digital marketing strategies have made it feasible to grow revenue, enhance customer loyalty, and draw in new clients. Digital platforms are being used to measure the success rates of businesses in all customer relationship management processes that should be implemented to improve customer satisfaction, sales revenues, campaign turnover rates, customer retention, and customer loyalty, as well as to lower service, operation, and marketing costs.

The active and reciprocal engagement between the brand and the customer has been facilitated by digital marketing (Varnali, 2010). Digital marketing uses web, mobile, and other new media channels to carry out commercial activities with the goal of promoting the brand. Other words for digital marketing include interactive marketing, online marketing, e-marketing, and web marketing (Altindal, n.d.).

According to Westerman et al. (2014), the foundation of digital transformation is the change of the customer experience. To get closer to the consumer, advertisers create a variety of direct, online, and experiential campaigns with the aid of digital technologies. Award-winning card layouts, digital tape ads, pay-as-you-go online, rich text ads, branded websites, viral ads, branded social networks, in-game ads (advergaming), interactive viral and entertainment ads, SMS texts, online blogs, text, e-mail, and mass media are some of the campaigns that fall under this category. The four stages of getting closer to the customer are as follows: talking to them is the first step; starting a conversation is the second; taking part in conversations and becoming an active customer is the third; and making the customer play the dual roles of both customer and brand advocate is the fourth. It's also important to highlight the fact that brands cannot control this platform, which offers them limitless freedom in terms of digital marketing and lets them communicate with customers without regard to physical space. As such, brands must exercise extreme caution when it comes to the risks associated with this arrangement.

## **2.2 Consumer Behaviour**

The four Ps of the marketing mix, according to well-known marketer E. Jerome McCarthy in 1960, are product, price, distribution, and promotion. Product management-related activities and procedures are summed up in the marketing mix. Robert F. Lauterborn claimed in the 1990s that the 4P era was coming to an end and that the 4C of marketing—consisting of Cost, Convenience, Communication, and Consumer Needs and Wants—was the new model. (Leino, 2016) It is said that segmentation, targeting, and positioning should come before 4P and that the concept of "Product" should be abandoned in favor of the "customer" concept. According to Erragcha and Romdhane (2014b), marketing is therefore not viewed as a tactical element to join the strategic union that creates the foundation for modern marketing. Only fifteen to twenty years ago, businesses used entirely different marketing tools, like direct mail, fax machines, print media, radio, television, and street advertising. The number of marketing channels skyrocketed in the middle of 2010 as a result of technological advancements and digitization.

Thanks to technology-driven tools and tactics, businesses are better equipped to identify and target certain client categories (Baardman et al., 2023). Marketing campaigns become more

relevant and effective, increasing consumer engagement and conversion rates (Noori & Al-Hashimy, 2022).

Product-oriented marketing knowledge has given way to customer-oriented, value-oriented, and finally virtual reality-oriented knowledge. The goal of marketing has changed over time, starting with product sales and progressing to client satisfaction and retention, and ultimately, building the future from the present. Companies used to view the market as a target population with physical demands, but as time went on, the market came to be recognized as fully conscious consumer communities that produce shared goods. In the past, firms focused their marketing strategies solely on product characteristics; however, in the present, they have begun to prioritize their vision, values, and aspirations. The marketing industry has entered a new phase known as marketing 4.0, where storytelling is crucial to success, human emotions are included, and customers are seen as sentient beings with souls, hearts, and emotions.

Concepts related to marketing and industry undergo constant change in tandem with the advancement of information technology and the Internet. The idea of marketing 4.0 has arisen as a result of these advancements and the growing integration of the industrial value chain. The power relationships between organizations, society, and customers have seen significant shifts in recent times. Research on digital marketing and e-marketing is growing as a result of marketing's parallel development with technology (Ertuğrul, 2018).

Thanks to the digital marketing revolution, businesses can now provide customized experiences based on customer preferences, behavior, and past interactions (Noori & Al-Hashimy, 2022). According to Shanahan et al. (2019), personalization can lead to improved brand perception, stronger client interactions, and increased consumer loyalty.

By using technology and providing helpful material, businesses can engage customers across a range of digital touchpoints (de Oliveira Santini et al., 2020). Brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth are increased when customers are actively involved with a brand.

Thanks to the revolution in digital marketing, businesses can differentiate themselves from competitors by providing unique and innovative digital experiences (Basimakopoulou et al., 2022). Companies that leverage technology well can rise to the top of their industries and obtain a competitive edge (Noori & Al-Hashimy, 2022).

**Table 3:** Ethiopian in figures, 2012-2023.

Parameters	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Aircraft	58	66	76	77	87	108	116	126	130	146	154
Destination	73	82	84	88	95	113	121	127	127	133	136
Passenger Number	5,224,717	5,918,364	6,353,059	7,595,057	8,761,101	10,631,866	12,140,297	9,660,129	5,779,033	8,680,301	13.88 Million
Cargo Tonnage	174,446	186,336	236,772	266,223	338,646	400,339	431,859	525,374	757,002	767,848	713,875
Revenue in USD '000	2,079,202	2,399,031	2,418,121	2,531,461	2,658,349	3,344,805	3,908,880	3,749,002	3,513,567	5,051,479	6.13 Billion
Profit in USD	110,931,687	162,112,536	172,661,302	284,982,557	234,850,163	207,256,806	260,087,000	183,327,000	493,500,000	942,459,496	
Employees	7,390	8,066	8,977	10,227	11,284	12,944	13,958	14,104	14,736	17,000	Over 17,000
Graduate Trainees	1,010	1,126	773	1,144	1,463	980	1,848	960	434	430	807
ASK '000	25,728,092	30,169,529	32,398,720	39,910,011	45,163,539	53,067,290	60,090,196	49,410,867	35,309,115	42,861,011	64,498,706

### 2.2.1 Customer Acquisition

Every business faces problems when it comes to acquiring new customers. A company's attempt to reach as many members of its target audience as possible through the implementation of a set of marketing activities is one of the reasons behind this. Companies are using more digital marketing methods to acquire customers as a result of increased competition and the requirement for personnel upskilling. It makes it possible to reach out to customers quickly, present products or services more effectively, gather user input quickly, and do reliable analysis.

In order to successfully acquire new customers, a business needs to employ a variety of marketing strategies. She stresses the value of social media marketing (SMM) as a way to communicate with the target audience on social media. In addition, the researcher thinks that one of the biggest problems facing digital marketing today is the dearth of trained experts with a grasp of cutting-edge technologies and consumer psychology.

It might be difficult to draw customers in with a product that is both high-quality and reasonably priced in the face of growing competition. It is critical to pinpoint the precise benefits that are required exclusively for a specific consumer category in order to give the customer the option to select this product. As a result, modern marketing focuses on coming up with fresh approaches to draw in clients in addition to highlighting the advantages of the product. The typical client is not interested in or unable to use traditional channels to learn about a product or service as virtual space becomes an increasingly important aspect of our life.

### **2.2.2 Customer Retention**

For businesses looking to build long-lasting relationships with their customers, customer happiness is essential. It is measured by comparing actual performance and service quality to customer expectations (Caruana, 2002). Comparing expectations and performance is how the Expectancy Disconfirmation Model determines satisfaction (Van Ryzin, 2013). Customer satisfaction results from performance that meets or beyond expectations, which supports brand loyalty, profitability, business success, and repeat business (Diez-Martin et al., 2019).

Positive intents and attitudes are influenced by satisfaction, which is a reflection of satisfying purchasing experiences that arise from contrasting expectations with available options. When perceived performance is higher than expected and satisfaction results, this is known as positive confirmation (Royal et al., 2014). On the other hand, negative confirmation happens when one feels that one's performance is inadequate, which results in discontent. Customers' reactions to a product and feelings resulting from performance that falls short of expectations are measured by researchers as customer satisfaction (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014). According to another definition, fair treatment plays a crucial role in fostering happiness that results from perceived justice and encourages reuse and repurchasing (Román, 2003). Customer loyalty, demonstrated by happy customers' recurring business, good word-of-mouth, and attention to the business, drives profitability.

### **2.2.3 Customer Loyalty**

The significance of customer loyalty as an intangible asset that influences a company's profitability has drawn the attention of academics and marketing specialists. There are differing definitions; some see it as an emotional bond that goes beyond business dealings (Uncles et al., 2003). Regardless of the circumstances, this loyalty spurs growth and improves

the company's chances. Oliver's approach, which distinguishes between active and passive loyalty, is extensively applied (Evanschitzky et al., 2012). Active loyalty is more significant in the current digital era, especially in light of online platforms. Academics are still fascinated by the consequences of loyalty and are working to identify causal factors and complex relationships (Ilyas et al., 2021).

Scholars emphasize the importance of comprehending the demands, influencing variables, attitudes, and purchasing behaviors of customers. Customer loyalty gives a competitive advantage and corporate success, as highlighted by Bowen and Chen (2001). As such, practitioners are urged to develop astute tactics for cultivating and maintaining loyalty.

#### **2.2.4 Purchase Intention**

Purchase intentions have been significantly impacted by the development of digital marketing and the rise in online sales. Consumer behavior, perception, and attitude all have an impact on the intricate process of purchase intention (Kim & Lennon, 2008). Purchase intention is directly impacted by variables including perceived value, price comparison, and quality (Peng et al., 2019). According to Mirabi et al. (2015), consumers tend to see low-cost products with subpar packaging and an unfamiliar brand as less reliable and hazardous.

Customers' motivation and goal to visit a website for product searches and purchases can be increased by having an aesthetically pleasing website with user-friendly online services and layout. Before the final buy assessment, there are several stages of purchase intention that are observed, impacted by factors like expertise, prior knowledge, personal interests, inclinations, persuasiveness, and the power to influence purchasing decisions (Hsu et al., 2013).

Purchasing goods and services is more pleasurable and fulfilling when done online with information seeking. It promotes return business, visits to the website, positive recommendations, and product evaluations for the items that are being advertised (Sohn & Kim, 2020). In the context of digital marketing, research by Dehghani & Tumer (2015) showed that branding had a major impact on purchase intention. Online product reviews are now a crucial resource for making well-informed purchasing selections as consumer patterns change.

### **2.2.5 Brand Image**

According to Crespi (1971), brand attitude consists of three components: action, belief, and overall assessment of positive and negative aspects. Companies, brands, products, likes, dislikes, emotions, and behavioral patterns are examples of objects (Kotler P., 1991). When making judgments about what to buy, people assess a brand, determine whether its features or benefits are positive or negative, and then form opinions about the brand. According to (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2013), brand attitudes can be utilized to communicate how much a person likes, dislikes, supports, or is dissatisfied with a brand. Though generally constant, brand attitudes are subject to shift throughout time. Consequently, one of the main objectives of corporate marketing communication initiatives is to determine ways to strengthen and improve consumers' perceptions of certain brands (Aaker & Keller, 1990).

The term "brand emotional attachment" describes the strong emotional bond that exists between a customer and a particular brand. This bond is created by the customer's intense passion, concern, and emotion (Thomson et al., 2005). Consumers' love, feelings, and bond with the brand form the foundation of their emotional attachment to it, and brand emotional attachment reflects the individual's view of the brand (Malär et al., 2011). According to (Smith & Park, 1992), there is an emotional bond between customers and brands as well as an increasing emotional relationship in the modern day (Tauber, 1981).

## **2.3 Digital Marketing Strategies**

Significant technology advancements including big data analytics, marketing automation, AI, machine learning, and CRM systems are examined in detail. These advancements set the stage for companies to revamp their marketing strategies and gain a competitive advantage in the digital realm. Real-world case studies are also reviewed to offer factual support and helpful insights into efficient implementation strategies. By examining these case studies, organizations can get insight from industry leaders who have effectively leveraged technology to enhance their digital marketing tactics (Figueiredo et al., 2021).

According to Kristen et al. (2021), it is imperative for enterprises to develop comprehensive digital marketing strategies that encompass an array of digital platforms, including social media, search engine optimization, content marketing, and mobile marketing. These strategies ought to satisfy both the organization's goals and the expectations of its customers.

In the airline industry, digital marketing has been crucial to satisfying consumer demands and enhancing customer relations. Would you wish to hear directly from your ultimate customer instead of via the narrow lenses of focus groups and surveys? This is made possible by social media. Do you want your customers to stick with your emerging brand? This is made possible via mobile computing. Would you like to provide a genuinely customized experience by improving your prediction skills? This potential is provided by customer analysis (Westerman et al., 2014).

It is well recognized that modern technologies improve marketing studies in addition to offering tailored products. Travel preferences of customers can be examined, and if a country is searched for, cheap or promotional flights to that nation can be offered to the client in a variety of ways. The implementations of digital marketing fall into the following categories: Web page marketing, search engine advertising, mobile applications, email marketing, social media marketing and social seating, content marketing, display advertising, and affiliate marketing.

Airlines utilize a variety of digital marketing techniques. The most popular kind of client relationship management is email marketing. By offering highly targeted advertising to clients who are willing to respond, airline firms can use customer relationship management technology to segment target audience lists. Detailed promos can be delivered by email mailings based on the customer's past purchases. Email marketing for airlines has a lot of variables. Customers are more likely to try their hardest to spend their vacation in warmer locations, for instance, in email advertising sent out during the winter (Chatterjee, 2022).

### **2.3.1 E-mail Marketing**

One of the best methods for attracting new clients, retaining current ones, building brand awareness, promoting products, sharing campaigns, learning more about the client through forms filled out, and communicating campaigns is email marketing. Even while more than 92% of emails were utilized for marketing in 2010, social networks were more and more popular, direct messaging programs were used extensively, and the amount of unsolicited messages also climbed. With the advent of mobile devices, email marketing has once again become an efficient means of communication and advertisement. The company's website receives more clicks when its customers receive e-newsletters, campaigns, and email incentives. Consequently, the intended group receives the appropriate message at a minimal

cost, and since customer information is collected, it is simple to measure the feedback. (Mestçi, 2017).

