



Addis Ababa University
School of Commerce
Department of Marketing Management

**The Effect of Digital Marketing on Service Delivery Enhancement:
The Case of Ethiopian Airlines Group**

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Submitted by: **Genet W/Michael**

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Addis Ababa

Declaration

I, Genet W/Michael Minuta, hereby declare that this research paper entitled “The Effect of Digital Marketing on Service Delivery Enhancement: The Case of Ethiopian Airlines Group”, is my original work and has not been used by others for any other requirements in any other university and all sources of information in the study have been appropriately acknowledged.

Declared by: Genet W/Michael Minuta (Mrs.)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Addis Ababa University, School of Commerce

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This is to certify that the thesis is prepared by Genet W/Michael, entitled; **The Effect of Digital Marketing on Service Delivery Enhancement: The Case of Ethiopian Airlines Group**, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Masters of Arts in Marketing Management with the regulation of the University and the accepted standards with respect to originality.

APPROVED BY BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Thesis Advisor: _____ Signature: _____

Internal Examiner: _____ Signature: _____

External Examiner: _____ Signature: _____

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ABSTRACT

In today's business world it has seen a significant shift in the global economic paradigm as digital marketing has succeeded traditional marketing. Digital marketing has become a major marketing engine in the last decade since it has reached every household. The usage of digital marketing, including search engine optimization, email marketing, content marketing, affiliate marketing, and social media marketing, is growing along with the rapid advancement of technology. This study's objective was to determine the impact of Digital Marketing on Service Delivery Enhancement and provides insight into the impacts of digitalized marketing on the service delivery enhancement taking the case of Ethiopian Airlines Group based on a 320-questionnaire distributed to passengers arriving, transferring and departing to and from Addis Ababa Bole international terminal. Convenient sampling technique was employed and the collected data were analyzed using percentage, mean-scores, and standard deviation, correlation and regression analyses. The result of the study indicates that the digital marketing dimensions: Social Media marketing shows a positive relationship with service delivery enhancement at ($r=0.605$, $p<0.01$) and in case of content marketing shows a positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.290$, $p<0.01$). The other dimension email marketing also shows a strong positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.606$, $p<0.01$). The dimension search engine optimization shows also a positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.402$, $p<0.01$) and the dimension affiliate marketing shows a moderate positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.331$, $p<0.01$). There is obvious gap between passengers' expectations and their assessment of the quality of the services rendered by Ethiopian Airlines Group and the quality of airline service delivery significantly and favorably affects airline customer satisfaction. Additionally, the outcomes demonstrated that every factor influencing digital marketing improved the airlines' ability to provide services in a favorable and meaningful way. In addition, the results demonstrated that content marketing, affiliate marketing and email marketing were the most important factor influencing the airlines' service delivery quality improvement followed by search engine optimization and social media marketing respectively. In conclusion digital marketing strategies simplify customer service by offering alternative transactions through digital platforms, reducing wait times and line waiting, and increasing comfort through online check-in and baggage services and the results of the study can be used by the airline, regulators, and policymakers to evaluate the impact of digital marketing on enhancing quality of service delivery. The recommendations can help airlines enhance their digital marketing strategies, staying updated with emerging trends to maintain relevance, engage with customers, and provide unique experiences in the rapidly evolving digital landscape. It is anticipated that the findings of this research could serve as a foundational resource for the creation of digital marketing strategies for airlines.

Key Words: *Ethiopian Airlines Group, Digital Marketing, Service delivery enhancement.*

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List of Acronyms:

ANOVA – Analysis of Variance

B2B – Business to Business

BSP –Billing and Settlement Plan of IATA

EAG – Ethiopian Airlines Group

FFP – Frequent Flyer Program

GDS – Global Distribution System

IATA – International Air Transportation Association

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

IMC – Integrated Marketing Communication

PPC – Pay per click

SEO – Search Engine Optimization

SPSS – Statistical Package for Social Science

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

Businesses now need to concentrate on the digital market due to the rising internet usage among consumers. Businesses must make a positive and long-lasting impression on customers in order to build their brand, especially with the increasing importance of digital marketing tools and tactics. Businesses of all sizes have come to rely heavily on social media to conduct views and engage with their customers in an effort to raise brand awareness, forge a strong and distinctive identity, and ultimately increase revenue (Seo E., Park, 2018).

Non-internet outlets that provide digital media, such as television, cellphones, callbacks, and mobile ringtones for on-hold messaging, are included in the category of digital marketing. The spread to non-internet channels is what distinguishes online from digital marketing. In recent times, internet marketing has gained popularity, and research has shown that it is more effective than traditional marketing strategies in building customer confidence in the brand and buy intent (Altidal M, 2013).

The primary means of promoting the company's brand to consumers is digital marketing. Digital marketing uses the internet, mobile applications, and other new media platforms to carry out a range of tasks that advance the brand of the organization. Additional names used to describe digital marketing include interactive marketing, online marketing, e-marketing, and web marketing (Chloe T, 2019).

On the other hand, customers have vast range of choices in today's competitive marketing environment. This is mainly because they are exposed to many choices in the online market and they have to make quick decisions based on the service quality they ought to buy which can be catered for by their disposable income. Branding of products and services is one of the strategies that companies may adopt to attract customers to the services they offer and to ensure the services get picked and re-picked (Fengjiao Zhang, 2017).

With the use of modern technology and digitization, marketers may now create a variety of campaigning strategies to reach more people. Advertising from a database to a certain section, digital

tape commercials, high-quality message advertisements, well-known advertisements, interactive and gaming advertisements, and many more are examples of campaigning programs (Chloe T. 2019). The airline industry is employing digital marketing strategies and technologies with discipline to outperform its competitors.

The airlines operate in a competitive market with a wide range of customers, and the aviation sector has grown more competitive than it was in the past. Airlines have been depending on process automation to keep costs down, as operational costs rise for a variety of reasons, including fuel prices, operation handling costs, the cost of maintaining and renewing aircraft, landing and parking fees, and labor expenses that led to the use of several digital marketing tools and strategies (Parsons A., Zeisser M., Waitman R., 1998).

Likewise, in order to outperform competitors, marketers are being forced to increase their marketing and advertising budgets due to intensifying competition in the airline sector. In the shape of interactive media, new channels for customer-business communication and interaction have emerged when paired with the other key components of the marketing mix, yields higher outcomes. Interactive media and unique characteristics in marketing have made it possible to compete in an essential market without being constrained by technology (Chloe T, 2019).

There has been a consistent increase in demand for air transportation services worldwide. An analysis of the aviation sector globally reveals noticeable increase in demand, with potential for expansion in both developed and developing nations. Air travel is the fastest means for moving both people and commodities. Air travel is crucial for landlocked countries such as Ethiopia. Landlocked countries' capacity to flourish economically and socially depends on the availability of safe, efficient air transportation (ESCFAP, 2017).

1.2 Background of the Company

Ethiopian Airlines Group (EAG)¹, which operates under the motto *Bringing Africa Together and Beyond*, aiming to connect Africa to the rest of the world, established in December 21, 1945 and started its operation with five C-47 aircraft operating its debut flight to Cairo Via Asmara on April 8, 1946. Since then, it has been growing in leaps and bounds and continued to introduce cutting edge aviation technology and systems. It is fully, 100%, owned by the Government and based in Ethiopia's capital city, Addis Ababa with its headquarters at Bole International Airport (EAG Website).

In the late 1950s, the network of international routes was extended northward, first to Athens and subsequently to Frankfurt. Through Khartoum - Sudan; Lagos - Nigeria; and Accra - Ghana, a second leg was added in 1960, extended to Monrovia - Liberia. Given that it was the first East-West link to the continent since the colonial era, this was seen as a significant development in African aviation. Before then, travelers would use hubs in Europe to connect to other African nations (EAG Website).

The airline currently operates daily and multiple flights to over 135 passenger and cargo destinations across five continents, including 63 places in Africa, with a minimum layover in Addis. More destinations within Africa are served by Ethiopian than by any other airline, making it a seasoned carrier with a broad intra-African network (EAG website). This objective is facilitated by the youngest and most advanced fleets. By offering ground services, domestic and regional service, aviation education, flight catering, maintenance repair and overhaul, safe, customer-focused, market-driven passenger and cargo transportation, and hotel services by 2035, Ethiopian Airlines wants to be the most successful and well-known aviation company in Africa (Ethiopian Airlines Vision 2035 and Strategic Roadmap, 2020). In December 2011, Ethiopian Airlines took a high step forward and joined Star Alliance group, the biggest airline network in the world. The airline has won numerous awards throughout the years, including Best Airline in Africa for multiple years running and Skytrax's Four-Star Airline rating (EAG Website).

¹ Since Ethiopian Airline's establishment in 1945, its official name has been changed several times, like from Ethiopian Air Lines around 1965 to 'ETHIOPIAN' and recently to Ethiopian Airlines Group, with expansion of its range of services representing a group of business units.

Ethiopian Airlines Group began digital marketing in 2002 per the arrangement with Amadeus. This company distributed a system that allowed airlines to offer online booking, although it was later modified. Later in 2006, Sabre Company upgraded the e-ticketing system for Ethiopian Airlines Group by installing new software. The airlines continue to use the Sabre Sonic Web because it offers improved online booking and ticketing services (EAG: Selamta Magazine, 2009). In Texas, USA, Sabre Corporation is the top supplier of technology to the international travel business. EAG signed up for Sabre Passenger in 2017 and started using the application and intelligence sharing that enables carriers to quickly solve specific concerns. With the release of its exclusive Micro-App bundle, the airline will be able to lead innovation and provide first-rate customer service (<https://marketplace.sabre.com/ix>).

Currently 47% of the airline sales is through online channels including B2B, Web and mobile and 44% is through global distribution channels that includes Sabre, Amadeus, Travelport etc. and the remaining 9% is through the airline's ticket offices (Ethiopian Airlines Group: Distribution Department report 2024). The online channel contributes for substantial cost saving strategy as the airline pays huge sum of money to Global Distribution System (GDS) per segment of tickets issued and service fees, billing and settlement plan (BSP) service charges and commission and incentives to travel agents.

Employee workloads are reduced as a result of digitalization. Companies increase customer satisfaction by making it simpler for their clients to obtain what they desire. Furthermore, digital marketing reaches a larger audience than traditional marketing does. Because the aviation industry uses digital marketing strategies, consumers are drawn to it (Smith B.A. 2011). This study examined the digital marketing landscape, the digitization of the aviation industry, and the effects of digital marketing elements on the quality of service provided by the industry.

In the aviation sector, the main benefits of digital marketing include enhancing user experience, offering rich content to customers, boosting productivity, streamlining transactions, showcasing airport amenities in a digital setting, decreasing workloads, and raising customer satisfaction.

Ethiopian Airlines Group (EAG) uses digital marketing widely. EAG employs the promotion and benefits of many global values as a tactic for digital marketing. The company's corporate application, corporate website, and services offered on other websites are all beneficial to customers. The

services and processes used during the trip are described on its company website. Additionally, it offers customers ticketing, hotel reservations, vehicle rentals, and trip insurance (ETG annual report, 2022).