The process of sending a commercial email to a potential customer database is known as email marketing. Given that it supports customer support or loyalty goals, this strategy is one of the most significant and effective digital marketing strategies because it is much less expensive than traditional direct marketing and offers opportunities for increased personalization of content and value creation. By using effective email marketing software, a business can maintain its database of subscribers' emails and filter it based on various criteria, including consumer preferences and aversions, consumption patterns, and frequency of purchases. It can also send newsletters to a list of subscribers instantly, regardless of size (Brătucu, G., Tălpău, A., 2014. - Google Scholar, n.d.).

Email marketing allows for the precise targeting of newsletters to the intended audience (subset of subscribers) and provides rapid feedback on the effectiveness and performance of the campaign. A company can track a variety of metrics, including sales, conversion rates, click-through rates on images and animations, message open rates, click-through rates by message categories or themes, number of clicks on the unsubscribe link and date, and more.

### **2.3.2 Social Media Marketing**

In order to promote, sell, and provide customer support, social media marketers use blogs, wikis, online communities, social networks, and other collaborative media (Taştepe et al., 2020). Businesses can increase client interaction by utilizing more media platforms, like WhatsApp, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Tiktok, and LinkedIn. Businesses may use social media to sell their products to a larger audience, find out what customers think of their businesses, and raise brand awareness. The freedom of consumers to openly share ideas and experiences in social media marketing does, however, come with risks. It is crucial for businesses to handle follow-up, content, services, and feedback in a professional manner because this platform requires more oversight and management than other conventional marketing channels.

Social media marketing makes use of material that is posted on social media platforms to sell items, build brand awareness, drive visitors to websites, and safeguard a company's online image. This tactic basically entails using social media platforms to target business pages or

websites that employ it. You can purchase advertisements on these platforms, set up a profile specifically for your company, and write promotional messages to expand your following. In addition to posting their own content on a regular basis, brands often work with digital influencers—third parties whom audiences trust and who help them develop brand loyalty. The experience that consumers get from digital platforms is the essence of social media marketing (Benartzi and Lehrer, 2015).

Businesses and organizations are focusing on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram in order to reach the millions of consumers who use them. The majority of these platforms have links on their websites that lead to their page or the page featuring the goods or services they offer, drawing a lot of traffic. Similarly, for a business to succeed on social media, its marketers need to have a thorough understanding of its target demographic. This includes knowing the platforms they use and the kinds of material they enjoy. Furthermore, as social media trends change frequently and being up to date is the same as having a noticeable and recognizable brand, it is critical to be aware of the most recent developments in this field. Businesses have additional opportunities as customers spend more time on social media to connect with them.

By creating connections with other people, social networks aim to foster a greater sense of community and business. These platforms often include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Tiktok, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Snapchat, and more specialized ones. Without the connected groups that these digital platforms foster, interpersonal connections are unlikely. Members might be able to get in touch with any other member, depending on the social media platform and account connection requirements (Li et al., 2021).

Social media marketing provides a focused method of establishing connections with partners and customers. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, WhatsApp, Snapchat, and LinkedIn are just a few of the platforms that target distinct demographics. Since visual material is important on all platforms, content development should take into account the social media channels of choice.

Facebook: With more than 2.9 billion users, Facebook is still the industry leader in social media. Although its primary user base is older, its many features—such as Groups,

Marketplace, and Live video—make it useful for a range of purposes. But worries about data leaks and privacy continue.

**Instagram:** With over 2 billion people sharing images, videos, and stories, Instagram is a paradise for visual storytellers. To target interested audiences, brands take use of its influencer marketing potential and variety of ad forms. Negativity, though, might result from the pressure to provide "perfect" content.

**Twitter:** Twitter is presently rebranding as X. Twitter, the hub for real-time news and opinion, is most known for its quick-witted, character-limited format. With 396 million active users, it facilitates conversations on popular topics and links people with thought leaders. Negativity and false information, however, can be common.

**YouTube:** With over 2 billion monthly viewers, YouTube is the preferred medium for video content. In order to attract a large audience, companies use sponsored content and adverts, while creators post humorous skits, instructional videos, and vlogs. Navigating copyright concerns and handling potentially offensive content are still difficult tasks, though.

**TikTok:** Primarily targeting Generation Z, TikTok has amassed over 1 billion users, making it the leader in short-form video content. The most popular things are humorous trends, catchy dances, and informative bits. Although brands recognize its creative potential, worries about user privacy and data security still exist.

**LinkedIn:** Over 830 million people use LinkedIn, the professional networking paradise, to find jobs, advance their skills, and gain industry insights. Companies utilize it for marketing, hiring, and thought leadership. Its formality, meanwhile, may restrict an individual's biological reach.

**WhatsApp:** Enterprises investigate the customer service and marketing potential of the messaging behemoth, WhatsApp, which has over 2 billion users who enjoy private, safe contact with individuals and groups. Scams and false information are a worry, though.

**Snapchat:** Started out as a visual messaging service, it has developed into a platform that combines multimedia communications with content platforms. More than 150 million people use Snapchat every month to communicate brief films and images that vanish once the

recipient views them. Via various sponsorships and ad placements, advertisers on Snapchat can connect with its user base.

### **2.3.3 Search Engine Optimization**

The website is viewed as an open store that operates efficiently around-the-clock and is being utilized as a tool for company. It's a platform made specifically for business marketing and advertising. Customers' preferences are crucial, therefore having an easy-to-use website with clear menus, an effective design, pleasing content that is updated frequently, and easy-to-download websites—like an effective web page marketing—is important. Easy communication and interactive internet marketing also depend on the caliber of the goods and services offered on the website and their alignment with the target market (Mestçi, 2017).

This tactic, known as search engine optimization (SEO), is a free means of promoting a company in naturally occurring or organic search results. It works by raising a website's page rank in search engines like Google, Bing, or others. In an Internet search, it entails making a specific webpage appear before other pages. Search engines update their algorithms frequently to ensure that only relevant results show up (Khan and Siddiqui, 2013). Search engine optimization software now has to comprehend what kinds of information are displayed and how to rank them because search engine optimization pages have seen several changes in recent years. For instance, Google works hard to prevent algorithmic manipulation and efficiently eliminates or filters out particular websites that don't belong in the top rankings.

In order for a search engine to determine what is on a page and display it as a result for a specific search, search engine optimization (SEO) not only entails improving the quality of the content on the page but also makes sure that there are enough relevant keywords and that the page itself is organized with subtitles, key points, and clear hyperlinks. It also verifies that the site's language code is optimized (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). More and more people are accessing information through gadgets; search engines gather user data and store it in databases to enhance user experience and deliver targeted content.

A well-designed website improves user experience and conversion rates by acting as a vital point of contact for prospective clients. Web design affects search engine visibility and ought to be in line with the goals of digital marketing.

On the page with the top and right paid ad spots, the search engines display the search results. Ads that are charged on clicks and displayed by keywords in these regions can be issued with Google AdWords, Yahoo Overture, and Microsoft AdCenter. The advertiser chooses when it will run, and real-time performance monitoring is available for commercials (Varnali et al., 2012).

### **2.3.4 Content Marketing**

The creation and distribution of diverse, high-quality digital content, including long-form content, is the main goal of the content marketing industry. Examples of this type of content include blogs, e-books, studies, forums, websites, webinars, videos, and materials for social media. The list is endless and depends on the audience for which the content is intended (Patruti Baltes, 2015).

The key component of a successful digital marketing strategy these days is content. For instance, all of the most recent modifications made to Google's algorithms suggest that, in terms of determining which search results to display, the quality and relevancy of the material are the most significant metrics. Additionally, it is critical that the material be tailored for various platforms because well-written content is shared, promoted, and can help a business become more well-known (Bala and Deepak Verma, 2018).

### **2.3.5 Mobile Marketing**

According to O'Kane (2013), mobile devices have become the primary means of accessing the Internet for a majority of customers, surpassing desktop and laptop PCs. Approximately 44% of all personal computing time is currently spent on mobile devices and tablets, which is double what it was in 2008 (Duncan et al, 2014). Roughly 50% of all Google searches are now conducted on mobile websites, according to one source (Graham, 2015). Smartphones now influence nearly \$600 billion of in-store transactions, up from \$159 billion in 2012, according to a recent Deloitte research (Haims, 2015).

Mobile devices, in contrast to laptops and desktop computers, are usually always with the consumer, always connected, and always on. Because of this feature, customers and retailers can constantly interact with one another's surroundings (Kaplan, 2012). Because the always-

with-the-consumer trait is so crucial, people who use smartphones and tablets frequently feel more stressed out when they aren't around to utilize them (Lindstrom, 2011).

Important success elements for mobile marketing are covered in two significant academic studies. According to a study by Huang (2012) that included a panel of experts in mobile marketing, out of 23 potential elements, consent, acceptance, usability, and value/profit were the four most crucial ones. An opt-in campaign's fundamental requirement is permission; customer benefits are related to acceptance; usability denotes simplicity of use; and value/profit quantifies the advantage to consumers.

The second study's foundation is a survey of the literature on mobile marketing success criteria. (Billore and Sadh, 2015) discovered that getting target consumers to accept mobile advertising is the largest obstacle for advertisers. The acceptance of mobile advertising has been found to be influenced by a number of characteristics, including value, amusement, informativeness, credibility, and interaction.

The term "mobile advertising" refers to marketing initiatives that use a non-fixed network to deliver advertisements to consumers through mobile networks, such as smartphones, personal digital assistants, etc. It is characterized as an excessive and frequent simultaneous interaction that exhibits features like user control, concurrency management, connectivity, gaming, and two-way communication. In the field of advertising today, mobile applications designed primarily for use on mobile phones have emerged as the most popular tools for facilitating direct communication between marketing managers and customers (Taştepe et al., 2020).

**Text Messaging (SMS and MMS):** SMS and MMS text messaging allow for direct customer communication. Concise and impactful messages are essential for establishing a fast connection with the audience.

**Display Advertising:** Advertisers utilize interactive advertisements, sidebars, banners, and videos to reroute viewers to websites or landing pages. They then display relevant adverts on third-party websites.

**Affiliate marketing:** By promoting goods and services, bloggers and social media influencers can earn commissions depending on how well they attract visitors and convert them into buyers.

Online ticket sales and booking provide airline companies with an additional avenue for client interaction. These procedures not only enhance the client experience but also give the business access to a sizable customer database that contains data for upcoming marketing initiatives. Mobile applications are the primary medium via which mobile marketing is exhibited. It has been noted that using these applications to conduct transactions like online check-in, booking, and ticket searches can result in faster, more convenient transactions and a rise in consumer loyalty. Many airline firms are also criticized negatively for their usage of saved passenger information. Better experiences are what the airlines aim to deliver. The flight crew's access to some passenger data, such as allergies, preferences, and nationality, and nationality.

## **2.4. Technological Advancements in Digital Marketing**

The socioeconomic stages of humankind throughout history can be categorized as information society, industrial society, agricultural society, and primitive society (Betül Garda et al., 2016). A completely new period known as the "Information Age" took over in the late 20th century, replacing the "Industrial Revolution" that signaled the shift in the late 19th century. A knowledge base is the center of the modern economic system (Toffler, A. & Toffler, H., 1995). Thanks to new information systems and information technologies, humanity is undergoing a very rapid transition during this era known as the "information age." Humanity must deal with significant social unrest and the most innovative restructuring in recorded history under this situation (Toffler, A. & Toffler, H., 1995).

A successful transformation of digital marketing requires a staff with the technological know-how and understanding of the digital world (Sousa & Rocha, 2019). Organizations should invest in training courses, workshops, and certifications to upskill their personnel in fields including data analytics, artificial intelligence, content production, and digital strategy (Eden et al., 2018). By providing staff members with digital competency training, organizations can optimize the results of their digital marketing activities (Hussein et al., 2023).

## **2.5 Advantages Digital Marketing Brings For Customers.**

The rise of digital marketing has altered consumer purchasing behavior due to the rapid advancement of technology. People have benefited greatly from this, as it has provided them with numerous advantages. Here are a few of them:

- ❖ **Stay tuned with new products or services:** - Customers can remain informed approximately corporate news by utilizing advanced showcasing innovation. These days, a huge number of customers may utilize the web at whatever point they need, and companies are persistently upgrading data approximately their items or administrations.
- ❖ **Enhanced engagement:** - Through digital marketing, clients can take portion within the numerous trade operations. Clients can see around the company's site, perused up on the items or administrations, make buys online, and post reviews.
- ❖ **Clear information about the products or services:** - Customers can get careful data around the products or administrations through digital marketing. The data you get from a salesperson in a store contains a slight likelihood of being misconstrued. However, buyers may depend on the Web to supply them with intensive item data that will offer assistance them make educated judgments.
- ❖ **Easy comparison with others:** - The customer can benefit a lot because many companies are using digital marketing to promote their products or services. This means the customer can easily and inexpensively compare products or services from different companies. Customers can learn more information about products or services without going to multiple stores.
- ❖ **24/7 shopping:** - You can buy things on the internet anytime because it's always available. Digital marketing helps people to tell others about products or services they like. Using digital media makes it easy to tell people about the good things a product or service has.
- ❖ **Apparent Pricing:** - When a company uses online advertising to promote their products or services, they are very open and honest with customers about the prices. Sometimes the company may change the prices of their products or offer special lower prices.
- ❖ **Enables Instant Purchase:** - Traditional marketing means that customers pick where they want to go and then see ads before buying something. Digital marketing allows customers to buy things immediately.

## 2.6 Theoretical Foundation of The Study

### 2.6.1 Generational Theory

According to generation theory, a person's perspective is influenced by the era in which they were born. This implies that our conception of what is significant changes throughout time as

a result of our experiences, communities, families, and birthdate. (Jurkiewicz, 1998). According to the generational marketing hypothesis, persons who were born within a 20-year window of each other tend to share similar attitudes and behaviors as a result of shared early experiences. The way each generation engages and the online spaces where they can be easily accessed inform the application of generational theory to digital marketing. This hypothesis is useful for research because it enables businesses to identify comparable consumer groups and provide marketing materials that are effective for them.