On its corporate website, EAG not only provides campaigns, promotions, and many language options for its consumers, but it also updates them about current happenings. For instance, EAG broadcast the safety procedures and guidelines used during the trip on its website and other digital platforms, and also informed customers about the consequences of the 2019 Covid-19 pandemic. Through digital platforms, EAG has kept its customers informed about the latest measures implemented by the government, the airport, staff, and passengers during the Covid-19 pandemic. It has also announced to its customers how this crisis is being managed via its digital platform.

EAG has a corporate account on the digital channels that it uses. EAG uses a variety of social media platforms. For instance, EAG's Instagram account now features innovations that are visually appealing and communicated to its followers. On social media, campaigns for charity and social responsibility are shared. Through digital media, the firm promotes the travel and entertainment sectors. In addition, it shares information on the places it serves with its customers, including those elements that may capture their interest. Compared to the Instagram app, EAG utilizes its Twitter account more formally. Usually, the company uses this social media platform to share its latest news. It also offers feedback on complaints raised by customers (EAG Public Relations Department, 2022).

Regarding EAG's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter looks combined. Only official news is shared by the firm on the LinkedIn app. The business uses its YouTube channel in a manner like to that of the Instagram app, but it additionally employs long-form videos for promotion. In its films, EAG makes use of the businesses it partners with or promotes. The firm discusses topics including news, product and service marketing, interviews, and more in the videos that it posts on YouTube.

In addition to its website, EAG offers customers access to its own mobile application. Under the brand name "Ethiopian Airlines" developer, it has deployed a number of programs. For instance, it provides services such as ticket purchase, hotel reservations, automobile rentals, identifying tourist attractions, and membership cards. EAG is present on prominent social media sites including YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter with official profiles. Customers may get travel news, promotions, announcements about new destinations, and other corporate information via

these pages. Additionally, it replies to inquiries, acknowledges customer feedback, and answers comments from its followers via social media in an interactive manner. Furthermore, it organizes contests, hashtag campaigns, and special events to keep users interested. In order to provide quality content, EAG gives importance to visuals on its social media platforms. These contain pictures from trips, aviation adventures, locations and fascinating articles about the airline sector. Also offered are a variety of materials, including consumer testimonials, videos, and interviews (EAG PR Department, 2022).

Ethiopian Airlines Group, like its rivals, benefits greatly from digital marketing as it helps the airline grow its customer base, improve customer satisfaction, and increase revenue. Digital marketing for airlines makes it feasible to engage with customers at every stage of their journey. The companies that gain from the growth of travel include airlines, airports, infrastructure suppliers, and of course customers. In a number of settings, including as online reservations and check-in, airport services, and passenger guidance, digital technology have been employed to enhance client experiences (EAG Annual report, 2022).

The airline sector is known for being volatile, unpredictable, complex, and uncertain. Due to this challenging economic environment, the industry has suffered, and the new development of services to and from nearly every continent has been negatively impacted. In an attempt to lessen the risks, Ethiopian Airlines has aggressively expanded its commercial businesses into, like aviation training, aircraft repair, cargo, catering, and even hotel service. Understanding the potential of the medium of interface and realizing that adoption of electronic marketing is essential for success in a market marked by thin profit margin and fierce competition, Ethiopian Airlines Group established digital sales and Integrated Marketing Communication, IMC, Division with goal streamlining customer-focused processes through the use of digital platforms (EAG Annual Report, 2022).

Since digital marketing in airline industry is continuing to grow at a rapid pace, airlines focus on the digital marketing strategies is crucial. By analyzing the current online marketing status of the airline and after reviewing the airlines presentation in utilizing digital technologies through digital marketing, this study will do assessment on the airlines digital marketing performance with respect to the customers' expectation on the service delivery quality in the stiff airline market competition to give insights on improvement areas for better service delivery.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Marketing that uses digital technology, such as smartphones, desktop computers, and other digital media and platforms, to advertise products and services online is known as digital marketing (Anshu D., 2021). By creating cutting-edge procedures and fusing technology and conventional marketing techniques, digital marketing allows a person or business to communicate effectively with consumers. Digital marketing encompasses marketing methods that do not require internet access in addition to those that do require. After technology first appeared in the 1990s and 2000s, the way companies and brands use it for marketing has changed. Digital marketing campaigns, which use a variety of techniques such as search engine optimization, SEO, content marketing, influencer marketing, content automation, campaign marketing, data-driven marketing, e-commerce marketing, social media marketing, e-mail direct marketing, display advertising, e-books, optical disks, and games, have become commonplace as people use digital devices more frequently in place of physical stores and as digital platforms become increasingly integrated into daily life and marketing strategies. In addition to the Internet, digital marketing also includes offline platforms that offer digital media, such television, cell phones, callbacks, and mobile ringtones for while you're on hold. Digital marketing is distinguished by its expansion to non-Internet platforms from online marketing (Anshu D., 2021).

Aviation is a sector that employs high-tech products. As a result, it's categorized as an industry that requires significant investment. The technology and aviation products employed by the aviation industry are expensive (Anshu D, 2021). Information technology is developing at a rapid pace, giving airlines new tools to sell and distribute their products and services, enhance customer experience, and draw in new consumers in many sectors of airline operations (Anshu D, 2021).

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is no published study done on the impact of digital marketing on service delivery enhancement in the case of Ethiopian airlines. The researcher believes this research will have theoretical value by adding knowledge on pointing out the effects of digital marketing on the service delivery improvement of Ethiopian Airlines. Therefore, this research fills the literature gap by studying how digital marketing affects the service delivery quality of the airline. Again it has a practical significance by enabling Ethiopian Airlines to focus on the importance of

digital marketing to the improvement of service delivery quality. In general, this research hopes to establish service delivery improvement through digital marketing strategy.

Moreover, the research attempts to reply to the following inquiries:

- What are the basic digital marketing dimensions that have influence on service delivery?
- What are the relationships between digital marketing and service delivery enhancement in EAG?
- What are the gaps between Ethiopian airlines digital marketing and the customer needs to be satisfied?
- What are the possible factors responsible for shifting the growth of digital marketing in EAG?

1.4 Research Question;

Main research question of the study: What is the effect of digital marketing in service delivery improvement in the case of EAG?

Sub research questions of the study:

- To what extent does social media marketing affect service delivery improvement in EAG?
- To what extent does content marketing affect service delivery improvement in EAG?
- To what extent does email marketing affect service delivery improvement in EAG?
- To what extent does search engine optimization affect service delivery improvement in EAG?
- To what extent does affiliate marketing affect the service delivery improvement in EAG?

1.5 Objectives of the study

1.5.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study is to identify the effect of digital marketing on service delivery enhancement, in Ethiopian Airlines Group.

1.5.2 The Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To examine the impact of social media marketing on service delivery improvement.
- To find out how content marketing affects service delivery improvement.

- To assess the impact of email marketing on service delivery improvement.
- To investigate how search engine optimization (SEO) affects service delivery improvement.
- To examine the impact of affiliate marketing on service delivery improvement.

1.6 Hypotheses of the Study

Research questions are frequently used by authors in quantitative proposals. A more formal research statement, however, makes use of hypotheses. These concepts, which may also be expressed as alternative hypotheses that detail the precise outcomes to be anticipated, are forecasts of how the results will turn out. As a result, the research has developed the following hypothesis for the study:

H1: Social media marketing has a significant positive influence on service delivery improvement.

H2: Content Marketing has a significant positive influence on service delivery improvement,

H3: Email Marketing has a significant positive influence on service delivery improvement,

H4: Search Engine Optimization (SEO) has a significant positive influence on service delivery improvement,

H5: Affiliate Marketing has a significant positive influence on service delivery improvement,

1.7 Significance of the study

The airline industry is complex, dynamic and very competitive. Decisions need to be taken every minutes and hours by the stakeholders but data may not be readily available at all levels. Yet, Airline management needs quick, reliable and consistent data in order to make the right decisions. The findings of this study can be used by the airline and other carriers to evaluate the impact of digital marketing on quality of service delivery. The survey revealed customers' perception of the quality of service delivery is strongly correlated with digital marketing.

The study has the following importance:

- The findings of the study will give important insight to the business entity to identify the interest of its customers and provide customer focused offers and solutions,
- Assists the airline in determining its digital marketing strengths and weaknesses, which may be leveraged to delight and retain passengers.

- It will provide insight about the gap between customers' expectation on digital services and ways to improve them.
- Policymakers may use this information to make decisions on Ethiopian Airlines' digital infrastructure by learning how digital technology affects the airline's performance.
- As a source of reference, it offers bases of interest for future researchers seeking to go deeper into the field.

1.8 Scope and Limitation of the study

Since the source of survey data for the study were questionnaires responses from the airlines customers, response rate were not to the level of our expectation. Some respondents were reluctant due to fatigue of long flight, rushing to collect their baggage, shortage of time etc., response shortage was one limitation of this research. The study was also limited at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport due to resource and time limitation. The study used convenience sampling technique using respondents who are willing and at ease to participate in the research.

1.9 Organization of the Paper

The study is organized in five chapters. Chapter One covers Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Basic Research Questions, Objectives of the study, Hypotheses of the study, Significance of the study, and limitation/scope of the study. Chapter Two deals with the literature review: Review of Related Literature, Review of Empirical Literature and Conceptual Framework. Chapter Three describes the design of the research; Population and sampling techniques, Sources and instruments of data collection, Procedures of Data Collection, Methods of Data analysis, Reliability and Validity and Ethical Considerations. Chapter Four presents results/findings of the study and interpret and/or discuss the findings. Finally, Chapter Five summarizes the findings, show conclusions and recommendations, mentions limitation of the paper and further research area.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Literature review

2.1 Overview

This chapter will offer a review of the literature that has been specifically chosen to support the study's goals. The investigation will consider relevant book chapters and journal articles. The goal of the study is to enhance service delivery in general by using an efficient digital marketing approach, which this chapter will address. The study will focus on examining how digital marketing impacts the airline sector as a whole, and pertinent empirical studies will be discussed. A conceptual framework taken from theoretical and empirical literatures will be introduced in order to identify the elements of digital marketing that impact the enhancement of service delivery and the performance of the airline business.

2.1.1 Digital Technologies

Digital marketing is the practice of firms using digital technology to electronically sell their products and services to consumers. Individuals' daily lives are greatly impacted by technology-related gadgets such as phones, computers, and the internet. Customers may now access a broad variety of products thanks to digital channels. Digital marketing is a tool that businesses utilize to provide their customers several benefits. Digital marketing now includes several new techniques in addition to internet marketing. Text messages sent to mobile devices, television advertisements, posters, and billboard visual ads are examples of digital marketing features (Kohil A., 2017).

Digitalization has grown in importance across practically all industries in the age of rapidly advancing technology. Businesses using outdated systems are unable to remain operational in the modern technological environment (Kingsnorth S, 2019). For companies that still rely on outdated processes run slower than those that are savvy with digital tools and methodologies. For both the employee and the consumer, digital systems streamline the process (Shaw S., 2007).

With the increasing usage of digital platforms in people's everyday lives and marketing strategies, digital marketing campaigns have become conventional. Moreover, they are increasingly substituting

digital gadgets for real establishments. Many tactics, including search engine optimization, content marketing, influencer marketing, campaign marketing, content automation, data-driven marketing, e-commerce marketing, social media marketing, email direct marketing, display advertising, and e-books, are frequently combined in these campaigns (Anshu D., 2021).