### **2.6.2 Technology Acceptance Model**

(Davis, 1989) model helps us understand how people like and use technology which is the most relevant theory related to the thesis. The model says people will use new technology if they think it's useful and easy to use. Davis (1989) says that perceived usefulness is how much someone thinks a system will help them do better work, and perceived ease of use is how easy they think it will be to use that system. The idea is that people will use technology if it works well and helps them do what they need to do. Technology acceptance model has a problem because it doesn't consider why people use technology, like how much it costs or if it's something they need because of their environment.

### **2.6.3 Diffusion of Innovation Theory**

Innovation Diffusion Theoretically, new technologies are accepted in new ways and at different rates. Innovation is transferred via certain techniques and channels, claims diffusion of innovation (Rogers Everett, 1995). The diffusion process is when society's members become aware of something new, consider it, make a decision, put it into action, and then confirm if it was successful. This model demonstrates that as time passes, more and more people start using technology until it becomes common for most people. The diffusion of innovation idea says there are five different groups of people who adopt things: the first ones to try it out (innovators), the ones who try it soon after (early adopters), the ones who try it once it's more popular (early majority), the ones who try it very late (late majority), and the last ones to try it (laggards). People who come up with new ideas and are creative are the first ones to adjust to changes, while the ones who are slow to adapt are the last ones to do so. How smoothly a company adopts changes depends on the leader's opinion about them, the way the company is organized, and how open the company is to new things (Rogers Everett, 1995).

#### **2.6.4 Using Technology and Unified Acceptance Theory**

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology says that people will use technology if it works well and isn't too hard to use. This idea says that four things called effort, performance, social influence, and environment can affect whether people start using something new. (Alawadhi & Morris, 2008) did a research on using technology and unified acceptance theory and discovered that people's plans to do something depend on how much they think they need to work and how well they can perform. People think carefully about a lot of things before they start using new technology, like how much money it will cost them.

#### **2.6.5 Richness Theory**

Richness theory, often known as information richness theory, is a framework for evaluating the capacity of a communications medium to replicate the information conveyed through it. The idea was created in 1984 by Richard L. Daft and Robert H. Lengel, according to (Asemah & Gambo, 2016), and it is used to rank and assess the richness of specific communication channels, such as phone conversations, video conferencing, and emails. For instance, a phone conversation is a less rich communication medium than video conferencing since it cannot replicate visible social cues like gestures. However, actions can be shown through online video conversations somewhat. The theory says that when we use fancy media, it's harder to understand and there may be more than one possible meaning. The idea is that different types of media affect the choices people make for their devices. "The way information is given can depend on things like how quickly feedback is received, how many ways there are to receive it, how personal the source is, and how easy the language is to understand." Obijiofor and Hanuch were mentioned by Asemah in a paper published in 2015 on page 157. This theory labels media as either "basic" or "advanced" based on how well they help us communicate and understand each other. When we talk, it's important to understand each other as fast as possible. This is better than when we have to explain things for a long time before someone gets it. A good conversation should be able to explain things clearly, even if the people talking don't have the same background knowledge. When we decide how to communicate something, one reason is to make sure the message is clear and easy to understand. The idea is important to the study because people like to use communication methods that they like and understand when they're looking for entertainment. Most people like social media because they can use it in different ways and it

allows them to interact with others. So, small business owners can use them to tell their customers about their brands and make good connections with them.

## **2.7 Empirical Review**

### **2.7.1 Digital Marketing In Airlines Industry**

Several studies demonstrate how crucial digital marketing is becoming for airlines to connect and interact with their Customer base. Research (Belobaba, 2016) highlights how airlines may improve their online visibility and customer interaction by leveraging digital channels like social media, email marketing, and search engine optimization (SEO). In a similar vein, a study conducted by U. Gretzel et al. (2015) emphasizes the importance of digital marketing in helping airlines efficiently target particular client segments and tailor marketing messages.

Digital marketing campaigns appear to improve the profitability and business performance of airlines, according to empirical data. As an illustration, a case study by Al-Emadi et al. (2019) shows how Qatar Airways used digital marketing techniques to raise online bookings, customer loyalty, and brand awareness. Likewise, studies conducted by Schuster et al. (2020) emphasize how digital marketing helps airlines increase revenue and enhance customer happiness.

Airlines may also face risks and difficulties from digital marketing, mainly in the areas of data privacy, cybersecurity, and online reputation management. The significance of trust and transparency in digital marketing interactions between airlines and customers is examined in a study conducted by Buhalis and Foerste (n.d.). In a similar vein, a research by U. Gretzel et al. (2015) emphasizes how important it is for airlines to manage privacy issues and foster customer confidence in their digital marketing campaigns.

Research articles, case studies, and empirical studies all highlight how important digital marketing is to the airline industry's ability to improve consumer engagement, boost corporate performance, and adjust to changing market conditions. To get the most out of their digital marketing tactics, airlines must also solve issues with data protection, cybersecurity, and trust. To investigate new developments and industry best practices in digital marketing for airlines, more investigation is required.

## 2.7.2 Digital Marketing Strategies

Research on the effectiveness of specific digital marketing strategies employed by airlines globally reveals several key findings. Studies show that personalized marketing campaigns tailored to individual preferences and behaviors can significantly enhance customer engagement and loyalty. (Wang, 2018) found that airlines using data-driven personalization techniques in their digital marketing efforts experienced higher click-through rates and conversion rates compared to generic campaigns.

Social media marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for airlines to connect with customers, build brand awareness, and drive sales. A study by (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010b) highlights the importance of engaging content, customer interactions, and influencer partnerships in maximizing the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies for airlines.

Search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine marketing (SEM) play a crucial role in enhancing airlines' online visibility and driving website traffic. Research by (Liu et al., 2019) demonstrates that airlines implementing SEO best practices and targeted SEM campaigns achieve higher rankings in search engine results pages (SERPs) and attract more qualified leads.

Mobile marketing strategies, such as mobile apps, push notifications, and location-based services, enable airlines to deliver personalized and contextually relevant experiences to travellers. A case study on the success of the British Airways mobile app by (Yeoman et al., 2014) illustrates how mobile technology enhances customer convenience, engagement, and loyalty throughout the travel journey.

Despite the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies, airlines face several challenges in leveraging digital channels to engage customers. One of the primary challenges is maintaining a consistent brand presence and message across multiple digital touchpoints. (Balakrishnan et al., 2018) highlights the importance of aligning digital marketing efforts with overall brand positioning and customer experience strategies to avoid brand dilution and confusion.

Airlines must contend with privacy concerns, data security risks, and regulatory compliance issues in their digital marketing endeavours. A study by (Gretzel et al., 2015) emphasizes the

need for airlines to prioritize data protection, transparency, and consumer trust in their digital marketing practices to mitigate potential reputational damage and legal liabilities.

While specific digital marketing strategies such as personalized marketing, social media marketing, SEO/SEM, and mobile marketing have proven effective for airlines in engaging customers and driving business outcomes, they also face challenges related to brand consistency, privacy, and data security. By addressing these challenges and capitalizing on emerging opportunities in the digital landscape, airlines can maximize the impact of their digital marketing efforts and enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

### **2.7.3 Ethiopian Studies On Adopting Digital Marketing**

(Tadele, 2019) investigated the impact of digital marketing on Coca-Cola product purchases. The study employed statistical analysis and included a survey of 355 participants to gather data. This study demonstrates how online advertisements—such as those seen on websites and social media—have the power to influence consumer behavior. The most effective way to get people to like something is through online advertisements that you see on websites; social media and other websites can also do this, but not as well.

In order to assess how SMEs in Bole's sub-city administration use internet marketing, (Tamiru, 2018) also carried out a study. Primary techniques for the study included a descriptive research design, and questionnaires, interviews, and observations were employed in a qualitative manner to collect primary data. Nine important business sectors where SMEs are concentrated have been highlighted by the Bole sub city council. Bole Sub City had a total population of 18,401, of which 357 samples were drawn using population proportionate sampling and stratification. The collected data have been evaluated using percentages and frequencies. The study found that just 38% of respondents used web marketing as a tactic. This shows that SMEs do not generally embrace online marketing for both commercial and promotional purposes.

### **2.7.4 Relation Between Email Marketing And Customer Base**

The study looked at how ShopRite Shopping Mall in Akure, Ondo State used digital marketing to (L., Adepoju, & Akinyomi, 2022). Digital marketing tools and sales performance of Shoprite, shopping mall Akure, Ondo state Nigeria improve their customer

base. The result shows that ShopRite Mall in Akure, Ondo State, mostly uses email and social media to promote their business online. The results indicate that the shop likes using digital marketing. This is because it's easier to see how it's working, more people can see it, it's cheaper, and it makes it easier for customers to communicate with the mall. The T-test found that using digital marketing is really important for getting more customers and making more money. It helps create a bigger share of the market, makes sales go up every day, saves money on advertising, and makes more profits. It also helps businesses get more attention online and make more sales there too. The study found that using social media and email to market products can greatly improve sales performance. A lot of competition and lying are the main things that stop people from using online markets. The research found that digital marketing can help increase company revenue, and it suggests having reliable internet access to make it work well. The research showed that using digital marketing helps Shoprite Alagbaka Akure in Ondo State sell more stuff for the customers. The survey shows that ShopRite sellers use email marketing a lot and it greatly affects how much they sell (L., Adepoju, & Akinyomi, 2022).

#### **2.7.5 Relation Between Social Media Marketing And Customer Base**

(Mulunda, 2021) investigated whether using social media marketing helped SMEs clothing businesses in Nairobi County increase their sales. The study used two theories, the Technology Acceptance Model and Social Network Theory, to understand the things being studied. The research looked at 210 small businesses in Nairobi County that make clothes, shoes, and accessories for the body. They used a type of study where they just observed and described what was happening at that moment. The research looked at all 210 fashion companies that were listed using a method called "census." We collected information directly from people using organized surveys. SPSS version 25 software was used to analyze data. The researchers used math to check their ideas in the study. A study showed that when small and medium businesses in Nairobi County's clothing industry use social media to advertise, they expand their customer base. The study recommends that fashion companies use good tools on social media to advertise well and increase sales. To make customers like fashion businesses more and get better service, they need to come up with better marketing strategies. To get the advantages of using social media for fashion businesses, like spending less money and connecting better with customers, they need to share useful and upto-date information on their social media pages to reach their customers (Mulunda, 2021).

### **2.7.6 Relation Between SEO And Customer Base**

(Poturak and others, 2022). They produced a study to examine the impact of SEO on the revenue generated by a Sarajevo-based private institution. Is utilizing search engine optimization (SEO) able to improve a company's performance? The hypothesis under investigation is if SEO can increase IBU's consumer base. We are examining data that was gathered directly from a research conducted in collaboration with the head of the IBU's marketing and public relations department. We conduct our studies in this manner. A sample of Google Analytics data examines visitor frequency, duration of engagement, search engine terms used, and position in search results. Data analysis is aided by SEO technologies.

The number of enrolled students is the main focus of the IBU CRM system, which computes the business's performance. According to the survey, businesses benefit more when their website ranks higher in Google search results. These positive outcomes include an increase in website visitors, longer website stays, more website interest, and an increase in student sign-ups. This indicates that the company is gaining clients every year. In addition to helping scholars and students better understand how SEO functions in company searches, this will also have a positive small- and large-scale economic impact on the government. This will benefit those who enjoy online advertising and those who are skilled at increasing the visibility of websites on search engines (Poturak et al., 2022).

### **2.7.7 Relation Between Content Marketing And Customer Base**

The research has investigated the role of content marketing on the customer engagement, trust and loyalty in the private hospitals of Saudi Arabia. Content marketing has the positive impact on customers' loyalty, trust and customer engagement. However, it should be noted that content marketing has a relatively stronger impact on the loyalty compared to trust and customer engagement. In addition, there is highest correlation between content marketing and loyalty in testing the hypothesis. These findings suggest that content marketing strategies have greater influence on building a loyal customers' base with compare to the building trust and the fostering customer engagement. In turn, it may lead to a positive word of mouth and repeated visits of hospital The role of content marketing in enhancing customer loyalty: an empirical study on private hospitals in Saudi Arabia (Ajina, 2019).

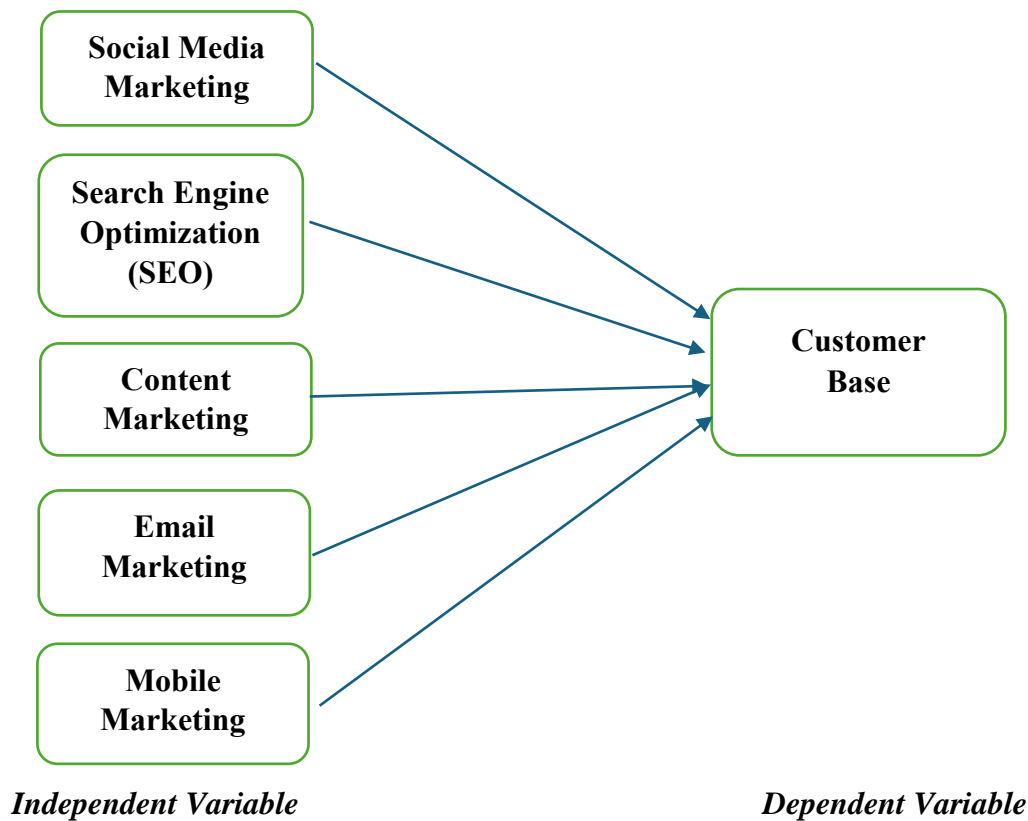
### **2.7.8 Relation Between Mobile Marketing And Customer Base**

The study aimed at identifying the impact of mobile marketing on customer loyalty in Jordan through the investment of mobile marketing and employing it to serve the needs of customers, which is reflected on the achievement of loyalty of customer in the face of this competitive sector.