According to Kohli A. (2017), who looked at how digital technologies affected market orientation, these tools have greatly improved an organization's ability to create, distribute, and react to market data. Although market positioning has been demonstrated to improve an organization's performance, his investigation did not find a link between an organization's revenue success and its digital market positioning. Service delivery in the aviation industry is greatly impacted by digitalization. Since all data will be transferred to digital platforms from outdated systems, digitization in this industry requires large and time-consuming financial investments. The process of digitalization may take longer than anticipated due to both human and technological considerations (Schwertner K. 2017).

According to study by Seo E. and Park J. (2018) on the significance of social media marketing on brand equity and customer reaction in the airline business, social media marketing activity has a considerable impact on brand awareness, brand image, and customer commitment. Social media marketing is an element of digital marketing that helps companies accomplish their branding and marketing goals by using the influence of well-known social media platforms (Samotalkova O, 2019). The study by Seo E. and Park J. surveyed passengers who utilize airline social media profiles. Unfortunately, the study merely examined the impacts of social media marketing and did not reach any conclusions on how it influenced the airlines' revenue performance.

Businesses may make sure customers can afford to buy their items through digital media by utilizing digital marketing. Products that use online marketing may sell for less money because there are no or very little out-of-pocket expenses, such as store charges (rent, shipping, attendant fee, etc.). Sellers can reach clients outside their local area by using internet marketing. It might sell in a number of global cities and nations using internet marketing. Businesses may use this to grow the size of their clientele. Companies can utilize digital marketing to advertise their brands and goods online. A new era in shopping has emerged as a result of online marketing upending established sales patterns.

The digital marketing industry is continuing to grow at a rapid pace. Businesses may promote their products and services to customers virtually by utilizing digital technology through digital marketing (Kingsnorth, 2019).

Digitalization is a modern need. An internet presence is essential for a business, as social media is widely used and anything can be discovered online. A business firm may better identify and serve customer demands with the use of a digital marketing strategy (Lockett, 2018).

One benefit of digital marketing, according to Lockett (2018), is that it is inexpensive yet still effective in attracting customers in 24 hours a day. The process of promoting and selling products and services online using digital and virtual environments is known as online marketing. Online business sellers can benefit from online marketing in addition to its drawbacks. The first benefit reduces the need for online stores as social media can serve as a marketing platform; the other makes it simple to contact customers through internet access and allows for two-way conversations at their own pace. Its drawbacks, however, are that some customers still like to see and examine goods or services in person and won't be willing to pay (Lockett, 2018).

With the development of digital marketing, a new era in technology has begun. Customers who want to take part in the auction can bid on the goods they want to purchase. When shopping digitally, customers prefer to utilize a computer or phone to access the products directly. Businesses should carefully use digital marketing in a highly competitive sector to increase their customer base and revenue (Wind J. 2002).

According to McKinsey research (2019), well-established businesses in a competitive market control 80% of the revenue in the digital marketing sector. Baltes (2016) conducted further study which indicates that since its inception, digital marketing has attempted to maintain prominent standards of customer satisfaction and attention. He asserts that it is possible to draw in clients used to traditional marketing strategies by utilizing digital marketing strategies. Additionally, according to Baltes, 80% of buyers pay more attention to the product title and picture than the product description. Digital marketing relies heavily on building consumer trust and brand loyalty (Baltes L. 2016). Digital marketing has shown to be an essential element in meeting consumer needs and improving relationships with customers in the airline industry. During the booking process, consumers use

electronic methods for services through phones, mobile devices, different airport check-in and check-out procedures, and even when visiting hotels (Baltes L. 2016).

Along with the general increase in Internet usage, there is an obvious rise in the rate at which individuals are using the Internet for personal needs like information access and shopping. People from all over the world may communicate with each other because of the internet. The internet is one resource that is accessible all the time. Users can't use the internet service unless they pay a set amount of money. Conversely, free internet may be found in public areas such as squares, cafés, and metro stations in many different countries (Schwertner K., 2017).

By polling passengers who utilize airline social media platforms, Seo E. and Park J. (2018) investigated how social media marketing activities affects customer response and brand equity in the airline business. They discovered that social media marketing activity significantly affected customer commitment, brand awareness, and brand image. But the research was limited to social media marketing's effects and did not draw any conclusions about how this would affect the customer service performance of the airlines.

According to Alam M. S., Wang D. and Waheed A. (2019) research, there is a favorable correlation between digital marketing and consumers' impulsive online purchasing preferences, irrespective of the customers' gender or educational attainment. Nevertheless, the research was limited to the behavioral consequences of digital marketing and did not draw any conclusions regarding the impact on businesses' customer service enhancement.

After researching how digital technologies affect market orientation, Kohli A. (2017) came to the conclusion that these technologies have allowed firms to become far more adept at producing, sharing, and acting upon market knowledge. This study failed not demonstrate the relationship between an organization's customer service performance and its digital market orientation, despite the fact that market positioning has been demonstrated to have a favorable impact on firms' performance.

Reaching and interacting with customers directly, without using a middleman, is known as direct marketing. Through email, the internet, online services, and traditional media like print and broadcast media, businesses can now directly reach out to customers with their products and services

thanks to the expansion of media. According to Kotler P. (2000), creative marketers are combining traditional and new media in unique ways to target offers more accurately recognize their most promising prospects, and present direct, customized offers to their existing customers. They demonstrate also how the world of new media has increased competitiveness, forcing both small and large firms to participate in an ongoing, worldwide struggle for customers, despite the wide range of marketing tools at their disposal. Consequently, the key to the most successful direct and online marketing campaigns is long-term relationship management with customers. Businesses may now tailor their media, offers, and messaging for more successful one-to-one marketing by using the data in their client databases to inform their creativity. which will ultimately lead to deeper, more profitable connections with their target audience, Kotler P (2000).

2.1.2 Digital Marketing in the Airlines Industry

Airlines were obliged to refocus their strategy on technical advancements in order to increase their competitiveness due to the advent of the internet mid-1990s and creation of intranets and extranets (Buhalis, 2004). Thus, it appears that this is what motivated the airline industry to consider the internet as a significant chance to cut expenses and redesign the business's structure. Although the aviation sector does not always enjoy stability, its profits are thought to be the highest of all the sectors. Since 2005, the airline industry has been constantly innovating. Airlines prioritize being unique in order to establish themselves as industry leaders. The majority of the inventions raised from the several low-cost strategies (Muktar S. Al Hasimi, 2018).

The airline industry is expanding at a very rapid rate. An IATA study projects that by 2034; there will be 7.3 billion passengers worldwide. Author Surabhi Ghosh Chatter Jee claims that in addition to being inconvenient for travelers, aircraft delays and operational inefficiencies cost the airline industry a lot of money. The journey time, fuel consumption, and flight route are projected to be between 18% and 22% inefficient for any given trip, and the operator loses \$81 each minute on an inactive aircraft. More than ever, technologically based solutions are required to address such inefficiencies. Airlines were the pioneers of the e-market, and as of right now, the majority of online product sales are plane tickets, according to Yang (2001). It shows that online sales bring greater benefits to airlines than to any other industry. Besides, using ICT tools made the industry re-engineer itself as it introduces a number of ICT-enabled innovations such as

electronic/paperless tickets, transparent and clear pricing led by proactive and retroactive yield management.

2.1.3 Service Marketing:

Six features of contemporary service marketing are listed by Jobber D. & Lancaster G. (2009) as below:

Customer retention and deletion: Investing resources in retaining existing, highly profitable, and high-potential customers is essential. Smaller customers, whose service expenses surpass income, should be dropped by the company, or alternative, reasonably priced servicing channels like the internet or telemarketing should be explored.

Database and knowledge management: The modern sales team has to be trained in the creation and use of customer databases, as well as how to use the internet to help with sales duties like identifying competitors and customer information..

Customer relationship management: The sales team places more emphasis on creating win-win scenarios with customers than merely making the next deal because everyone wants to maintain the relationship and has something to gain from it.

Product marketing: In addition to tasks that support or enhance marketing activities like database management, information provision and analysis, and market segment assessment, a salesperson's expanding role includes participating in marketing activities like market development, product development, and market segmentation. Modern selling requires a few essential components, especially when dealing with businesses-to-business transactions: requirement discovery, problem solving, solution proposal, and implementation.

Problem Solving and system selling: that a large portion of contemporary sales, especially in business-to-business settings, rely on the salesman acting as a consultant, collaborating with the client to pinpoint issues, ascertain needs, and suggest and carry out workable solutions.

Satisfying needs and adding value: that the modern salesperson must have the ability to identify and satisfy customer needs and further stimulate need recognition.

2.1.4 Service Delivery Process in Airline Business:

Using airplanes to transfer people, luggage, freight, mail, and messengers between two destinations in a convenient location and time is known as air transport service. This technique of providing services integrates different, complimentary operations from many business sectors.

Because it is essential to their existence and competitiveness, airlines must place a high priority on customer satisfaction. Offering excellent, dependable customer service at every soft touch point is one of the best strategies airlines can use to draw in and retain customers. The level of service quality has an impact on client satisfaction. Most researchers revealed that the standard of the airline service delivery process affects consumer satisfaction, which in turn leads to consumers' loyalty and repeat business (Kelley, 2012).

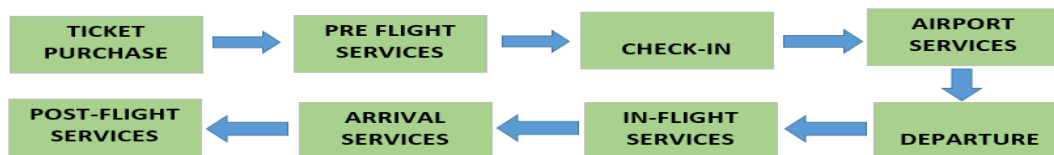


Fig. 2.1.4 Service Delivery Process (Kelley, 2012)

The below table elaborates in detail the three service delivery stages, pre-flight service, in-flight service and post-flight service delivery processes.

<i>Service Delivery Stages</i>	<i>Service Attributes</i>
Pre-Flight Service	i) Reservation and ticket purchase
	- Ticket fares and flexibility for change
	- Schedule convenience and frequency of flights
	ii) Airport ground Services
	- Ground service staff availability
	- Signs at airport
	iii) Check-in services
	- Lines check-in counters
	- Baggage check-in services
	- Boarding gate line wait
	iv) Brand image
	- Airline reputation
- Type of aircraft, availability of different classes	
v) Security procedures and process	
vi) On-time departure	
In-Flight Services	i) Cabin staff services
	- Attentiveness of the crew
	- Courtesy & friendliness of the crew
	- Efficiency and professionalism
	- Adequate announcements about the flight
	ii) Quality of Food
	- Quality and quantity of meals
	- Consistency of meal standard
	iii) Inside cabin attributes
	- Seat and width of the cabin
- Cabin comfort, cleanliness and attraction	
vi) Inflight entertainment services	
- Movies, audios, games quality and availability	
Post-Flight Services	i) On-time arrival
	ii) Wait time for luggage
	iii) Availability of support during luggage delay
	iv) Lost and damaged baggage handling procedures
	v) Complaint handling procedures

Table 2.1.5 Service Delivery stages and attributes - (source - Kelley, 2012)

The table above illustrates the service delivery stages and attributes in airlines business.

2.2 Theoretical Literature Review

2.2.1. Porter's Five Competitive Market Forces theory in Airlines Industry:

When conducting strategic operations, Michael E. Porter's model of the five competitive market forces is an essential tool for analyzing the industrial structure of a firm. Porter has identified five competitive forces that affect all markets and industries. His approach is based on the idea that a

business plan should take into account the opportunities and hazards that an organization's external environment brings. These elements regulate the degree of rivalry, which influences the attractiveness and profitability of an industry. Corporate strategy should be focused on altering these competitive elements in a way that improves the organization's position. Porter's model provides assistance for an examination of the elements that drive an industry. With the information gathered from the Five Forces Analysis, management can decide how to exert influence or take advantage of particular characteristics of the industry (Porter, 1980).

The competition between already-existing businesses, the threat of substitutes, the threat of new entrants, the bargaining power of suppliers, and the threat of customers are the five market forces that are shown below as helpful marketing tools for marketing strategy because they enable to assess current strategic position and make future plans.

Rivalry amongst existing firms

Porter claims that long-standing companies are often the source of real rivalry and the spark for change in many sectors. These well-established businesses frequently have similarities with one another when it comes to their issues and weaknesses as well as their strengths. Only at the margins of their operations can they perceive the advantages of fierce competition (Porter, 1980).

Threat of Substitutes

Porter suggests that there are two potential causes of disruption to the long-established enterprises' competitive equilibrium. The first is substitution. When businesses in a different industry discover a fresh and more effective method of satisfying the identical customer demands that the established companies are aiming to satisfy, substitution takes place. Airlines are now dealing with a number of substitution-related problems. Among them are the effects of digital communication tools, such as email, videoconferencing, and teleconferencing, on the market for business air travel. Customers have the option to switch out a product or service for another. This differs from just moving your product usage to a new company that is a complete product flip (Porter, 1980).

Threat of New Entry

The second factor that shakes off the existing participants' competitive balance is new entrants. There are very few new entrants in the modern aviation sector, especially in point-to-point, short-haul transportation. This is due to the numerous potential entrance barriers. Airport slots, resources, economies of scale, and regulatory restrictions are a few of the obstacles. Naturally, new entrants are more likely to come in a business that is seen as attractive. An excessive number of new competitors will reduce industry profitability and make the sector less attractive to consumers. The biggest companies, who have a monopoly-like position in the sector, can reduce or even prevent the entry of new players (Porter, 1980).

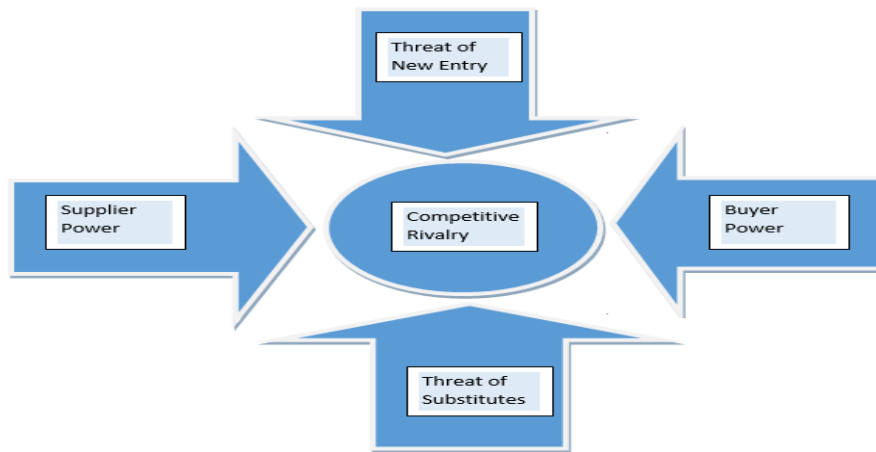
Bargaining Power of Customers

According to Porter, a key factor in determining a company's profitability in any given business is the power of its consumers. Two factors, in turn, will influence a company's customer power: the quantity of its customers and the presence of switching costs. There will be a sizable number of consumers if a business has a huge client base and some of these defects to the competitors. But if the business is small, losing one of its customers will result in the loss of at least one-third of its income. Customers will have a lot of negotiating power in this scenario (Porter, 1980).

Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Porter emphasizes his claim that monopolies that control the supply of essential resources would allow their suppliers to set prices that not only guarantee their own high profits but also severely restrict the profitability of the companies they supply. This is particularly true when a business is completely dependent on these suppliers. Airlines will be significantly impacted by the list of suppliers that may possess monopolistic power. For instance, airport services are provided by the airport, and many airlines are forced to pay the fees that are imposed. Given their monopolistic position, a large number of airports continue to generate substantial financial returns. Suppliers that are in smaller numbers tend to have greater influence and charge higher costs (Porter, 1980).

Figure 2.2.1 Porter's Five Forces



Source: Porter's Five Forces Analysis, (Shaw, 2007)

2.2.2. The 5S Digital Marketing Models:

To review and define the major objectives of digital marketing in an organization the 5S digital marketing model can be used as a simple framework (Dave Chaffey, 2020). According to Dave Chaffey, (2020) the 5S Digital Marketing Models are illustrated below:

Sells – Grow sales: includes sales from physical channels that are impacted by online activity as well as direct online sales where things can be offered online. Attained by offering a larger selection of products than in-store, lowering pricing in comparison to other channels, or expanding distribution to reach clients that are unable to be served offline. The main target is customer acquisition and retention.

Serve – Add value: Attained by providing customers with additional benefits online or by using online feedback and interaction to improve product development. The goal is customer satisfaction.

Speak – Get closer to customers: Using conversation marketing to create a two-way discussion through online engagements such as live chat and forums, as well as formal surveys and casual conversation monitoring to get insights about the online market. The target is on the number of engaged customers.

Save – Save costs: Reductions in labour, printing, storage charges, and postal expenses are attained through online correspondence, sales, and service transactions. 'Web self-service,' when users respond to inquiries using online resources, also results in savings. The objective is to gain quantified efficiency.

Sizzle – Extend the brand online: Can be achieved by presenting novel ideas, new offers, and new experiences such as fostering community development.



Figure 2.2.1 The 5S Digital Marketing Model
Source: Dave Chaffey, 5S Digital Marketing Model, 2020

2.3 Empirical review

Some researchers have conducted related studies, however no research is found that is conducted regarding the impact of digital marketing on service delivery improvement in the case of the airline. It is crucial to provide a brief summary of related previous studies done in the area in order to organize the topic properly and highlight the importance of current research. Only a small number of studies that directly or indirectly influence this study have been compiled, despite the fact that the review elaborates on a significant number of studies. In order to support this study thesis, these research articles are examined to get background knowledge on the procedures, systems, and experiences. It contributed to the creation of a framework and frame of reference for the digital marketing service sector as a whole.

No	Authors & Year of Publication	Research Title and Methodology	Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis Researched	Major findings
1	Ayodeji Awokunle (2021)	Digital Marketing effect on customer satisfaction; Cross sectoral study in Nigeria Descriptive, quantitative research method	IV: Email marketing, search engine marketing, social media marketing DV: Customer satisfaction	The result of regression analysis revealed that the digital marketing attributes have significant effect on customer satisfaction.
2	Eden Melkamu (2020)	The effect of online marketing on customer satisfaction; the case of Ethiopian Airlines Descriptive, quantitative method	IV: Website design, payment security, ease of shopping, accurate service information, online price, delivery service DV: Customer satisfaction	The online service delivery has insignificant effect on customer satisfaction.
3	Azeb Mezgebe (2020)	Effect of Electronic marketing on customer satisfaction; the case of four star Hotels in Addis Ababa Exploratory, quantitative	IV: Location facets, technological facets, social skill, motivation, technical skill DV: Customer satisfaction	The result shows e-marketing attributes have positive effect on customer satisfaction.
4	Netsanet Tadesse (2021)	The role of digital marketing in manufacturing industries: the case of textile and garment manufacturing industries in Addis Ababa Descriptive	IV: Search engine marketing, social media marketing, website, email marketing, pay per click, SEO DV: Business performance	The result of the regression analysis shows there is insignificant effect of digital marketing on manufacturing industries.
5	Mary Legesse (2016)	Determinants of online ticket purchase behaviour; An empirical study of Ethiopian Airlines Descriptive, quantitative	IV: Perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived convenience, perceived trust DV: Online ticket purchase	The result of the study reveals that perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived convenience and perceived trust have positive and strong relation with online ticket purchase behaviour.
6	Getnet G/Yohannes (2021)	The effect of digital sales on Revenue maximization: the case of Ethiopian Airlines Descriptive, quantitative	IV: Digitally connected customers, digital customer relationship management, product/service offer digitally, digital delivery of services DV: Maximized revenue	The regression analysis result show digital delivery of products/services came out to have no significant effect on company revenue maximization.

Table 2.3 Summary of reviewed researches on related topics with their attributes

Definition: IV: Independent Variables and DV: Dependent Variables

Source: Researcher own compilation

2.4 Factors Affecting Digital Marketing Practices

Among the different influencing factors the following eight factors are reviewed in relation to digital marketing: Perceived usefulness, Perceived risk, ease to use, infrastructures, security, trust, behavioural control and subjective norm are the most popular factors employed to explain online customer practice (Athiyaman A. 2002).

Perceived Usefulness

Perceived usefulness, according to Athiyaman A. (2002), is the extent to which a person believes that using a certain system would enhance their performance. Alam, M.S. (2019) revealed that, in the context of online consumer behaviour, perceived usefulness has a substantial impact on intentions to purchase. It made clear that the likelihood of a certain result from an activity influences a person's behavior selections. The consequences of travellers buying tickets online serve as a great example of this aspect.

Perceived Ease of Use

Perceived ease of use (Alam, M.S. 2019) is the degree to which a person believes that using a particular technology would be simple. Perceived ease of use has been a major focus of IT adoption research. Chen and associates found that people's opinions about internet shopping are impacted. According to Athiyaman (2002), perceived utility impacts usage intention, that may be impacted by perceived ease of use. In the context of airline marketing, user-friendliness is linked to a website that is simple to use and intuitive, as well as mobile applications that can improve customer satisfaction by simplifying and accelerating the execution of online marketing campaigns.

Subjective Norm

A person's sense of social pressure to engage in or refrain from engaging in the behavior in question is referred to as a subjective norm (Athiyaman, 2002). Several researches have demonstrated the relationship between behavioral intentions and subjective norms. According to Davis (1993), research conducted in organizational contexts has demonstrated the significant influence of subjective norm on behavioral intention. Additionally, subjective standards may have a greater impact early on in the system's deployment, according to Athiyaman A. (2002). Examining respondents who buy electronic tickets from a certain company's website via an agent is the focus of

subjective norms. It works by asking them how much their thoughts may affect other people's attitudes in their own decision-making.

Perceived Behavioral Control

One's perception of how simple or complex an activity is to complete is known as perceived behavioral control (Athiyaman, 2002). Because an individual may be prevented from doing an action by their surroundings, even when they intend to, perceived behavioral control plays a crucial role in understanding human behavior. When it comes to online purchasing, behavioral control elements such as computer access, Internet connection, and the availability of help are crucial in promoting online marketing behavior. In the field of online consumer behavior, there has been much discussion on the impact of perceived behavioral control on the desire to purchase online as well as the actual purchasing behavior.