Based on the study results, it is clear that the mobile device adoption rates are increasing at an unbelievable rate indicating the importance of tailoring marketing efforts. People spend more time on mobile devices, so mobile marketing and mobile commerce go hand-in-hand because mobile technology gives customers the chance to shop and compare while they walk down the store. Mobile marketing explained by thus dimensions and the result found that interactivity, personalisation, convenience had a significant and positive effect on customer loyalty but localisation insignificant effect on customer loyalty (Al-Hawary & Obiadat, 2021).

## **2.8 Conceptual Framework**

(Creswell, 2009) a conceptual framework provides a structure for organizing and interpreting the variables under investigation, offering a lens through which to understand the relationships between them. In this study, the conceptual framework draws on relevant theories and concepts from the fields of digital marketing. The conceptual framework for this study will illustrate the perceived link between the independent variables (Social media marketing, Search engine optimization, Content marketing, Email marketing and Mobile marketing ) and the dependent variable (Customer Base).



**Figure 1:** The Conceptual framework of the study

*(Source: Olonde 2017 and Equinet academy's Digital Marketing Strategy 2017)*

## 2.9 Research Hypotheses

The study will characterize by research hypotheses that specify the current practice of the variables and Effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable being studied. Hypothetical backgrounds related to the Effect of digital marketing on Customer acquisition, Retention, loyalty and brand image will developed in the following hypothetical statements.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Social Media Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Search Engine Optimization has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Content Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Email Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.

**H<sub>5</sub>:** Mobile Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.

# Unit Three

## 3. Research Design and Methodology

### 3.1. Introduction

The study's research design, data sources, population, sample, and sampling methodologies, data collection tools, data gathering processes, data analysis and interpretation techniques, and ethical issues are all covered in this chapter.

### 3.2 Research Approach

While the qualitative technique was concerned with the subjective evaluation of attitudes, opinions, and behavior, the quantitative method, according to Kothari (2004), entails the collection of data in quantitative form that can be submitted to rigorous quantitative analysis in a formal and rigid fashion. Zikmund et al. (2009) contrast these two popular approaches and also summarise their differences as follows: quantitative methods focus a significant amount of effort on measuring concepts using scales that either directly or indirectly yield numerical values. While qualitative researchers are more interested in watching, listening, and understanding, the numerical data can then be used in statistical calculations and hypothesis testing. These arguments led to the criticism that qualitative research is more subjective and that its conclusions depend on the researcher. For these reasons, it was evident that the quantitative approach was used for this study in order to achieve objectivity in testing hypotheses and control subjective influence from the result.

### 3.3 Research Design

In light of the digital marketing strategies used by the airline sector, the study's goal is to ascertain "The effect of digital marketing on expanding the customer base of Ethiopian Airlines". In order to collect and evaluate empirical data about the effects of digital marketing campaigns on Ethiopian Airlines' customer base, the study used a quantitative research design.

In order to accomplish the goals of the study and gather and analyze data for the proposed framework, the current research will apply and interest in conducting a quantitative study-based method. Due to its many advantages for academics, including ease of use and minimal difficulty in reaching the target sample, this kind of research approach has been popular in

contemporary studies (Saunders, et al., 2009). The legitimate justifications offered by the researchers who employed these kinds of studies validated the prevalent research patterns in the social science domains. However, in order to carry out this study and gather the necessary data from the target population—that is, Ethiopian Airlines customers—the researcher was choose the most suitable and advantageous research methodology.

According to Saunders and colleagues (2009), survey designs are superior to other designs because they make it possible to gather a substantial amount of data from a sizable population in a very cost-effective manner. Furthermore, survey design makes it possible to gather quantitative data that can be statistically analyzed using inferential statistics. Similar to that, the goal of this study's research was to obtain the best possible demographic data while also utilizing inferential statistics. These factors made the survey design suitable for this study. Furthermore, as mentioned by Saunders, et al. (2009), it was suitable to classify this research as survey research because it examines the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

Research design, according to Sekaran & Bougie (2013), outlines the general framework or plan of the study and directs the investigator in methodically examining the research problem. The research design of this study incorporates components of both explanatory and descriptive research.

The methodical collection and presentation of data to characterize phenomena and traits of interest is known as descriptive research. Descriptive research was used in this thesis to give a thorough examination of the state of digital marketing strategies today and how they affect Ethiopian Airlines' Customer base. The study intended to describe the major digital marketing initiatives carried out by the airline and their effects on consumer engagement levels and loyalty through the use of surveys and statistical analysis.

Conversely, explanatory research aims to demonstrate causal connections between variables and provide an explanation for the occurrence of specific occurrences. Explanatory research was used in this thesis to examine the fundamental mechanisms that underpin the relationship between Ethiopian Airlines' customer base and its digital marketing initiatives. Regression analysis is one of the statistical tools used in this study to determine how much digital marketing influences client acquisition, retention, and loyalty.

## 3.4 Target Population and Sampling

### 3.4.1 Target Population

The study's target demographic consisted of travellers on Ethiopian airlines that fly in both business and economy classes to 135 foreign destinations out of and through Addis Ababa Ethiopia Bole International.

### 3.4.2 Sampling Technique

A key factor in establishing the representativeness and generalizability of study results is sample design. (Hair, et al., 2019) state that choosing individuals or units from the population of interest to include in the research study is included in the sample design. To guarantee sufficient representation of Ethiopian Airlines customers across several demographic segments, including age, gender, income level, and travel frequency, the sample design for this thesis was utilized a random sampling technique. The study employed basic random sampling technique based on these demographic data in order to obtain a full understanding of the attitudes and actions of customers toward the airline's digital marketing campaigns. In order to estimate the sample size, statistical factors like the intended level of precision and confidence interval, among other statistical factors, as well as real-world data collection limitations, were taken into account when determining the sample size. The goal of the thesis is to improve the validity and reliability of the study's conclusions through a well-constructed sample.

### 3.4.3 Sample Size

The number of objects that must be chosen from the population to make up a sample is referred to as the sample size. According to Kothari's (2004) recommendations, the ideal sample size is one that satisfies the needs of efficiency, representativeness, dependability, and flexibility. It shouldn't be either extremely large or small. As a result, the study was selected the best possible sample from the entire population under investigation—that is, Ethiopian Airlines customers. The following parameter was used to determine the sample size.

$$n = \frac{z^2 \times p \times q}{e^2}$$

Where,

n= size of sample

z= standard variation at the given confidence interval

p= percentage of success

q= Percentage of failure

e= sampling errors

As such, the computation required consideration of an estimate of the probability of success (Kothari, 2004). Accordingly, the decision was made based on a 95% confidence interval (z), 5% sampling error (e), and the most common proportion of success (p), which was 50%. As a result, 384 individuals were included in the study's sample.

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5(1 - 0.5)}{0.05^2} = 384.16 \quad n = 384$$

Using the previously indicated methodology, 384 people were made up the study's sample. Since the precise number of customers in each continent was unknown, the researcher employed a basic random sample technique.

### **3.5 Time Horizon**

Establishing the time horizon was essential to defining the study's duration and scope. According to (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013), the temporal horizon is the duration of the research project, including the start and end of data collection and analysis. Within this framework, the thesis's time horizon spans from the beginning of data collecting to the conclusion of data processing and interpretation. The time horizon's length was determined by the resources that are available, the data that can be accessed, and the project's total completion date. The study guarantees that the research objectives are accomplished within the designated time frame by defining a well-defined time horizon, which in turn promotes the timely and pertinent development of insights. Data was collected within the period of 6th-12th June 2024 at Ethiopian international airport terminal.

### **3.6 Source of Data Collection**

According to Hair et al. (2019), data collection entails employing the proper Dataprocedures to obtain information from primary or secondary sources that is pertinent to the study objectives. Both primary and secondary sources of information will be used in this thesis.

Structured surveys that are given to Ethiopian Airlines customers who have interacted with the airline's digital marketing platforms was used to gather primary data. Customers' opinions, attitudes, and behaviors on Ethiopian Airlines' digital marketing initiatives and how

they affect customer engagement and loyalty was captured via the survey instrument. First-hand information on how well digital marketing is influencing the airline's client base was provided via the survey replies.

Secondary data on digital marketing in the airline business, and specifically Ethiopian Airlines, was gathered from published works, industry publications, and company papers. By adding more context and background information to the primary data gathered through surveys, this secondary data was supported the research. The thesis attempts to perform a thorough examination of the relationship between digital marketing and Ethiopian Airlines' customer base by merging primary and secondary data sources.

### **3.7 Data Collection Instrument**

The problem's nature, as well as the time and resources available, all had an impact on the methods that were used (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). All study participants were fill out a questionnaire, which were used by the researcher to gather primary data.

According to Cooper and Schindler (2006), a questionnaire was an effective research technique since it allowed the researcher to get respondent personal opinions. A research instrument, according to Sekaran & Bougie (2013), is a device or method used to gather data from study subjects. Customers of Ethiopian Airlines who have interacted with the airline's digital marketing channels through Questionnaire paper was the main subjects of this thesis's constructed survey questionnaire. Customers' opinions, attitudes, and behaviors on Ethiopian Airlines' digital marketing initiatives and how they affect customer engagement and loyalty were captured via the survey questionnaire. To measure important dimensions including awareness, satisfaction, intention to purchase, and likelihood of recommending the airline to others, the questionnaire contained both closed-ended and Likert-scale questions. The thesis was attempt to collect empirical data in a methodical manner by using a structured survey instrument.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Method**

The data in this study was analyzed using both inferential statistics, such as correlation and multiple linear regression analysis, and descriptive statistics, such as frequency, mean, and standard deviation. The users' personal data was examined using percentage, frequency, and cumulative percentage. Statistical techniques such as mean values and standard deviation were computed for every variable in the study. The Pearson Correlation approach was used to

statistically determine whether there is any relationship at all between the independent components and the dependent variable. Version 26 of the SPSS program was used by the researcher to examine the quantitative data. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to look at how the independent components affect the dependent variable.

$$y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4 + b_5x_5 + e$$

Where,

Y = Overall Digital Marketing

a = Y intercept/constant

b1 = the bet weight or regression coefficient of Email Marketing

b2 = the bet weight or regression coefficient of Social Media Marketing

b3 = the bet weight or regression coefficient of Search Engine Optimization

b4 = the bet weight or regression coefficient of Content Marketing

b5 = the bet weight or regression coefficient of Mobile Marketing

x1 = Email Marketing

x2 = Social Media Marketing

x3 = Search Engine Optimization

x4 = Content Marketing

x5 = Mobile Marketing

e = Sum of Residuals or error terms.

### **3.9 Validity and Reliability**

The validity and reliability of the research instruments are crucial for three main reasons: understanding the phenomena studied, achieving statistical significance in data analysis, and drawing meaningful conclusions from the data.

#### **3.9.1. Validity**

The structured questionnaire utilized for data collection underwent thorough verification and validation processes. Reputable scholars in the fields of finance, digital literacy, and customer engagement reviewed the questionnaire, providing valuable feedback and suggestions. Their input was instrumental in refining the survey items, enhancing clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research objectives. The selection of literature and theoretical frameworks was conducted meticulously, drawing upon established theories and concepts from reputable sources. Each variable, including Social Media Marketing, Search Engine Optimization, Content

Marketing, Email Marketing and Mobile Marketing has been rooted in relevant academic literature.

### **3.9.2. Reliability**

(Williamson, 2002) defines reliability as the consistency of research results when repeated. The reliability of the survey depends on obtaining high-quality responses and ensuring respondents understand the questionnaire. Sample questions and a scaling mechanism were used to achieve this. The survey design ensures high response rates and clear understanding by respondents. To ensure reliability, the instrument was standardized before 35 distribution. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the internal consistency of each construct, ensuring that the data collection method produces consistent results and that the raw data interpretation is transparent.

### **3.10 Ethical Consideration**

According to (Sekaran, 2006), the researcher adhered to strict ethical guidelines. Participation in the study was voluntary, and data collection was conducted with respondent consent. Participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, and their information was handled with utmost confidentiality. Anonymity was guaranteed throughout the study, and the data collected from respondents was not misrepresented or distorted in any manner.

# Unit Four

## 4. Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

### 4.1 Introduction

In order to accomplish the research goal, this chapter addresses the data presentation, analysis, and interpretation under each presentation. This chapter covers a number of topics, including data cleaning; reliability analysis scores of the instrument used in the study; results of tests of assumptions; mean and standard deviation for respondent demographic data and for independent and dependent variables; inferential analysis, which is used to examine relationships between variables and the effects of independent variables on dependent variables; and a summary of test hypotheses.

### 4.2 Data Cleaning

384 questionnaires were expected to be completed by the respondents based on the procedures outlined in the preceding chapter, and 375 were returned for analysis. For both descriptive statistics and inferential analysis, statistical software licensed for use is the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 20.

### 4.3 Reliability Analysis

As Kothari (2004) pointed out, reliable testing is a crucial component of sound measurement, and sound measurement itself requires sound measurement in order to be done well. Thus, reliability analysis was carried out on all instruments used in this research after full scale data collection in order to maintain instrument reliability and ensure that the data collection tools are producing consistent results; the Cronbach's coefficient alpha score was then presented as follows.

#### 4.3.1 Reliability Analysis on Digital Marketing Instruments

**Table 4:** Reliability Statistics on Digital Marketing Instrument

Reliability Statistics		
Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Email Marketing (EM)	.818	5
Social Media Marketing (SMM)	.814	5
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)	.853	5
Content Marketing (CM)	.824	5
Mobile Marketing (MM)	.847	5
Customer Base (CB)	.837	5
Overall Reliability	.929	30

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

The following table shows how each of the distinct digital marketing elements was put to the test in terms of how well it measured how much Ethiopian Airlines' customer base was growing as a result of digital marketing. With Cronbach's coefficient alpha scores of 0.818 for EM, 0.814 for SMM, 0.853 for SEO, 0.824 for CM, 0.847 for MM, 0.837 for CB, and 0.929 for total reliability analysis, they were therefore determined to be reliable. Scales with a coefficient Alpha between 0.70 and 0.80 are regarded as having "good" reliability, and scales with a coefficient Alpha between 0.80 and 0.95 are regarded as having "very good" reliability, according to Zikmund et al. (2009). Thus, we can infer from the test results above that the instrument was found to have an adequate Cronbach's coefficient alpha.

#### 4.4 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics on the respondents' demographic data, the extent of digital marketing tactics as of right now, and the size of their client base were shown and addressed in the sections that followed.

##### 4.4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

The demographic information in this part included the respondents' sex, age, educational background, reason for travel, whether or not they fly with Ethiopian Airlines, class of service they take, and tier of travel.

**Table 5:** Demographic Information of Respondents

Variable	Categories	Freq.	Per.	Valid Per.	Cum. Per.
Gender	Male	199	53.1%	53.1%	53.1%
	Female	176	46.9%	46.9%	100.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
Age of Respondents	25 years and below	16	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%
	26 – 35 years	125	33.3%	33.3%	37.6%
	36 – 45 years	138	36.8%	36.8%	74.8%
	Above 46 years	96	25.6%	25.6%	100.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
Educational Qualification	Below Diploma	7	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
	Diploma	22	5.9%	5.9%	7.8%
	1 <sup>st</sup> Degree	209	55.7%	55.7%	63.5%
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Degree and Above	137	36.5%	36.5%	100.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Purpose of your trip	Leisure/ Vacation	29	7.7%	7.7%	7.7%
	Business/Corporate	54	14.4%	14.4%	22.1%
	Personal business/trade	116	30.9%	30.9%	53.0%
	Visit of family and friends	105	28.0%	28.0%	81.0%
	Cargo Customer	71	18.9%	18.9%	100.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
Did you Travel with Ethiopian Airlines	Never	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	1 times	36	9.6%	9.6%	9.6%
	2 – 8 times	146	38.9%	38.9%	48.5%
	More than 8 times	193	51.5%	51.5%	100.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
Class of Service	Economy	179	47.7%	47.7%	47.7%
	Business	196	52.3%	52.3%	100.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
Tier Level	Platinum	12	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%
	Gold	29	7.7%	7.7%	10.9%
	Silver	102	27.2%	27.2%	38.1%
	Blue	106	28.3%	28.3%	66.4%
	No Tier	126	33.6%	33.6%	100.0%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

The bulk of responses, 199 (53.1%) male and 176 (46.9%) female are displayed in the above table. When it comes to age groupings, the largest proportion of responders (138, or 36.8%) are between the ages of 36 and 45. As a result, 125 (33.3%) of the responders fell within the 26–36 age range. Regarding this, it was noted that 70.1% of the people in the sample was between the ages of 26 and 45. This suggests that the bulk of respondents fell into the middle age range.

When we examine the respondents' educational backgrounds, we find that 209 (55.7%) had their first degree, followed by 137 (36.5%) who had their second degree or above. Thus, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents, or 346 (92.3%) of the sample respondents, had a first degree or above in academic pursuits. In light of this, a thorough analysis of Ethiopian Airlines' use of digital marketing to grow its client base was conducted. Consequently, as the above table illustrates, the majority of respondents (116, or 30.9%) who fell under this trip category traveled for personal business, while 105 (28.0%) traveled in order to see family and friends.

Conversely, the largest percentage of respondents - 193 (51.5%) - had flown with Ethiopian Airlines more than eight times, followed by 146 (38.9%) who had flown with the airline two to eight times. Consequently, it is reasonable to conclude that the majority of respondents, or 339 (90.4%) of the sample respondents, have taken more than two airline trips. Consequently, as the table illustrates, 196 (52.3%) of the respondents, or the majority, traveled in business class when it came to the service category, while 179 (47.7%) traveled in economy class.

Lastly in tier level in Ethiopian Airlines, 106 (28.3%) of the sample's respondents were at the blue level, and 126 (33.6%) of the sample's respondents were at the no tier travel level. Similarly, 102 individuals (27.2%) in the sample exhibited a silver level. Stated otherwise, 334 (89.1%) of the sample's respondents in Ethiopian Airlines were categorized as silver or below.

#### 4.4.2 Current Level of Digital Marketing

The participant's mean score was classified as low, average, or high by the researcher using the Kothari (2004) mean score assessment. Accordingly, on a five-point rating system, mean scores of less than 2.69 were classified as low, mean scores of 2.70 to 3.49 as average, and mean scores of more than 3.50 as high.

##### 4.4.2.1 Current Level of Email Marketing (EM)

**Table 6:** Descriptive Statistics on Email Marketing

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
EM1	375	1.00	5.00	2.9600	1.24144
EM2	375	1.00	5.00	3.0213	1.17440
EM3	375	1.00	5.00	3.2907	1.16697
EM4	375	1.00	5.00	3.2800	1.16500
EM5	375	1.00	5.00	3.0267	1.20797
EM	375	1.00	5.00	3.1157	.90686
Valid N (list wise)	375				

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

Ethiopian Airlines' entire EM application received a mean score of 3.12 and a standard deviation of 0.91, as indicated in the above table. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.29 and 1.17, respectively, email marketing from Ethiopian Airlines had the highest mean score when we looked at the individual EM components. This influence on my decision to go with them was therefore the result of their marketing. "I am satisfied with the frequency of emails

I receive from Ethiopian Airlines" had the second-highest mean score for the EM item, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.28 and 1.17, respectively. "I find the content of Ethiopian Airlines' emails personalized to my interests" received the third-highest mean score (mean and standard deviation: 3.03 and 1.21, respectively) for the EM item. Every item in EM has a higher score than the mean. Based on the respondents' perceptions, it can be determined that Ethiopian Airlines did not have any gaps in its email marketing practices.

#### 4.4.2.2. Current Level of Social Media Marketing (SMM)

**Table 7:** Descriptive Statistics on Social Media Marketing

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SMM1	375	1.00	5.00	3.4480	1.19797
SMM2	375	1.00	5.00	3.4107	1.15017
SMM3	375	1.00	5.00	3.4187	1.08867
SMM4	375	1.00	5.00	3.3840	1.18897
SMM5	375	1.00	5.00	3.4853	1.15586
SMM	375	1.00	5.00	3.4293	.87588
Valid N (list wise)	375				

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

Ethiopian Airlines' total SMM scored mean and SD of 3.43 and 0.88, respectively, as can be seen in the above table. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.48 and 1.16 for each of the individual SMM elements, the respondents' level of trust in the information supplied by Ethiopian Airlines on its social media platforms was greatest. "Ethiopian Airlines' social media pages provide timely updates and information" had the second-highest mean score among SMM elements, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.45 and 1.20, respectively. "I am likely to participate in promotions and contests by Ethiopian Airlines on social media" had the third-highest mean score among SMM items, with a mean and SD of 3.42 and 1.09, respectively. Every SMM item receives a higher score than the organization's average. Consequently, based on the respondents' perceptions, it can be said that Ethiopian Airlines' application and usage of social media marketing were flawless.

#### 4.4.2.3 Current Level of Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

**Table 8:** Descriptive Statistics on Search Engine Optimization

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SEO1	375	1.00	5.00	3.3387	1.15160
SEO2	375	1.00	5.00	3.3813	1.18645
SEO3	375	1.00	5.00	3.4533	1.19595
SEO4	375	1.00	5.00	3.3920	1.18296
SEO5	375	1.00	5.00	3.4347	1.13542
SEO	375	1.00	5.00	3.4000	.92938
Valid N (list wise)	375				

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

Table 8 shows Ethiopian Airlines' overall SEO score, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.40 and 0.93, respectively. Ethiopian Airlines has the greatest mean score (mean and standard deviation of 3.45 and 1.20, respectively) among the individual SEO components when it comes to increasing customers' faith in the airline's brand due to its visibility in search engine results. "Ethiopian Airlines' SEO efforts make it convenient for the customer to book flights online" received the second-highest mean score among SEO elements, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.44 and 1.14, respectively. "I find it easy to access information about Ethiopian Airlines through search engines" was the item with the third-highest mean score from SEO, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.39 and 1.18, respectively. Every SEO item has a higher rating than Ethiopian Airlines' average. Since the respondents' perceptions support this conclusion, it can be said that Ethiopian Airlines' use of search engine optimization was effective.

#### 4.4.2.4 Current Level of Content Marketing (CM)

**Table 9:** Descriptive Statistics on Content Marketing

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CM1	375	1.00	5.00	3.5493	1.06831
CM2	375	1.00	5.00	3.5253	1.05657
CM3	375	1.00	5.00	3.5333	1.12499
CM4	375	1.00	5.00	3.4960	1.10631
CM5	375	1.00	5.00	3.4213	1.14862
CM	375	1.00	5.00	3.5051	.84369
Valid N (list wise)	375				

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

Ethiopian Airlines' overall CM received a mean score of 3.51 and a standard deviation of 0.84, as indicated in the table. With a mean and SD of 3.55 and 1.07, respectively, the Ethiopian Airlines blogs and articles offer insightful travel information when we look at the individual CM items. "As a customer, I trust the travel information provided by Ethiopian Airlines in their content marketing" had the second-highest mean score for the CM item, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.53 and 1.13, respectively. "Ethiopian Airlines' content marketing increases the customers interest in flying with them" had the third-highest mean score among the CM items, with a mean and SD of 3.53 and 1.06, respectively. Even yet, every item in CM has a higher rating than Ethiopian Airlines' average. Based on the respondents' impression, it can be concluded that Ethiopian Airlines was using content marketing effectively.

#### 4.4.2.5 Current Level of Mobile Marketing (MM)

**Table 10:** Descriptive Statistics on Mobile Marketing

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
MM1	375	1.00	5.00	3.2507	1.18642
MM2	375	1.00	5.00	3.2640	1.21363
MM3	375	1.00	5.00	3.3013	1.24633
MM4	375	1.00	5.00	3.2320	1.15487
MM5	375	1.00	5.00	3.1280	1.18576
MM	375	1.00	5.00	3.2352	.94299
Valid N (list wise)	375				

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

Ethiopian Airlines' total MM scored mean and SD of 3.24 and 0.94, respectively, as can be seen in the above table. When looking at the individual MM elements, we find that, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.30 and 1.25, respectively, Ethiopian Airlines had the highest mean score, indicating that mobile marketing through SMS has positively influenced consumer booking decisions. "I frequently receive useful notifications from the Ethiopian Airlines mobile app" had the second-highest mean score (mean and SD: 3.26 and 1.21, respectively) among the MM items. "The Ethiopian Airlines mobile app is user-friendly" had the third-highest mean score (mean and SD: 3.25 and 1.19, respectively) among the MM items. Additionally, every item in MM scores higher than average. In light of the customers' perceptions, it is possible to draw the conclusion that Ethiopian Airlines' usage of mobile marketing was fascinating in fulfilling its client base.

#### 4.4.2.6 Current Level of Customer Base (CB)

**Table 11:** Descriptive Statistics on Customer Base

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CB1	375	1.00	5.00	3.2933	1.04156
CB2	375	1.00	5.00	3.3627	1.14775
CB3	375	1.00	5.00	3.2933	1.10145
CB4	375	1.00	5.00	3.3840	1.07810
CB5	375	1.00	5.00	3.3467	1.12213
CB	375	1.00	5.00	3.3360	.85528
Valid N (list wise)	375				

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

Ethiopian Airlines' overall CB received a mean score of 3.34 and a standard deviation of 0.86, as seen in the table. With a mean and standard deviation of 3.38 and 1.08 for each of the CB's individual elements, the customer who was more aware of Ethiopian Airlines' services and offers as a result of their digital marketing had the highest mean score. "I recommend Ethiopian Airlines to others based on their digital marketing campaigns" had the second-highest mean score of CB items, with a mean and standard deviation of 3.36 and 1.15, respectively. "Overall, digital marketing by Ethiopian Airlines has significantly impacted the customer decision to fly with them" received the third-highest mean score from CB items, with a mean and SD of 3.35 and 1.12, respectively. Even still, every item in the CB has a higher rating than Ethiopian Airlines' average. Therefore, based on customer perception, it can also be argued that Ethiopian Airlines' use of digital marketing to satisfy its client base was done so in an acceptable manner.

#### 4.5 Inferential Statistics

The relationship between DM practice and CB at Ethiopian Airlines was presented and discussed in the part that followed. Regarding this, the section discussed the components of DM practice and CB at Ethiopian Airlines as well as the direction and strength of the interaction between the two. Additionally, the following section looked at how DM practice and its elements affected CB.