Perceived Trust

According to Foxall, G. R. (1997), the ability to rely on someone you have faith in as a confidant is known as trust.. Compared to traditional purchasing, online marketing is a new type of business activity that usually carries a greater degree of risk and uncertainty. Furthermore, trust has turned into a critical component of e-business success; companies with the strongest reputations for protecting the privacy and security of customer and corporate data will thrive. Because of this, the idea of trust assumes significant importance when discussing online customer behavior. According to a research by Foxall, G. R.(1997), trust is a key factor in determining an individual's attitude toward online buying.

Infrastructure

Effective logistics networks inside a nation are essential for e-commerce to succeed. Building reliable and secure payment systems is essential to preventing frauds and other illegal activities as it continues to rise, according to Foxall, G. R.(1997). Digital marketing infrastructure growth is accelerated by factors such as government policies, political will, and the economic and geographic makeup of the county. Three infrastructural systems exist, according to Foxall, G. R.(1997). These are: communication, payment, distribution and delivery.

Security

Security services that provide protection against safety threats include identification, verification, privacy, honesty, access control, and non-reputation, according to Foxall, G. R.(1997). Consistent with this element, the study affirms that security constituted the second primary driver of online payment. This suggests that e-payment lacks security, has gaps in its communication about security concerns across several channels, and offers no guarantees when it comes to the e-payment services transaction process.

Perceived Risk

Consumers' perceptions of uncertainty and unfavorable outcomes while making purchases online are referred to as perceived risk Athiyaman A. (2002). Foxall, G.R. (1997) state that there are several factors used to quantify perceived risk, including financial, performance, physical, psychological, social, and temporal dimensions. In order to gauge customers' psychological preparedness to embrace or reject the system and businesses' financial capacity to build the essential infrastructures to reduce customers' perception of a new system as risky, the risk associated with implementing an e-ticketing system would also be measured on those dimensions.

2.5 Digital Marketing as a Competitive Strategy;

In airline business with fierce competition, digital marketing is crucial. Businesses use tactics to advance and hold onto their market position. In this domain, a digital marketing strategy is crucial. Digital marketing allows businesses to sell their products globally and promote their brand. Announcements about campaigns and promotions may be made to the entire world easily.

Businesses that compete globally stay up to date with technological developments in order to improve their sales strategies. The production of products and services is a crucial step in this technological process. It is essential for companies to teach their employees so they can use the quickly developing technology. They therefore need to create novel approaches to make complex processes simpler. Companies may reduce employee stress by utilizing digital technologies. For instance, more precise sales and profitability figures may result from the products being connected to the digital world. As a consequence, the workload for the staff will be reduced. (Matt C. 2015).

Business competition is known to exist everywhere in the world. Companies have significant strategic prospects as a result of technological advancements and digitization. As highly competitive environment exists in the airline sector, majority of airlines worldwide have transformed their operations and are now using digital technology as a strategic weapon. Yet building and maintaining digital platforms are quite expensive. (Shaw S., 2007).

Apart from being an invaluable complement to conventional marketing in situations when it is insufficient, digital marketing has the potential to dramatically expand employment opportunities, which will strengthen the economy. Digital marketing operates in a virtual environment and may reach retailers globally. Digital marketing is essential for the airline sector. Airlines may use digital marketing to increase customer satisfaction. Customers can use a credit card to buy airline tickets online, and the digital application can handle all the required steps. They can use laptops, tablets, and cell phones to buy their tickets. Airlines may use digital media to introduce new services and promotions, which they can then provide to their regular passengers. (Matt C. 2015).

2.6 Digital Marketing Dimensions:

The dimensions of digital marketing consist of social media marketing, email marketing, content marketing, search engine optimization, pay-per-click advertising and affiliate marketing (Anshu Dikshant, 2021)

Social media marketing,

Social media is a type of digital marketing that reaches consumers through social networks like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Tik-Tok. It can be considered as a virtual platform that improves people's social connections. It combines data-driven strategies with the reach of social media platforms to reach specific customers. (Anshu D. 2021)

Whether through computers, mobile devices, or mobile apps social media offers the opportunity to reach a wide and targeted audience of possible consumers.

Examples of social media marketing include:

- Videos posted onto social media as a part of a larger campaign,

- Pictures posted on Instagram that reflect a brand's identity,

Content marketing,

Through unique content, such as blogs, articles, and newsletters content marketing establishes a connection with target consumers. By producing content that speaks to a certain target, it is frequently utilized to increase brand recognition. Information regarding a company's products and services is pertinently provided by content. Businesses may sell or promote their services by using various forms of content to present them. As a result, marketing by itself is insufficient to achieve the desired results and could minimize the significance of a company's product to the customer. (Anshu D. 2021)

Content marketing can take many forms across a range of digital media channels, including:

- Informative articles and blog posts
- Original videos
- Podcasts
- Newsletters (like Sub stack, Medium, or LinkedIn)

Email marketing,

To alert prospective consumers about specials, discounts, and new product releases, marketers send out timely emails to sizable lists of individuals who have subscribed to their contact list. Email marketing has a definite impact: With careful use, it may yield an average return on investment (ROI) of 4,200% for each dollar invested. (Anshu D. 2021)

Some common examples of emailing marketing include:

- Timed emails that raise brand awareness during holiday seasons
- Blast emails that inform recipients about upcoming sales events
- Targeted emails that send personalized offers and messages to specific groups on an email list

Search engine optimization (SEO),

Enhancing the position of online content on search engines like Google or Bing is the goal of the SEO approach. Digital marketers utilize SEO marketing to make sure that potential buyers can actually locate their products or services online in a congested online market. SEO often focuses on organic search phrases, which means that content creators produce material that organically fits in with and ranks for popular product search terms. Typically, search engine marketing tactics include paid and organic media, such as purchasing Google advertising. (Anshu D. 2021)

Some common ways to go about SEO include:

- Creating quality content that meets searcher intent
- Using keywords to help search engines identify relevant material
- Using long-tail keywords (specific phrases that searchers use) to help content reach its target audience
- Ensuring that content loads quickly and is compatible with mobile devices

Pay-per-click (PPC) advertising,

In the pay-per-click (PPC) paradigm of digital marketing, an advertiser pays a publisher each time one of their advertisements is clicked. The publisher is usually a person who runs a website, runs a search engine, or runs a social media platform such as Facebook or Instagram. (Anshu D. 2021)

Typical examples of PPC advertising include:

- Banner ads that flank web content on the sides or top of the page
- Social media ads that appear in the feeds of targeted audiences
- Ads that appear when a specific keyword is searched on a search engine, such as Google

Due to the reason that pay-per-click (PPC) is not yet practiced in Ethiopian Airlines, it is not included on this study as a variable.

Affiliate Marketing,

Affiliate marketing is a kind of advertising where a business pays independent publishers to send customers about their products and services. The commission payment encourages the third-party

publications, who are affiliates, to look for opportunities to market the business. Through internal analytics, an affiliate marketing business may monitor the links that generate leads, (Anshu D. 2021)

Main types of affiliate marketing include:

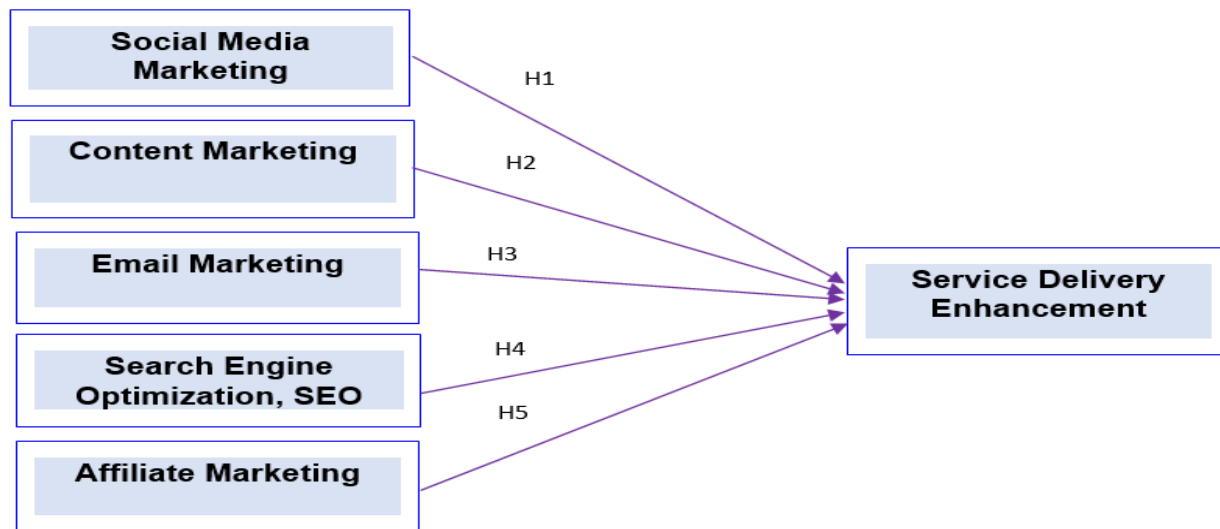
- Unattached affiliate marketing – no connection to the product and service promoting.
- Related affiliated marketing -involved promotion of products and services by an affiliate with some type of relationship to the offering.
- Involved affiliate marketing – deeper connection between the affiliate and the product or service promoting.

From the list of the above dimensions of digital marketing components, Ethiopian Airlines use E-mail marketing, Social media marketing, content marketing, SEO and affiliate marketing. (Source E-commerce department of ET).

2.7. Conceptual Framework

Referring Anshu D. 2021, the elements of digital marketing that are social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing, and search engine optimization, that impact service delivery improvement, illustrated below on the conceptual framework.

Fig 2.7. Conceptual Framework



Source: - Conceptual framework model adapted from Anshu Dikshant 2021,

2.8 Identified Literature Gap

An understudied subject that comes to light during a literature assessment that has potential for more study is known as a literature gap, (Baltes B. 2014). A comprehensive assessment of the body of research on the subject, both in general and in more detail, is necessary to detect any gaps in the literature. This will also show whether any gaps have not been completely filled by the researcher. Such unexplored or underexplored areas have scope for further research.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Methodology

This chapter covered the research design and approach, population and sampling techniques, sources and instruments of data collection, procedures of data collection, methods of analysis, reliability and validity and Ethical Considerations. This section of the thesis highlights the overall methodological considerations used in gathering, analyzing and interpreting the data.

3.1 Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted in Addis Ababa Bole Sub-city by looking at customers of EAG who are using the digital marketing platform to see the effect of digital marketing on the service delivery improvement of the airline sector. The survey was conducted at bole international airport, Addis Ababa during passengers' departure, transit and arrival times.

The study's target population was determined by the type and purpose of the research (Saunders et al., 2007). This target population was used to determine the sample size. Questionnaires were allocated to target population's sample size, and referred to as respondents in the study.

3.2 Research Approach

Choosing an adequate data gathering approach and technique is essential when starting a research project. The meticulous, scientific examination of quantitative attributes and events, as well as their interactions, is known as quantitative research (Kotler, Wong, & Armstrong, 2005). It describes studies that rely on theories, hypotheses, and statistical analysis to arrive at their conclusions. As a result, surveys and experiments are employed to evaluate theories in order to extrapolate from the specific to the general.