Consequently, the link between the variables under research was examined using inferential analysis (Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Linear Regression); the degree of correlation was assessed using the following pattern, as suggested by (Evans, 1996):

0.00 – 0.19 “Very Weak”      0.40 – 0.59 “Moderate”      0.80 – 1.00 “Very Strong”  
 0.20 – 0.39 “Weak”              0.60 – 0.79 “Strong”

#### 4.5.1 Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient

##### 4.5.1.1 The Relation between Digital Marketing and Customer Base

**Table 12:** The Relation between Digital Marketing and Customer Base

		Correlations	
		DM	CB
DM	Pearson Correlation	1	.593**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
CB	Pearson Correlation	.593**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). N = 375

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

The relationship between Ethiopian Airlines' CB and general DM practice is depicted in the above table. There is a statistically significant relationship (moderate and positive) between Ethiopian Airlines' total DM practice and CB, based on the correlations between the two primary research variables (DM practice and CB) ( $r = 0.593$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

##### 4.5.1.2 The Relation between Components of DM and CB

**Table 13:** The relation between components of DM and CB

		Correlations					
		EM	SMM	SEO	CM	MM	CB
EM	Pearson Correlation	1	.594**	.500**	.436**	.414**	.435**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
SMM	Pearson Correlation		1	.485**	.462**	.304**	.410**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.000	.000
SEO	Pearson Correlation			1	.563**	.438**	.396**
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.000	.000
CM	Pearson Correlation				1	.396**	.409**
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.000	.000
MM	Pearson Correlation					1	.575**
	Sig. (2-tailed)						.000
CB	Pearson Correlation						1
	Sig. (2-tailed)						

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). N = 375

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

The correlation coefficient, which is weak but indicates a statistically significant positive association between employee CB and EM at Ethiopian Airlines ( $r = 0.435$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), is displayed in the above table. It may be inferred that email marketing and CB at Ethiopian Airlines have a moderately significant statistical relationship in this regard.

Similarly, at Ethiopian Airlines, SMM and CB have a moderately strong positive association ( $r = 0.410$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Research in this area has demonstrated that social media marketing and CB have a beneficial association.

The table additionally demonstrates that, for Ethiopian Airlines, there was a statistically modest positive correlation between SEO and CB ( $r = 0.396$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This suggests that CB had a poor relationship with search engine optimization for businesses.

Additionally, in Ethiopian Airlines, there was a statistically moderately significant relationship ( $r = 0.409$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) between CM and CB in the other DM components. This suggests a moderate relationship between CB and content marketing.

In Ethiopian Airlines, there was ultimately a statistically moderate link between MM and CB ( $r = 0.575$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This suggests a moderate relationship between CB and mobile marketing.

## **4.5.2 Regression Analysis**

### **4.5.2.1 Simple Linear Regression Analysis**

#### **Assumptions of Simple Linear Regression Analysis**

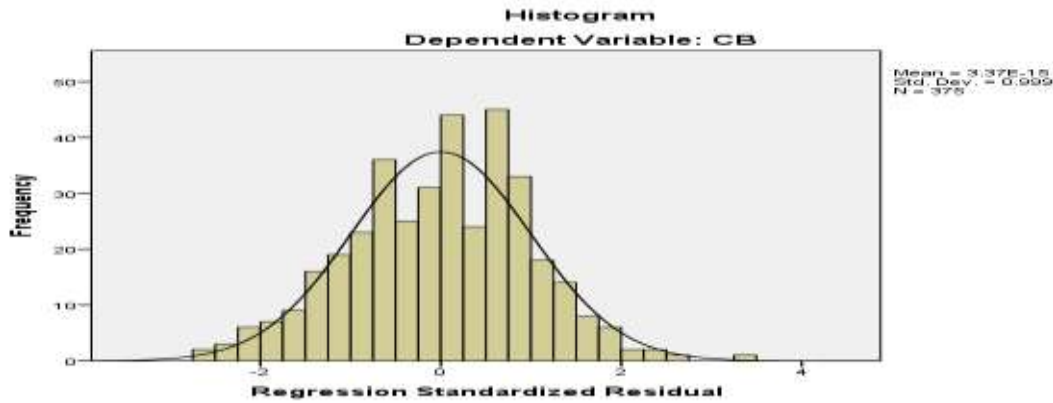
(Field, 2009) states that in order to perform a basic linear regression, it is necessary to verify important assumptions and to make conclusions about the population being studied. This involved examining the linearity of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables as well as the normality of the predictor and predicted variables. The findings are shown as follows.

#### **Normality**

Field (2009) asserts that the assumption of normalcy is crucial for research employing regression, or generic linear models, and that it aids in extrapolating the analysis's conclusions outside of the sample that was used. One of the many methods for verifying the normality assumptions for a basic linear regression analysis is to examine a histogram and a P-P plot (probability–probability plot) to see whether a distribution is normal. Consequently,

in order to verify the accuracy of these hypotheses, the researcher additionally verifies normalcy using Ethiopian Airlines' P-P plot and histogram.

**Figure 2:** Histogram for Dependent Variable CB of EAL



Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

Similarly, as we can see from the above picture, Ethiopian Airlines' histogram for the dependent variable employee CB has a bell-shaped distribution and resembles a normal distribution. As a result, we may say that our model for the data is sound, and we may be able to draw conclusions about Ethiopian Airlines' customer base.

**Table 14:** Skewness and Kurtosis - Normality Test

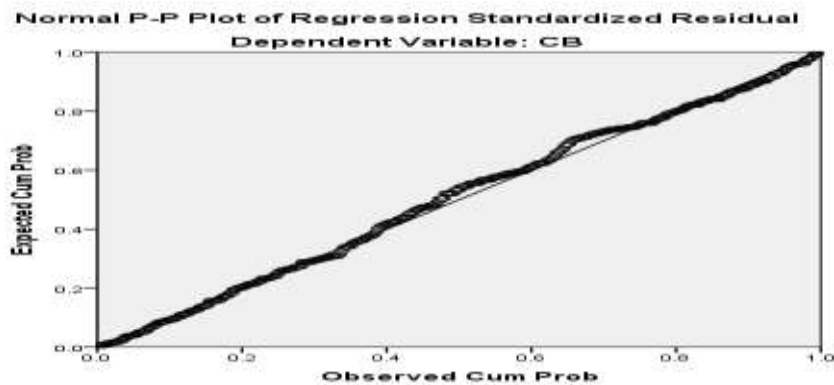
	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Email marketing	375	-.050	.126	-.693	.251
Social media marketing optimization	375	-.432	.126	-.413	.251
Search engine optimization	375	-.385	.126	-.575	.251
Content marketing	375	-.680	.126	.199	.251
Mobile marketing	375	-.247	.126	-.572	.251
Customer base	375	-.227	.126	-.385	.251
Valid N (listwise)	375				

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

The histogram clearly demonstrated that the data was normally distributed based on the survey results. Additionally, the Kurtosis and Skew tests are employed to numerically test normalcy. Should fall between +2 and -2 when the data are properly distributed, according to Hair (1998). The table displayed a range for kurtosis of -0.693 to -0.199 and a range for skewness of -0.680 to -0.050. Consequently, both outcomes satisfy the normalcy criteria.

## Normally Distributed Error for Customer Base

**Figure 3:** Normally Distributed Error for CB of EAL



Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

The data obtained by Ethiopian Airlines (in the dependent variable CB) does not exhibit any deviations from normality, as indicated by the normal probability map. In this plot, the points indicate the observed residuals for Ethiopian Airlines, while the straight line depicts a normal distribution. Consequently, every point in a data collection that is fully normally distributed will fall on the line (Field, 2009). Since the basic linear regression assumption has been satisfied, we may presume that the model is reliable and that it can be applied to the organization's population as a whole.

### 4.5.2.2 Regression Analysis of DM and CB

Regression Analysis of Components of Digital Marketing and Customer Base

**Table 15:** (Model Summary) DM as Predictor to CB of EAL

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.641 <sup>a</sup>	.411	.403	.66082

a. Predictors: (Constant), EM, MM, CM, SMM, SEO

b. Dependent Variable: CB

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

According to the model summary table above, which takes into account the influence of all variables (EM, MM, CM, SMM, and SEO), the total model explains 41.1% of the variation in Ethiopian Airlines' customer base. This indicates that other factors account for approximately 58.9% of the variation on CB. Put simply, regardless of the presence of CB, 41.1% of the variance observed by consumers was accounted for by Ethiopian Airlines' five DM practices.

Put otherwise, DM components as a whole explain 41.1% of the variation in Ethiopian Airlines's CB expansion.

**Table 16:** (ANOVA) Digital Marketing as Predictor to CB of EAL

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	96.288	1	96.288	202.575	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	177.296	373	.475		
	Total	273.584	374			

a. Dependent Variable: CB

b. Predictors: (Constant), DM

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

The p-value and F-test result in the ANOVA table above determine how well the regression model as a whole predicts the outcome and how likely it is to be the result of chance. Ethiopian Airlines has an F-test score in this area of 202.575 with a significant value of less than 0.01. This suggests that there is less than a 0.01 chance that these outcomes would have happened by accident. As a result, Ethiopian Airlines' extensive DM practice has an effect on growing CB. This indicates that the independent variable (DM practice) has a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable (CB). The total regression model for Ethiopian Airlines is significant, with  $F(1,373) = 202.575$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , and  $R^2 = 0.352$ .

Additionally, Ethiopian Airlines' growing customer base and DM practice demonstrated a strong and significant interdependence, as proven by the greater F value and smaller standard error of the estimate. Thus, it can be said that Ethiopian Airlines' DM practice had a significant impact on growing its customer base, with a p-value of less than 0.01.

**Table 17:** Digital Marketing as Predictor to CB of EAL

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.836	.179		4.667	.000
	DM	.749	.053	.593	14.233	.000

a. Dependent Variable: CB

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

The beta-value of 0.593 in the preceding coefficient table suggests that, for Ethiopian Airlines, there is a statistically significant, direct association between DM practices and

customer base at a 99% confidence level. Furthermore, the B value (0.749) in the unstandardized coefficient column indicates that, assuming that all other variables remain constant at zero, we anticipate a 0.749 unit increase in Ethiopian Airlines' customer base for every unit rise in DM practice. Therefore, under these circumstances, the regression equation will be:

$$CB = 0.836 + 0.749DM + 0.68944$$

This suggests that customers' CB increases dramatically when they believe Ethiopian Airlines has effective DM in place. The customer base was impacted by factors other than their opinion of the DM practice within the company, as this discussion's description of the impact of DM practice on Ethiopian Airlines' growing customer base illustrates. This is supported by the regression result, which shows that other factors account for 64.8% of the variance in CB.

**Table 18:** (ANOVA) Digital Marketing as Predictor to CB of EAL

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	112.446	5	22.489	51.499	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	161.138	369	.437		
	Total	273.584	374			

a. Dependent Variable: CB

b. Predictors: (Constant), EM, MM, CM, SMM, SEO

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

Because the p value in the organization is less than 0.01 for the model's statistical predictor of enlarging the CB, the above ANOVA table aids in confirming that the model is a statistically significant predictor of the outcome (CB).

An increasing number of specific DM practices (EM, MM, CM, SMM, and SEO) have an impact on Ethiopian Airlines' growing client base. Hence, it can be inferred that the organization's DM practice components statistically and significantly predict the growth of the customer base. The entire regression model is significant, with  $F(5, 369) = 51.499$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , and  $R^2 = 0.411$ .

**Table 19:** (Coefficients) EM, MM, CM, SMM and SEO as Predictors to CB

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.789	.175		4.494	.000
	MM	.393	.042	.433	9.318	.000
	CM	.111	.052	.110	2.147	.032
	SEO	.013	.049	.015	.272	.786
	SMM	.153	.051	.157	2.983	.003
	EM	.102	.051	.108	2.013	.045

a. Dependent Variable: CB

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

The statistical data derived from the model summary table above indicates that the following elements of DM practices collectively account for approximately 41.1% of the variance in Ethiopian Airlines' growing customer base, as indicated by the regression equation:

$$CB = 0.789 + 0.393(MM) + 0.111(CM) + 0.013(SEO) + 0.153(SMM) + 0.102(EM) + 0.66082$$

With a B value of 0.393 ( $p < 0.01$ ), MM has a statistically greater contribution to the outcome from these effects on Ethiopian Airlines' growing customer base. Because 0.393 is greater than the other B values, we may conclude that MM has a bigger contribution than the other DM components to explain the change in increasing customer base based on this statistical data and the standardized beta value (which has been transformed to the same scale).

Thus, it is evident from the above result that mobile marketing plays a major role in Ethiopian Airlines' customer base expansion.

#### 4.6 Testing of the Proposed Hypotheses

Seventeen hypotheses were developed for this investigation. Below is a brief discussion of the statistical tests that were conducted for these hypotheses.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Social Media Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.

Using SPSS, the correlation and basic linear regression analysis were used to test this hypothesis, as was previously mentioned. Thus, social media marketing (SMM) activity has a substantial impact on growing customer base (with moderate and positive,  $r = 0.410$ ,  $p =$

0.003 and B value is 0.153) in Ethiopian Airlines, according to the correlation and regression model summary, ANOVA and coefficients results and arguments. "Social Media Marketing Practice Has a Positive Significant Effect on Customer Base in Ethiopian Airlines" is one way to read this. **Therefore,  $H_1$  is supported.**

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Search Engine Optimization has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.

According to the correlation, regression model summary, ANOVA, coefficient results, and justifications used to validate this hypothesis, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) has a significant impact on Ethiopian Airlines' growing customer base (with a weak and positive,  $r = 0.396$ ,  $p = 0.786$ , and B value is 0.013). This could mean that "Search Engine Optimization has no positive significant effect on Ethiopian Airlines' customer base." **Therefore,  $H_2$  is rejected.**

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Content Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.

According to the correlation and regression model summary, ANOVA, and coefficient results and explanations used to confirm this hypothesis, content marketing (CM) significantly affects Ethiopian Airlines' growing customer base ( $r = 0.409$ ,  $p = 0.032$ , and B value is 0.111). This could be read as follows: "Content marketing significantly improves Ethiopian Airlines' customer base." **Therefore,  $H_3$  is supported.**

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Email Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.

According to the correlation and regression model summary, ANOVA, and coefficient results and justifications used to confirm this hypothesis, email marketing (EM) significantly affects Ethiopian Airlines' growing customer base ( $r = 0.435$ ,  $p = 0.045$ , and B value is 0.102). This could be read as follows: "Email marketing significantly improves Ethiopian Airlines' customer base." **Therefore,  $H_4$  is supported.**

**H<sub>5</sub>:** Mobile Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.

Based on the correlation, regression model summary, ANOVA, coefficient values, and justifications, this hypothesis is validated. According to Ethiopian Airlines, mobile marketing (MM) significantly affects the airline's growing customer base ( $r = 0.575$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , and B value is 0.393). This could be read as follows: "Mobile marketing significantly improves Ethiopian Airlines' customer base." **Therefore,  $H_5$  is supported.**

## Summary of the Hypotheses Test

The overall result of the hypotheses test was indicated in the table below.

**Table 20:** Summary of the Overall Outcome

Hypotheses	Result	Reason
<i>H<sub>1</sub></i> : Social Media Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.	Supported	p = 0.003 β = 0.153
<i>H<sub>2</sub></i> : Search Engine Optimization has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.	Rejected	p = 0.786 β = 0.013
<i>H<sub>3</sub></i> : Content Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.	Supported	p = 0.032 β = 0.111
<i>H<sub>4</sub></i> : Email Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.	Supported	p = 0.045 β = 0.102
<i>H<sub>5</sub></i> : Mobile Marketing has a positive significance effect on Customer Base.	Supported	p = 0.000 β = 0.393

Source: Personal survey performed in SPSS in 2027

## 4.7 Discussion

Here, the model's overall fit should be the initial topic of discussion. The first point to think about in this situation is that this claim has been supported by a variety of statistical data. The first approach is the ANOVA test, which produced a P-value of 0.000 and is below the 0.05 alpha threshold. This suggests that there is a significant correlation between sales income and digital marketing, or that there is a statistically significant association between the dependent variable and the total independent factors.

The coefficient of correlation, or *r*, is a statistical concept that makes it easy to measure the degree of (linear) correlation between the independent and dependent variables considered together. All that is measured is the degree of covariance or correlation between the two variables. (Gujarati and others, 2004). According to the correlation table, Ethiopian Airlines' customer base expansion is positively correlated with mobile, email, and social media

marketing (coefficient values of 0.575, 0.435, and 0.410), followed by content marketing and SEO (0.490 and 0.396).

The last step is to look at the adjusted R square, which is the percentage of the overall variation or dispersion in Ethiopian Airlines' growing customer base (the dependent variable) that can be accounted for by changes in the regression's independent variables. With an adjusted R square value of 0.411, this suggests that 41.1% of the variation in Ethiopian Airlines' customer base can be explained by a linear connection between all the independent variables. As a result, a high adjusted R square suggests that the independent variables in the study significantly affect the dependent variable.

Most people agree that the regression model used for the study is a decent fit or predictor of Ethiopian Airlines' Customer base.

The first digital marketing instrument to be assessed was social media marketing. Ethiopian Airlines is increasing its customer base by using social media to promote their brand. Social media is widely used by businesses because it is a cheap means of promoting goods online and because it gives them access to a large audience of potential customers. The results align with Mulunda's (2021) study, which discovered a significant impact of social media on sales income.

SEO was the second digital marketing tactic to be studied, and the results showed a negligible yet beneficial impact on the Customer base. The conclusion differs from the findings of Hasant et al.'s 2020 study on the impact of SEO technologies on growing a Customer base. Customers of Ethiopian Airlines believe SEO is inaccessible.

According to the findings, email marketing is a highly effective tool used by Ethiopian Airlines to reach out to both potential and committed consumers. Additionally, more firms are starting to embrace email signatures and personalization. The results are consistent with studies conducted by Yasmin (2014), Onyango (2016), and Davido et al. (2022), all of which discovered a favorable relationship between email marketing - among digital marketing's components - and an increase in the number of clients.

The study examined content marketing as a digital marketing tactic that influences customer base growth. The study's findings indicated that Ethiopian Airlines uses it to some degree and that it has a big impact on their Customer base. (Enoch et al., 2022) examined the connection between digital marketing and the Customer base of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

The results of the analysis show that content marketing has a big impact on the Customer base.

Mobile marketing was the last digital marketing strategy examined in the study that has an impact on client base growth. The results indicate that Ethiopian Airlines has adopted mobile marketing to a large extent, and that this has had a good impact on the airline's client base. The outcome is identical to that of Mohammed (2022), who reported a good rapport and an increase in the number of customers for the firms.

# Unit Five

## 5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter included a summary of the main conclusions, suggestions, and findings. The main conclusions and the literature review were used to formulate the conclusions. Included were implications and suggestions for additional research.

### 5.2 Summary of Major Findings

The purpose of this study was to evaluate Ethiopian Airlines' use of digital marketing and look at how it was affecting the airline's customer base growth. Thus, in order to achieve the research goal, the researcher gathered information from a sample of respondents and used both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyze the information. The following important conclusions were reached as a result.

The bulk of respondents - 199 (53.1%) and 176 (46.9%) - were male, according to the respondents' demographics. Furthermore, the majority of respondents were in the medium age range, as indicated by the fact that 70.1% of the people in the sample was between the ages of 26 and 45.

Regarding the respondents' educational background, the bulk of them - 346 (92.3%) of the sample respondents - hold a first degree or higher. As a result, when it comes to the trip category, the majority of respondents - 116, or 30.9% - travelled for personal business, followed by 105, or 28.0%, who traveled for visits with family and friends.

The majority of respondents, or 339 (90.4%) of the sample, on the other hand, had taken more than two airline trips. Consequently, 196 (52.3%) of the respondents, or the majority, traveled in business class when it came to the service category, while 179 (47.7%) travelled in economy class.

Furthermore, of the responses to Ethiopian Airlines, 106 (38.1%) were at the blue level and 126 (33.6%) were at the no tier travel level. Similarly, 102 individuals (27.2%) in the sample exhibited a silver level. Stated otherwise, 334 (89.1%) of the sample's respondents worked for Ethiopian Airlines and were categorized as silver or below.

The results of the descriptive statistics showed that Ethiopian Airlines' mean score for each particular digital marketing technique falls between 3.12 and 3.51, near the moderate mean.

Therefore, out of the five components of digital marketing, "CM" had the greatest mean score ( $M = 3.51$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ), while "EM" received the lowest mean score ( $M = 3.12$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ ). These results indicate that, among Ethiopian Airlines' practices, "CM" performed better and "EM" performed the least.

The correlation coefficient result showed that Ethiopian Airlines had a positive and statistically significant relationship ( $r = 0.593$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) between the two major variables (overall Digital Marketing practice and Customer Base) in the investigation of the relationship between these two variables. This indicates that Ethiopian Airlines' customer base and overall digital marketing practices have a statistically significant beneficial link.

The correlation coefficient result showed that there was a positive and statistically significant relationship between EM and CB ( $r = 0.435$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), between SMM and CB ( $r = 0.410$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and between SEO and CB ( $r = 0.396$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) in the analysis of the relationship between the components of DM and CB in Ethiopian Airlines. Additionally, in Ethiopian Airlines, there was a statistically significant and positive relationship between MM and CB ( $r = 0.575$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and between CM and CB ( $r = 0.409$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). As a result, it is discovered that, among DM practice items with CB in Ethiopian Airlines, MM has the highest correlation and SEO has the lowest. Thus, a high level of media marketing utilization is strongly associated with Ethiopian Airlines' customer base.

After examining the influence of Ethiopian Airlines' overall DM practice on CB, a simple linear regression analysis revealed that, at a B value of 0.593 ( $p < 0.01$ ), 35.2% of the variation in CB can be attributed to the airline's DM practice. Additionally, the multiple linear regressions showed that, with a B value of 0.393 ( $p < 0.01$ ), MM has a statistically greater contribution for the variation in CB in Ethiopian Airlines among the five components of DM practice. Similarly, the remaining elements of digital marketing (CM, SEO, SMM, and EM) have had a statistically significant impact on the variation in CB at Ethiopian Airlines, as seen by their respective B values of 0.111 ( $p < 0.01$ ), 0.130 ( $p < 0.01$ ), 0.153 ( $p < 0.00$ ), and 0.102 ( $p < 0.01$ ).

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate DM practice and look into how it affected Ethiopian Airlines' growing customer base. Meanwhile, the researcher posed and addressed the following specific research questions: "To what extent does content marketing contribute to the growth and retention of Ethiopian Airlines' customer base?," "How does the utilization

of social media marketing affect the customer base of Ethiopian Airlines?" and "What is the relationship between search engine optimization (SEO) efforts and the expansion of Ethiopian Airlines' customer base?" "How successful is email marketing for Ethiopian Airlines in drawing in new business and keeping existing customers?" and "How does Ethiopian Airlines' customer base respond to mobile marketing strategies?" Consequently, the outcome is explored at the core of these inquiries. Therefore, the main focus of these inquiries is the result, which is covered in chapter four under each of the subheadings. It is evident from this that the study's goals and questions have been well addressed. As a result, the analysis led to the following results.

Of the five elements of direct marketing strategies, Ethiopian Airlines prioritized content marketing, introducing and implementing social media marketing second. However, it turns out that there were some issues with the usage of email marketing because, in contrast to the other DM components, Ethiopian Airlines was not using it to the full extent that was expected. This suggests that businesses only use content marketing, search engine optimization, and social media marketing as their primary digital marketing tools, ignoring the other tools available to them for growing and enhancing their Customer base.

In Ethiopian Airlines content marketing has in some degree and has a big impact on their Customer base. And as a result, content marketing contribute to the growth and retention of Ethiopian Airlines' customer base as it has a big impact on the Customer base. And also, Ethiopian Airlines is increasing its customer base by using social media to promote their brand. Social media is widely used by businesses because it is a cheap means of promoting goods online and because it gives them access to a large audience of potential customers. The results align with Mulunda's (2021) study, which discovered a significant impact of social media on sales income. Then, the utilization of social media marketing affect the customer base of Ethiopian Airlines.

Search engine optimization has a negligible yet beneficial impact on the Customer base in Ethiopian Airlines. The conclusion differs from the findings of Hasant et al.'s 2020 study on the impact of search engine optimization technologies on growing a Customer base. Customers of Ethiopian Airlines believe search engine optimization is inaccessible.

Email marketing is a highly effective tool used by Ethiopian Airlines to reach out to both potential and committed consumers. Additionally, more firms are starting to embrace email signatures and personalization. The results are consistent with studies conducted by Yasmin

(2014), Onyango (2016), and Davido et al. (2022), all of which discovered a favourable relationship between email marketing - among digital marketing's components - and an increase in the number of clients. Then, email marketing is successful for Ethiopian Airlines in drawing in new business and keeping existing customers.

And also, Ethiopian Airlines has adopted mobile marketing to a large extent, and that this has had a good impact on the airline's client base. The outcome is identical to that of Mohammed (2022), who reported a good rapport and an increase in the number of customers for the firms. Then, Ethiopian Airlines' customer base respond to mobile marketing strategies as it has a large and good impact on the organization's client base.

Additionally, at Ethiopian Airlines' client base, we found that it was roughly where we expected it to be. Based on the study's customer base, the study concludes that, despite the fact that most customers have a high level of confidence in Ethiopian Airlines' services and offerings because of its digital marketing, they still recommend the airline to others in light of its efforts to grow and diversify its customer base through digital marketing campaigns. In general, Ethiopian Airlines' client base grows and expands in proportion to the extent of its digital marketing practices.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

The research needed to provide practical and appropriate recommendations, given the study's result and the stated research problem. Consequently, the investigator proposed the subsequent suggestions.

- ❖ The administration of Ethiopian Airlines should include more efficient digital marketing strategies in order to broaden their Customer base.
- ❖ Ethiopian Airlines' management should stay away from the restrictions associated with email and mobile marketing, match its business plan with its digital marketing strategy, be aware of the organization's best practices, and recruit and employ additional digital marketing techniques.
- ❖ The organization's management and staff should put in effort to manage digital marketing in a way that is significantly related to the growing client base. If digital marketing is applied correctly within the company, then the Customer base is enhanced. This is due to the fact that numerous studies have shown that digital marketing has a significant impact on growing an organization's consumer base.

- ❖ In order to enhance the growth of their consumer base, Ethiopian Airlines' management should focus on other variables other than digital marketing practices.

In conclusion, the researcher highly advised Ethiopian Airlines to implement digital marketing methods and overall strategies to ensure that their consumers are satisfied, make the most use of the airline, and make better use of their skills. This is only achievable if the clients are happy with their travel experience.

## **5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies**

The researcher used a number of statistical techniques and adhered closely to the research methodology in order to answer the stated purpose of the study on the impact of digital marketing on Ethiopian Airlines' growing customer base. As a result, this study addressed the research concerns, came to a conclusion, and offered helpful suggestions. Furthermore, the researcher thought that because this is a novel phenomenon, there are still unanswered questions that need to be explored in larger-scale research projects in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. Therefore, the following are regarded as the study's shortcomings and suggestions for further research.

- This study only encompasses five digital marketing practices, which are widely used in the literature and in actual practice, but to make full picture of digital marketing, future researchers may include additional digital marketing practices, such as pay-per-click advertising, web design, and other in their researches.
- The study also limits itself on the practice of Ethiopian Airlines, towards its digital marketing practice, and the conclusion and recommendations remains within the organization. In this regard, to make the conclusion and recommendation more wide and applicable for more organizations, future researches may conduct the research in industry wide or nationwide by increasing the sample size.
- This research employed only quantitative research method and considers only customers, accordingly, future researchers may employ mixed approach (qualitative and quantitative) in their data type; to include employee, managerial say and document review.
- Finally, There's a lack of theoretical foundation and models for understanding digital marketing and its connections to other factors. Future research should focus on developing models and theories, considering various digital marketing dimensions like industry, strategy, business nature, and sector.

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## Appendix

### Questionnaire

*Addis Ababa University*

*School of Commerce*

*Department of Digital Marketing and E-Commerce*

Survey Questionnaire for a Post Graduate Program in Master of Science in Digital Marketing and E-commerce a Thesis conducted on “**The Effect of Digital Marketing on Expanding the Customer Base of Ethiopian Airlines.**”

**Dear valuable respondents,**

My name is Thomas Gebrecherkos Gebremichael and I am one of the students of Master of Science in Digital Marketing and E-Commerce in Addis Ababa University School of Commerce. This research is part of my study and conducted for purely academic purpose. All the information collected through the questionnaire will be used only for contribution to knowledge and will be kept secret or confidential.