A quantitative research approach was applied for this study because the research problem tends to be explanatory which seeks to explain the relationship between digital marketing dimensions and service delivery enhancement, to achieve the objective of the study and to test the hypothesis. It describes studies that base their conclusions on theories, hypotheses and statistical analysis (Saunders et al., 2007).

To better understand the effect of digital marketing on service delivery improvement, quantitative research was the most effective way to quickly and efficiently gather relevant information from a sizable sample size.

3.3 Research Design

In order to complete the study's objective and evaluate the hypothesis, the researcher must follow certain processes, which are outlined in a research design (Saunders et al., 2007). It is frequently referred to, by researchers, as a research template that must be adhered to in order for the study to be successful. It is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies' (Saunders et al., 2007). It is the overall plan for connecting the conceptual research problems with the pertinent and achievable empirical research. In other words, the research design sets the procedure on the required data, the methods to be applied to collect and analyze this data, and how all of this is going to answer the research question. As explained by Catherine (2007), there are three possible forms of research design: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory and the base of classification relies on the purpose of the research area as each design serves a different end purpose.

Explanatory study sets out to explain and account for the descriptive information. So, while descriptive studies may ask 'what' kinds of questions, explanatory studies seek to ask 'why' and 'how' questions (Saunders et al, 2007). By advancing beyond exploratory and descriptive study, it can pinpoint the true causes of a phenomenon. Investigating causes and reasons and offering proof to either confirm or refute an explanation or prediction are the goals of explanatory research. It ascertains and documents the connections between the many elements of the phenomena being examined (Saunders et al, 2007).

Using a survey technique, descriptive and explanatory research design were used for this study. Descriptive study approach was chosen because, in comparison, it provides a more accurate description of the degree of correlation between variables. Explanatory studies, on the other hand, utilize hypothesis testing to determine both causes and effects. As the study's primary goal was to determine how digital marketing affects the service delivery quality; for that it produced quantifiable, statistical data.

3.4 Sampling Method

Sampling is a technique for selecting items from a large population (Catherine, 2007). The research used a convenient sampling of passengers at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport who used the airline services and were carefully selected as research respondents. Convenient sampling is used because of the movement of passengers and trip fatigues that makes passengers uncomfortable, and the data collection picked passengers who are willing and available to participate in the study and the process takes just a few minutes to complete and return.

3.5 Population and Sample Size

The target population for this study were Ethiopian Airlines passengers who used the airline's services. To achieve its goal of the study, that is to examine service delivery improvement through digital marketing, acceptable sample size used to have precise results, as stated by Saunders (2007). The study's sample size, with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level, is based on a survey technique that is specifically designed for a population that basically used for an unidentified number of consumers. According to Saunders's (2007) technique, a formula based on calculated values used to estimate the sample size for populations larger than 100,000:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where:

n = required sample size for unlimited set of population (more than 100,000)

Z = degree of the desired confidence level, for example 95%

p = the probability of positive response = (50%)

q = the probability of negative response = 1-p = (50%)

e = the desired level of precision or tolerable error = ($\pm 5\%$)

Thus, $n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.05 \times 0.05}{(0.05)^2} = 384.16 = \mathbf{385}$

3.6 Data Source and Type

The research was conducted using primary data sources. Malhotra & Birks (2007) state that primary data is produced by the researcher specifically with the intention of resolving the issue at hand. The

most crucial kind of data is gathered via structured surveys. Information obtained for purposes other than the current issue is referred to as secondary data (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). Secondary data such as, publications like books, magazines, newspapers, journals, articles, and research papers were also used as references on this study. The construction of a more thorough comprehension of the research was facilitated by these types of secondary data.

The core data was gathered using structured surveys and data gathering tools from airline customers. Reports, published manuals, studies, journals, articles, and unpublished documents about Ethiopian Airlines' digital sales & marketing, online services, and service delivery quality were among the many secondary sources of information that were used in the research.

3.7 Data collection method

To minimize the number of inaccurate responses, the data was collected with scenario-specific questionnaires. For the purpose of gathering primary data, survey questionnaires were developed and distributed to travelers arriving, transferring and departing to/from Addis Ababa Bole International Airport. Social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing, search engine optimization, and affiliate marketing are the distinct components that make up the fundamental five-dimensional structure of digital marketing.

3.8 Data Analysis Method and Presentation

SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) statistical software version 26 was used to encode and analyse the data that was collected from the respondents. A descriptive and explanatory statistical technique is used to analyze the five dimensions of digital marketing and each of the associated variables. Data analysis was carried out that requires organizing, evaluating, classifying, tabulating, and compiling the evidence in order to answer the study's initial hypothesis.

A descriptive research technique explains the characteristics of the population or issue under study, according to Catherine (2007). With this method, the "what" of the study subject is given more weight than the "why" of the issue. Finding the traits of a demographic group is the primary goal of descriptive research methodology, as opposed to attempting to explain "why" a phenomenon occurs. Put otherwise, it explains the study topic but doesn't address "why" it happens.

A method for examining a phenomenon that has never been thoroughly described or has only ever been studied once is known as explanatory research, according to Catherine (2007). Establishing cause and effect relationships allows it to ascertain the "why" and "how" of events.

To further highlight the relationship, descriptive statistical methods including the mean, frequency distribution, and cross tabulation were employed. Regression analysis and correlation are two more statistical techniques that were used. To determine the degree or proportion as digital marketing determinants influencing service delivery performance, regression analysis was used.

utilizing a linear model, the regression analysis findings utilizing the Ordinary Least Squares regression (OLS) approach are displayed as follows;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_n X_n + \varepsilon_i$$

Where Y is dependent variable which is explained by the independent variables, β_0 is constant, $\beta_1 \dots \beta_n$ are the coefficient of the independent variables X_1 to X_n . ε_i is an error term.

3.9 Validity and Reliability Test

3.9.1 Validity

Regarding validity, there are four different factors that cause a study to have validity; construct validity, content validity, face validity and criterion validity (Middleton, 2020). Construct validity refers to whether or not a study measures the intended concept. Content validity examines if a study entirely measures its intended goal. Face validity refers to if a study, from a more subjective perspective, contains the right elements to test its purposes. Finally, criterion validity states if a study's results coincide with previous studies (Middleton, 2020).

The study's construct validity and content were verified through the involvement of airline experts and managements in the measurement of the items included. The correlation coefficient for the independent and dependent variables was computed using an instrument that had been previously tested and utilized in related literatures. In this study, the researcher employed content validity to analyze the degree to which the instrument given had sufficient coverage of the issue under investigation of the survey items. Mostly, the tools were designed based on the literature review.

According to the results of the correlation research, all the five dimensions of digital marketing are positively associated with service delivery improvement of EAG.

3.9.2 Reliability Analysis

Data quality is evaluated through reliability. To ascertain whether measuring items are consistent, a reliability test is employed (Middleton, 2020). We tested the dependability of multi-items using Cronbach Alpha. Reliability statistics were employed in this study to assess the data's dependability in the SPSS program version 26. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was computed to assess the internal consistency of the variables in the research tool.

290 of the 320 passengers who received questionnaires as part of the study have been collected. Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for each of the 20 questions used in the pilot survey in order to assess the dependability of the data collection tool. The range of 0.957 to 0.994 indicates that all of the Cronbach alpha coefficients are within the acceptable threshold of 0.7. Coefficient alpha, which measures reliability in research, was determined to be 0.982 in this study, indicating that the scale is suitable for more examination.

Table 3.9.2 Reliability Test Results with Cronbach’s Alpha

No	Determinants	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Social Media Marketing	5	0.988
2	Content Marketing	5	0.974
3	Email Marketing	5	0.990
4	Search Engine Optimization	5	0.990
5	Affiliate Marketing	5	0.957
6	Service Delivery Quality	10	0.994
7	Overall reliability	35	0.982

Table 3.9.2 Cronbach’s Alpha for all Independent and Dependent Variables – Instrument reliability test
Source: SPSS out put

Cronbach's Alpha values were examined for each variable in the study, and a coefficient of 0.90 or above suggests a very reliable instrument, while a coefficient between 0.70 and 0.90 is adequate for the majority of instruments. As a consequence, the findings showed that the instrument had an

adequate reliability coefficient ($\alpha=0.982$) and was very dependable for each variable. This suggests that the device was trustworthy.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The study considered different ethical factors. Its objective also properly defined in the questionnaire's introduction section. In consideration of the convenience of the travellers, the surveys were only given to willing participants who had the time, energy, and willingness to respond at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport. To protect the secrecy of the airline and the information that the respondents would provide, the respondents requested not to have their names written down and guaranteed that the responses would be handled completely discreetly, with no information about them being published. In the questionnaire sheet, the researcher also refrains from making any false or misleading remarks. And credit was given to all sources of information, assistance, and collaboration.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 Data Analysis and Interpretation

In this chapter, the raw data collected from respondents has been carefully compiled, sorted, analysed, and evaluated. To address the research questions; whether digital marketing dimensions and service delivery enhancement are positively correlated, and whether digital marketing influences service delivery improvement for Ethiopian Airlines services was the goal of analysing the primary data from the research survey.

4.1.1 Sample Response Rates

To collect the survey data, for passengers at the Business, Platinum, and STAR Gold lounges, international check-in counters, arrival and transit desks, and the arrival hall of the international baggage collection area, sum of 320 survey questionnaires prepared and disseminated to passengers arriving, transferring, and departing from/to Addis Ababa Bole International Terminal. Out of that 91% of the total questionnaires distributed were returned, amounting to sum of 290 completed forms. 9% were not returned for a variety of reasons, including misplacing them.

4.1.2. Descriptive Statistics

The questioner is composed of three parts. The first section is intended to collect demographic data about the respondents; the second section focuses on the determinants of digital marketing; and the last section is devoted to service delivery improvement.

4.1.3. Demographic characteristics of the respondents

As described in table below, of the total participants who have completed the survey 52.8% of them were male and the remaining 47.2% were female.

Respondent gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	153	52.8	52.8	52.8
	Female	137	47.2	47.2	100.0
	Total	290	100.0	100.0	

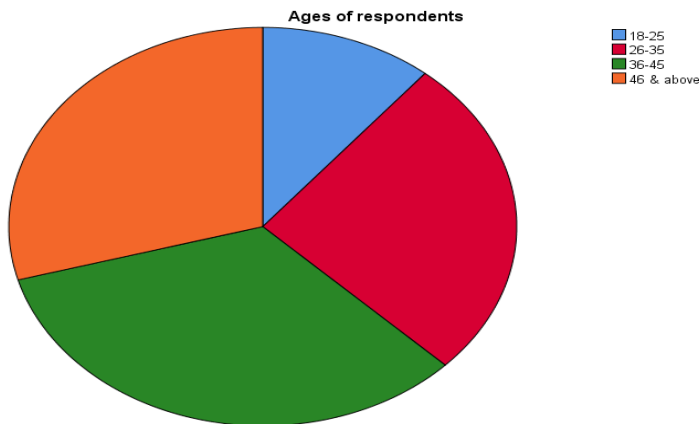
Table 4.1.3 Gender group of respondents
Source: Own survey data

Regarding the age group the greatest respondents, 33.4%, were within the age of 36-45, followed by 29.3% from aged 46 & above, and 26.2% were from 26 to 35 and the remaining 11% were from 18 to 25 age group.

Ages of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	32	11.0	11.0	11.0
	26-35	76	26.2	26.2	37.2
	36-45	97	33.4	33.4	70.7
	46 & above	85	29.3	29.3	100.0
	Total	290	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.4 The Age group of respondents
Source: Own survey data



Regarding nationality of respondents, majority of them 63.1% were other nationals and 36.9% were Ethiopians.

Nationality of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Ethiopian	107	36.9	36.9	36.9
	Others	183	63.1	63.1	100.0
	Total	290	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.5 Nationality group of respondents

Source: Own survey data

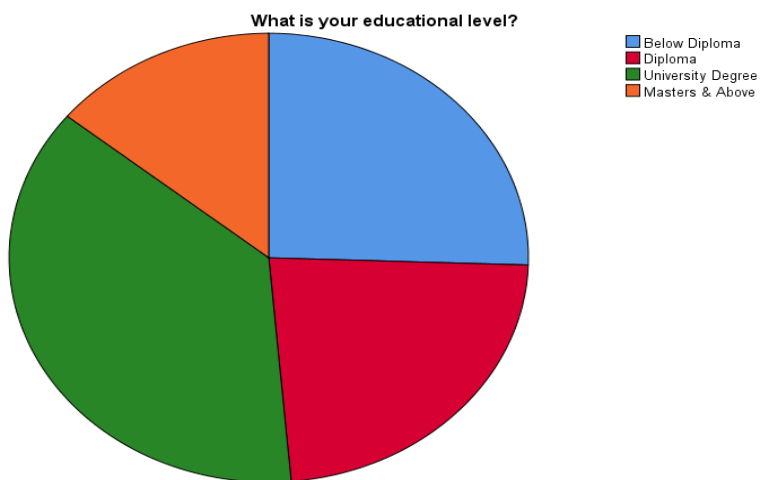
Concerning the respondents' educational background, 37.2% acquired BSc/BA degree, while 25.5% of the respondents have below diploma education level, and 23.1% have diploma and the remaining 14.1% have Master's degree & above. It demonstrates that the majority of responders have solid educational backgrounds.

Educational level of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below Diploma	74	25.5	25.5	25.5
	Diploma	67	23.1	23.1	48.6
	University Degree	108	37.2	37.2	85.9
	Masters & Above	41	14.1	14.1	100.0
	Total	290	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.6 Educational level of respondents

Source: Own survey data



As shown in Table below, on the respondents' occupational status, majority of the respondents, 57.2% were self-employed with private business while 30.7% employed and the remaining 7.9% and 4.1% are students and house wife/husband respectively.

Occupational status of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Student	23	7.9	7.9	7.9
	Employed	89	30.7	30.7	38.6
	Self-employed	166	57.2	57.2	95.9
	House wife/husband	12	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	290	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.7 Occupational status of respondents

Source: Own survey data

From the demographic character, the majority of respondents were foreign nationals, as seen in the above chart, which helps to explain that EAG serves a varied range of nationalities. With this, it is vital that EAG evaluates its digital marketing platform in light of the many consumer segments it serves. Given the gender, a fair number of men and women participated in this study, and all age groups participated in the survey, with the majority being 35 and older. EAG may thus target those age groups in order to create an engaging and lively website and social media presence. The majority of respondents were found to have undergraduate degree when it came to their academic level. This result provides concrete evidence that most respondents had higher educational backgrounds and can use the ETG digital marketing system and they were able to answer the questions appropriately. When it came to their employment status, the vast majority of respondents were self-employed, with those who were employed making up the second-largest proportion.

Purpose of Travel

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Business	98	33.8	33.8	33.8
	Leisure	66	22.8	22.8	56.6
	Holiday	39	13.4	13.4	70.0
	Medical	21	7.2	7.2	77.2
	Education	34	11.7	11.7	89.0
	Other	32	11.0	11.0	100.0
	Total	290	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.8 Purpose of travel, Source: From Survey Data

The above table shows that the greatest number of the respondents, 33.8% were having their trips for business purpose and 22.8% were for leisure, 13.4% for holiday, 11.7% for education, 7.2% for medical purpose and the other 11.0% were traveling for other reasons.

		Frequency of Travel			Cumulative
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Percent
Valid	1 to 5	151	52.1	52.1	52.1
	6 to 10	95	32.8	32.8	84.8
	11 to 15	28	9.7	9.7	94.5
	16 to 20	11	3.8	3.8	98.3
	More than 20	5	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	290	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.9 Passengers' travel frequency
Source: From survey data

Regarding the flying experiences of the respondents' passengers on Ethiopian Airlines, as displayed in the above table, nearly half of the total respondents, 52.1% travelled 1 to 5 times in a year, and those respondents who travelled 6 to 10 times accounts for 32.8% and 9.7% travelled 11 to 15 times, and 3.8% travelled 16 to 20 times and the remaining percentage are those travelled more than 20 times in a year. The more a passenger travels in a year, a more privileges he/she can get from the airline, like access to the Sheba Miles lounge, free baggage allowance, priority at check-in and boarding if the passenger registers to be member of the loyalty program and earn miles.

		Annual Income in Dollars			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below \$5,000	124	42.8	42.8	42.8
	\$5,001 - \$10,000	96	33.1	33.1	75.9
	\$10,001 - \$15,000	38	13.1	13.1	89.0
	\$15,001 - \$20,000	22	7.6	7.6	96.6
	Above \$20,000	10	3.4	3.4	100.0
	Total	290	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.10 Respondents' income per year in dollars
Source: Own survey data

As indicated on the table above, 42.8% of the respondents earn below \$5,000 per annum and 33.1% of respondents earn \$5,001 to \$10,000, from \$10,001 to \$15,000 takes 13.1% of the respondents and 7.6% of the respondents earn from \$15,001 to \$20,000 and the remaining 3.4% earns more than \$20,000 per annum.

Type of Airline Choice

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Ethiopian	207	71.4	71.4	71.4
	Emirates	31	10.7	10.7	82.1
	Turkish	18	6.2	6.2	88.3
	Egypt Air	9	3.1	3.1	91.4
	Kenya airways	12	4.1	4.1	95.5
	Other	13	4.5	4.5	100.0
	Total	290	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.11 Respondents' choice of airline to fly with frequently
Source: Survey data

The table above shows majority of the respondents 71.4% were Ethiopian airlines customers and the remaining are those also uses Emirates 10.5%, Turkish 6.2%, Egypt Air 3.1%, Kenya Airways 4.1% and 4.5% uses other airlines that operates to Addis Ababa, Bole International Airport.

Class of Service choice

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Economy Class	182	62.8	62.8	62.8
	Business Class	76	26.2	26.2	89.0
	First Class	32	11.0	11.0	100.0
	Total	290	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.12 Respondents' choice of class of service
Source: Own data

Regarding class of service, majority of the respondents, 62.8% utilized economy class service, 26.2% used business class service, and the remaining 11% used first class service. While some airlines, like Emirate, provide first class service, Ethiopian Airlines offers economy and business class services combining first and business class services naming “Cloud Nine” service.

Purchasing Airline Tickets

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Website/mobile	86	29.7	29.7	29.7
	Ticket office	65	22.4	22.4	52.1
	Call center	42	14.5	14.5	66.6
	Travel Agency	89	30.7	30.7	97.2
	Other	8	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	290	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.1.13 How passengers book and purchase air tickets, Source: Own data

As can be seen in the above table, the percentages for booking and purchasing airline tickets using website/mobile app and travel agency are nearly same, at 29.7% and 30.7%, respectively. It suggests that the usual trend and practice of passengers' more travel agencies usage has changed, with a notable increase in the utilization of websites and mobile apps. 22.4% of respondents acquire tickets through the ticket office, while 14.5% do so using call centres, where by customers' book over the phone and pay with a credit card or at bank. The remaining 2.8% of respondents obtain their tickets from other sources, such as from tour package operators.

Cross tabulation of customers income and frequency of flying

Frequency of Travel * Annual Income in USD Cross Tabulation

Count		Below \$5000	\$5,000-\$10,000	\$10,001 - \$15,000	\$15,001 - \$20,000	Above \$20,000	Total
Frequency of Travel	1 - 5	124	27	0	0	0	151
	6 - 10	0	69	26	0	0	96
	11 - 15	0	0	12	16	0	28
	16 - 20	0	0	0	6	5	11
	More than 20	0	0	0	0	5	5
Total		124	96	38	22	10	290

Table 4.1.14 Cross tabulation between frequency of travel and annual income in dollars
Source: Own survey data

In terms of the respondents' incomes from the sample under study, individuals with annual incomes under \$5,000 travel more frequently than those with annual incomes above \$5,000. And passengers with annual income of more than \$20,000 travels more than 20 times in a year. According to the statistics, there are notable income disparities among the sample respondents, and some passengers fly with Ethiopian Airlines more frequently than 20 times year. Remember that among the responders were some who were traveling for the first time.

4.2. Results and Interpretation of Key Results

4.2.1 Descriptive Analysis

Finding out how digital marketing influences the service delivery improvement in the airline industry was the aim of this study. According on the customer's response, the attributes were compiled in the tables below.

Descriptive Statistics of Social Media Marketing

	N	Mean
ET social media is easy to search and to find what I am searching	290	3.9620
I am satisfied with the speed and responsiveness of ET social media	290	3.9413
ET's social media frequently adds important new features and has all	290	3.7827
My recent experience on ET online service was excellent	290	3.8241
ET social media provides timely & accurate flight information	290	3.8241
Overall Social Media marketing	290	3.8668
Valid N (listwise)	290	

Table 4.2.1 Social media marketing descriptive statistics

Source: Survey data

From the above table the significant feature of digital marketing for the customers is the value with the highest mean score under the social media marketing which were the easiness to search and find what a customer is looking for as well as the speed and responsiveness of the social media, with mean value of 3.962 and 3.9413 respectively, and the overall mean value was 3.8668.

Descriptive Statistics of Content Marketing

	N	Mean
I receives content, such as blogs, posts, articles, and newsletters about ET regularly	290	3.8275
I receives original videos from ET that are important and informative	290	3.7827
I will recommend the service to my friends and family	290	4.1724
It provides accurate information about ET services on ground and on the flight	290	3.9655
It improves the service delivery quality of the airline	290	4.2365
Overall Content marketing	290	3.9969
Valid N (list wise)	290	

Table 4.2.2 Content marketing descriptive statistics

Source: Own data

According to the table above, which details the questions posed to respondents under the content marketing dimension of digital marketing, the highest mean score (4.2365) was on its effect on the improvement of service delivery quality of the airline and the lowest is on receiving important original videos from the airline (3.7827) and the overall mean value was 3.9969.