To this end, I kindly request you to respond for all the given statements otherwise incomplete responses will not fulfill my requirements and your response is paramount important to me. Therefore, your genuine, honest and prompt response is a valuable input for the quality and successful completion of the research paper.

General Instruction

- There is no need of writing your name;
- Please put the mark (√) in the appropriate box; that indicate your response to the question.

In case of any inquiry about this questionnaire, you can call me through my cell phone or contact me through the following e-mail address.

Thank you for your time.

E-mail: - [Thomastyz99@gmail.com](mailto:Thomastyz99@gmail.com)

Phone: - +251911-291717

# Questionnaire

*Université d'Addis-Abeba*

*École de Commerce*

*Département de Marketing Digital et E-Commerce*

Questionnaire d'enquête pour un programme de troisième cycle en Master of Science en Marketing Digital et E-commerce dans le cadre d'une thèse intitulée « **L'effet du marketing digital sur l'expansion de la base de clients d'Ethiopian Airlines** ».

**Cher(s) précieux(s) répondant(s),**

Je m'appelle Thomas Gebrecherkos Gebremichael et je suis l'un des étudiants en Master of Science en Marketing Digital et E-Commerce à l'École de Commerce de l'Université d'Addis-Abeba. Cette recherche fait partie de mes études et est menée à des fins purement académiques. Toutes les informations recueillies par le biais du questionnaire seront utilisées uniquement pour contribuer à la connaissance et seront gardées secrètes ou confidentielles.

À cette fin, je vous prie de bien vouloir répondre à toutes les déclarations données, sinon les réponses incomplètes ne répondront pas à mes exigences et votre réponse est d'une importance capitale pour moi. Par conséquent, votre réponse sincère, honnête et rapide est une contribution précieuse pour la qualité et la réussite de la rédaction du mémoire de recherche.

Instruction Générale

- Il n'est pas nécessaire d'écrire votre nom.
- Veuillez mettre la marque (✓) dans la case appropriée, indiquant votre réponse à la question.

En cas de questions concernant ce questionnaire, vous pouvez m'appeler sur mon téléphone portable ou me contacter à l'adresse e-mail suivante.

Merci pour votre temps précieux.

E-mail : Thomastyz99@gmail.com / [ThomasGe@Ethiopianairlines.com](mailto:ThomasGe@Ethiopianairlines.com)

Téléphone : +251 911-291717

## **Part I**

### **General Information/ Informations Générales**

Please tick (✓) the boxes which are more applicable for your biographical information. /  
**Veillez cocher (✓) les cases qui correspondent le mieux à vos informations biographiques.**

- 1) Gender/ **Genre**    Male/ **Masculin**                       Female/ **Féminin**
- 2) Age/ **Âge**  
 25 years and below/ **25 ans et moins**    26 – 35 years  
 36 – 45 years     Above 46 years/ **Plus de 46 ans**
- 3) Educational Qualification/ **Niveau d'Éducation**  
 Below Diploma/ **En-dessous du Diplôme**     Diploma/ **Diplôme**  
 First Degree/ **Premier Diplôme**                       Master's Degree and above/ **Master et plus**
- 4) Purpose of your trip/ **Objectif de Votre Voyage**  
 Leisure/ Vacation (**Loisirs/Vacances**)  
 Business/Corporate (**Affaires/Entreprise**)  
 Personal business/trade (**Affaires Personnelles/Commerce**)  
 Visit of family and friends (**Visite de la Famille et des Amis**)  
 Cargo Customer (**Client de Fret**)
- 5) Did you Travel with Ethiopian Airlines/ **Avez-vous voyagé avec Ethiopian Airlines.**  
 Never/ **Jamais**  
 1 times/ **1 fois**  
 2-8 times/ **2-8 fois**  
 More than 8 times/ **Plus de 8 fois**
- 6) Class of Service / **Classe de Service**  
 Economy / **Économique**  
 Business / **Affaires**
- 7) Tier Level / **Niveau de Fidélité**  
 Platinum / **Platine**  
 Gold / **Or**  
 Silver / **Argent**  
 Blue / **Bleu**  
 No tier / **Aucun niveau**

## **Part II**

### **Assessment Digital Marketing Tool / Évaluation Outil de Marketing Digital**

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by putting (√) to the correspondent number. Higher number indicates higher level of agreement.

**Key:** 1 (SD) – Strongly Disagree; 2 (D) – Disagree; 3 (N) – Neutral; 4 (A) – Agree; and 5 (SA) – Strongly Agree

Veillez indiquer dans quelle mesure vous êtes d'accord ou en désaccord avec chaque affirmation en mettant (√) sur le numéro correspondant. Un nombre plus élevé indique un niveau d'accord plus élevé.

Clé : 1 (PD) – Pas du tout d'accord ; 2 (D) – En désaccord ; 3 (N) – Neutre ; 4 (A) – D'accord ; et 5 (TA) – Tout à fait d'accord

No.	Item	SD (1) PD	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5) TA
<b>1.</b>	<b>Email Marketing/ Marketing par Email</b>					
1.1	1. Ethiopian Airlines' email promotions are informative and useful.  1. <b>Les promotions par e-mail d'Ethiopian Airlines sont informatives et utiles.</b>					
1.2	2. I often find relevant offers in Ethiopian Airlines' email newsletters.  2. <b>Je trouve souvent des offres pertinentes dans les newsletters d'Ethiopian Airlines.</b>					
1.3	3. Email marketing from Ethiopian Airlines has influenced my decision to fly with them.  3. <b>Le marketing par e-mail d'Ethiopian Airlines a influencé ma décision de voler avec eux.</b>					
1.4	4. I am satisfied with the frequency of emails I receive from Ethiopian Airlines.  4. <b>Je suis satisfait de la fréquence des e-mails que je reçois d'Ethiopian Airlines.</b>					
1.5	5. I find the content of Ethiopian Airlines' emails personalized to my interests.  5. <b>Je trouve que le contenu des e-mails d'Ethiopian Airlines est personnalisé en fonction de mes intérêts.</b>					
<b>2.</b>	<b>Social Media Marketing /Marketing sur les Réseaux Sociaux</b>					

2.1	6. Ethiopian Airlines' social media pages provide timely updates and information.  <b>6. Les pages de réseaux sociaux d'Ethiopian Airlines fournissent des mises à jour et des informations en temps opportun.</b>					
2.2	7. The social media content by Ethiopian Airlines is engaging and interactive.  <b>7. Le contenu des réseaux sociaux d'Ethiopian Airlines est engageant et interactif.</b>					
2.3	8. I am likely to participate in promotions and contests by Ethiopian Airlines on social media.  <b>8. Je suis susceptible de participer à des promotions et concours d'Ethiopian Airlines sur les réseaux sociaux.</b>					
2.4	9. Social media marketing by Ethiopian Airlines has influenced my decision to book flights with them.  <b>9. Le marketing sur les réseaux sociaux d'Ethiopian Airlines a influencé ma décision de réserver des vols avec eux.</b>					
2.5	10. I trust the information shared by Ethiopian Airlines on their social media platforms.  <b>10. Je fais confiance aux informations partagées par Ethiopian Airlines sur leurs plateformes de réseaux sociaux.</b>					
<b>3.</b>	<b>Search Engine Optimization (SEO)/ Search Engine Optimization</b>					
3.1	11. I often come across Ethiopian Airlines while searching for flights online.  <b>11. Je tombe souvent sur Ethiopian Airlines en cherchant des vols en ligne.</b>					
3.2	12. The search engine results for Ethiopian Airlines are relevant to my queries.  <b>12. Les résultats des moteurs de recherche pour Ethiopian Airlines sont pertinents pour mes requêtes.</b>					
3.3	13. Ethiopian Airlines' presence in search engine results enhances my trust in their brand.  <b>13. La présence d'Ethiopian Airlines dans les résultats des moteurs de recherche renforce ma confiance dans leur marque.</b>					
3.4	14. I find it easy to access information about Ethiopian Airlines through search engines.  <b>14. Je trouve facile d'accéder aux informations sur Ethiopian Airlines via les moteurs de recherche.</b>					
3.5	15. Ethiopian Airlines' SEO efforts make it convenient for me to book flights online.  <b>15. Les efforts SEO d'Ethiopian Airlines rendent la réservation de vols en ligne pratique pour moi.</b>					

4.	Contente Marketing/ Marketing de Contenu				
4.1	<p>16. The articles and blogs by Ethiopian Airlines provide valuable travel insights.</p> <p><b>16. Les articles et blogs d'Ethiopian Airlines fournissent des informations de voyage précieuses</b></p>				
4.2	<p>17. Ethiopian Airlines' content marketing increases my interest in flying with them.</p> <p><b>17. Le marketing de contenu d'Ethiopian Airlines augmente mon intérêt à voler avec eux.</b></p>				
4.3	<p>18. I trust the travel information provided by Ethiopian Airlines in their content marketing.</p> <p><b>18. Je fais confiance aux informations de voyage fournies par Ethiopian Airlines dans leur marketing de contenu.</b></p>				
4.4	<p>19. The travel tips and guides by Ethiopian Airlines enhance my travel experience.</p> <p><b>19. Les conseils et guides de voyage d'Ethiopian Airlines améliorent mon expérience de voyage.</b></p>				
4.5	<p>20. Content marketing by Ethiopian Airlines influences my choice of destinations.</p> <p><b>20. Le marketing de contenu d'Ethiopian Airlines influence mon choix de destinations.</b></p>				

5.	Mobile Marketing/ Marketing Mobile				
5.1	<p>21. The Ethiopian Airlines mobile app is user-friendly.</p> <p><b>21. L'application mobile d'Ethiopian Airlines est conviviale.</b></p>				
5.2	<p>22. I frequently receive useful notifications from the Ethiopian Airlines mobile app.</p> <p><b>22. Je reçois souvent des notifications utiles de l'application mobile d'Ethiopian Airlines.</b></p>				
5.3	<p>23. Mobile marketing through SMS has positively influenced my booking decisions with Ethiopian Airlines.</p> <p><b>23. Le marketing mobile par SMS a positivement influencé mes décisions de réservation avec Ethiopian Airlines.</b></p>				
5.4	<p>24. The mobile marketing campaigns of Ethiopian Airlines are engaging and relevant.</p> <p><b>24. Les campagnes de marketing mobile d'Ethiopian Airlines sont engageantes et pertinentes.</b></p>				
5.5	<p>25. I prefer receiving updates and promotions from Ethiopian Airlines via mobile marketing.</p> <p><b>25. Je préfère recevoir des mises à jour et des promotions d'Ethiopian Airlines via le marketing mobile.</b></p>				

### **Part III**

#### **Assessment on Customer Base/ Évaluation Base de clientèle**

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by putting (√) to the correspondent number. Higher number indicates higher level of agreement.

Key: 1 (SD) – Strongly Disagree; 2 (D) – Disagree; 3 (N) – Neutral; 4 (A) – Agree; and 5 (SA) – Strongly Agree

Veillez indiquer dans quelle mesure vous êtes d'accord ou en désaccord avec chaque affirmation en mettant (√) sur le numéro correspondant. Un nombre plus élevé indique un niveau d'accord plus élevé.

Clé : 1 (PD) – Pas du tout d'accord ; 2 (D) – En désaccord ; 3 (N) – Neutre ; 4 (A) – D'accord ; et 5 (TA) – Tout à fait d'accord

No.	Item	SD (1) PD	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5) TA
<b>1.</b>	<b>Customer Base/ Base de clientèle</b>					
1.1	26. Digital marketing by Ethiopian Airlines has made me a more frequent flyer with them. <b>26. Le marketing digital d'Ethiopian Airlines a fait de moi un passager plus fréquent avec eux.</b>					
1.2	27. I recommend Ethiopian Airlines to others based on their digital marketing campaigns. <b>27. Je recommande Ethiopian Airlines à d'autres personnes en me basant sur leurs campagnes de marketing digital.</b>					
1.3	28. The digital marketing efforts of Ethiopian Airlines have increased my loyalty to the airline. <b>28. Les efforts de marketing digital d'Ethiopian Airlines ont augmenté ma fidélité envers la compagnie aérienne.</b>					
1.4	29. I am more aware of Ethiopian Airlines' services and offers due to their digital marketing. <b>29. Je suis plus conscient des services et offres d'Ethiopian Airlines grâce à leur marketing digital.</b>					
1.5	30. Overall, digital marketing by Ethiopian Airlines has significantly impacted my decision to fly with them. <b>30. Globalement, le marketing digital d'Ethiopian Airlines a significativement impacté ma décision de voler avec eux.</b>					

ቁጥር: አ.አ.መ/አ/3/1/ኮ/239/2016  
 ቀን: ግንቦት 28 ቀን 2016 ዓ.ም

ለሲቪል አቪዬሽን ደህንነት ዋና መምሪያ ዳይሬክተር

አዲስ አበባ

ጉዳዩ: የፓስ እድሳት ፈቃድ ስለመጠየቅ

ስማቸው ከዚህ በታች የተገለጹት የETG ሰራተኛ የመመረቂያ ጽሁፋቸውን በመሰራት ላይ ይገኛሉ። በመሆኑም መጠይቅ ለመሰብሰብ በተርሚናል 1 እና 2 ከግንቦት 29 እስከ ሰኔ 5 ቀን 2016 ዓ.ም ስለሚገቡ ለእርሳቸው እና ለእጅ ሞባይል ስልካቸው ፓስ እንዲሰጣቸው የተለመደ ትብብር እንድታደርጉልን በትህትና እንጠይቃለን።

ማሳሰቢያ: የእጅ ስልካቸውን የሚጠቀሙት ለኤሌክትሮኒክስ ዳታ ኮሌክሽን ብቻ ነው።

<u>Name</u>	<u>ID No</u>
Thomas Gebrecherkos Gebremichael	00019305

ለሚደረግልን ትብብር በትድሚያ እናመሰግናለን።

ከሰላምታ ጋር  
  
 ማተብ ጽኑ-ን  
 የሰው ሀብት ልማት እና  
 ታላንት ማኔጅመንት ማኅፀር