Descriptive Statistics of Email Marketing

	N	Mean
I feel secured and have confidence on the online payment options	290	3.8862
ET email marketing is easy to use and I get timely response	290	3.9724
I get more privilege and incentives for using online booking, online purchase and online check-in se	290	3.9586
I often receive emails from ET on future sales events, seasonal discounts, and new product launch	290	3.7965
The quality and standard of ET email marketing meets its customers' expectations	290	4.0551
Overall Email marketing	290	3.9338
Valid N (listwise)	290	

Table 4.2.3 Email marketing descriptive statistics
Source: Survey data

According to the table above, a number of questions were posed to the respondents about the email marketing dimension of digital marketing. The question about whether email marketing meets customers' expectations with quality and standard received the highest mean score (4.0551), while the question about receiving frequent emails from the airline about new product launches and seasonal discounts received the lowest mean score (3.7965), and the overall mean value was 3.9338.

Descriptive Statistics of Search Engine Optimization

	N	Mean
It is easy to search for flight schedule availability on ET's website	290	3.9547
ET website content loads fast and is compatible with my mobile device	290	3.8552
Whenever I go online for the best price offers for tickets, ET consistently appears among the top 1	290	3.8965
My rights and obligations regarding internet purchases are stated clearly on ET website	290	3.8103
The quality of service delivery is significantly improved by ET digital marketing.	290	3.9139
Overall Search Engine Optimization	290	3.8861
Valid N (listwise)	290	

Table 4.2.4 Search Engine Optimization descriptive statistics
Source: Own data

The table above, the highest mean score for the dimension Search engine optimization was 3.9547 on ease of use for searching flight availability on the airline website while the lowest was 3.8103 on alerting customers about online purchase rights and responsibilities on the website. The overall mean value was 3.8861.

Descriptive Statistics of Affiliate Marketing

	N	Mean
I regularly receive ET adverts from third-party publishers.	290	3.6035
I receive valuable and helpful information from ET's affiliates.	290	3.6414
While using ET online services I evaluate my alternatives	290	4.5414
ET's online customer support is very helpful and consumer-focused	290	4.1862
The online service fees for ET are fair and reasonable.	290	3.8828
Overall Affiliate Marketing	290	3.9711
Valid N (listwise)	290	

Table 4.2.5 Affiliate Marketing descriptive statistics

Source: Survey data

From the questions posed to the respondents under the affiliate marketing dimension of digital marketing, the highest mean score was on evaluating alternatives by the customers while purchasing online (4.5414) and the lowest mean score was on receiving regular adverts from ET affiliates or publishers, and the overall mean value was 3.9711.

Descriptive Statistics of Service Delivery Quality

	N	Mean
ET offers best service with its digital marketing platform	290	4.1689
To book online, purchase online and check-in online makes travel hassle free	290	4.2655
ET's digital services satisfies customers needs	290	4.1724
ET provide safe and secure payment options for online transactions	290	4.1862
I spent less time and gets better service by using ET online services	290	4.2397
ET website offers enough language options for ease of understanding	290	4.1379
The inconvenience and wait times at ticket office and check-in counters are minimized with ET on	290	4.3448
The customer service call centre team are always available 24/7 to assist on any challenge on the	290	4.1759
The overall service quality improved through online services	290	4.1691
My appreciation for ET has grown as my experience exceeded my expectations	290	4.2310
Overall Service Delivery Quality	290	4.2091
Valid N (listwise)	290	

Table 4.2.6 Service delivery quality descriptive statistics

Source: Own survey data

The dimension service delivery improvement which is the dependent variable, the respondents' highest mean score (4.3448) was related to the improvement of waiting times at ticket office and check-in counters as a result of ET's digital services, while the lowest mean score (4.1379) was on availability of sufficient language options on ET website, and the overall mean value was 4.2091.

The summary of mean and standard deviation for each independent variable and the dependent variable is shown in the table below.

Descriptive Statistics of Mean and Std Deviation

	Mean	Std Deviation	N
Service Delivery improvement	4.2091	0.832	290
Social Media Marketing	3.8668	1.0596	290
Content Marketing	3.9969	0.9534	290
Email Marketing	3.9338	1.0672	290
Search Engine Optimization	3.8861	1.0588	290
Affiliate Marketing	3.9711	0.9638	290

Table 4.2.7 Summary of Mean and Std. Deviation for both IVs and DV
Source: Own survey data

As shown in the table 4.2.7 above, customers of Ethiopian Airlines have rated service delivery improvement, content marketing, affiliate marketing and email marketing with high score while search engine optimization and social media marketing with moderate score.

4.3. Skewness and Kurtosis Tests

A precondition for conducting a statistical test is to determine if the distribution of the data is normal. Conducting descriptive statistics to determine skewness and kurtosis is a standard test for normality. One way to measure symmetry is through skewness. If the appearance of a data set is the same to the left and right of the center point, it is said to be symmetric. A measure of how heavy or light the data are compared to a normal distribution is called kurtosis. According to Hair, (1998) both skewness and kurtosis should be within the range of -2 and + 2 when the data are normally distributed.

Descriptive Statistics of Skewness and Kurtosis					
	N Statistic	Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Social Media Marketing	290	-.857	.143	-.494	.285
Content marketing	290	.938	.143	1.370	.285
Email marketing	290	.507	.143	.872	.285
Search engine optimization	290	-.636	.143	-.250	.285
Affiliated marketing	290	.035	.143	.299	.285
Service delivery	290	-1.056	.143	.987	.285

Table 4.3 – Normality test of Skewness and Kurtosis, Source: Own survey data,

The data is normally distributed, according to the above normality test result, as the skewness and kurtosis values fall within the expected range. For this reason, the test may be a useful indicator to begin further analysis.

4.4. Validity Test - Correlation Analysis results

The study used Pearson's correlation to evaluate construct validity. Using a single number that ranges from -1 to +1, Pearson's correlation is a widely used and highly helpful method of summarizing the strength and link between the independent and dependent variable features. Morgan G. (2004) asserts that there are three possible correlations: 0.0 (no correlation), +1 (perfect positive correlation), and -1.0 (perfect negative correlation). The link between the independent variables (social media marketing, content marketing, affiliate marketing, email marketing, and search engine optimization) and the dependent variable (service delivery quality) was computed and assessed using Person's correlation.

		Correlations					
		Social Media Marketing	Content marketing	Email marketing	Search engine optimization	Affiliated marketing	Service delivery quality
Social Media Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	290					
Content marketing	Pearson Correlation	.126	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032					
	N	290	290				
Email marketing	Pearson Correlation	.249	.086	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.144				
	N	290	290	290			
Search engine optimization	Pearson Correlation	.274**	.142*	.175**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.015	.003			
	N	290	290	290	290		
Affiliated marketing	Pearson Correlation	.208**	.022	.186**	.256**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.708	.001	.000		
	N	290	290	290	290	290	
Service delivery quality	Pearson Correlation	.605**	.290**	.606**	.402**	.331**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	290	290	290	290	290	290

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.4. Pearson's correlation between dependent and independent variables, Source: Own survey data

As shown, Pearson correlation coefficient between various digital marketing dimensions in each of the determinants per hypotheses and service delivery enhancement found using the SPSS 26. The final correlation analysis result to verify the validity shows in detail that all the digital marketing dimensions (social media marketing/*H1*, content marketing/*H2*, email marketing/*H3*, search engine optimization/*H4*. Affiliate marketing/*H5*) have a positive association with the service delivery enhancement in Ethiopian Airlines.

The result shows that the digital marketing dimensions: Social Media marketing shows positive relationship with service delivery enhancement at ($r=0.605$, $p<0.01$) and in case of content marketing shows a weak positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.290$, $p<0.01$). The other dimension email marketing also shows a strong positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.606$, $p<0.01$). The dimension search engine optimization shows also a positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.402$, $p<0.01$) and the dimension affiliate marketing shows a moderate positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.331$, $p<0.01$). Accordingly, all the hypothesized attributes have the predictor for service delivery enhancement that validate, as it indicates, the correlation (r) of all the attributes have positive correlation. Consequently, it is determined that there is a positive correlation between each digital marketing dimensions and service delivery enhancement in Ethiopian Airlines and that the null hypothesis is rejected.

4.5. Regression Analysis

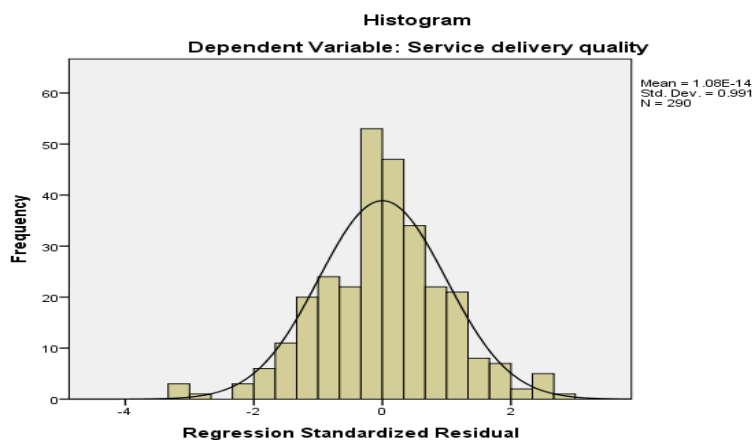
Prior to performing regression analysis, accordingly to Gujarati (2004) states that it is important to determine whether the data obtained contradict any of the primary assumptions of multiple linear regression models. If so, the outcomes of the study may become ambiguous and biased. The classical assumptions need to be checked before testing multiple regression models. The three standard assumptions must be confirmed before doing a regression analysis. Normality and multicollinearity are two of these assumptions (Brooks, 2008). Thus, the researcher made an effort to determine whether or not these assumptions are satisfied in this section.

4.5.1. Normality Test

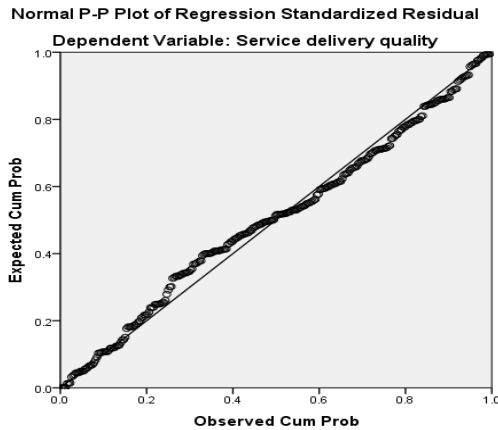
To confirm that the multivariate normality assumption was satisfied, the data were examined. According to Brooks (2008), the normality assumption needs to be met in order to perform a hypothesis test for the model parameter. The assumption of normality states that the residuals' mean is zero. Gujarati (2004) states that one of two tests of normality - the normal probability plot (NPP), which is an asymptotic, or large-sample test - or the residuals histogram might be used to evaluate the hypothesis of normality. As can be seen below, graphical instruments were used in this study to evaluate the normality assumption due to their ease of use. Within a normal p-p plot, the observed cumulative probabilities of the data are displayed against the theoretical cumulative probabilities predicted by normal distribution. A normal distribution of the data is shown in a graphic where the data points roughly follow a straight line.

4.5.1.1. Histogram of Residuals and P-P plot Tests

The form of the Probability Density Function of a dependent random variable may be inferred using a simple visual tool called a residuals histogram. Rectangles with heights corresponding to the number of observations (frequency) in each class interval are constructed in each class interval where the values of the variable of interest (OLS residuals) are separated into appropriate intervals on the horizontal axis. A bell-shaped histogram results from the residuals being regularly distributed around the mean value of zero. The dependent variable residuals are normally distributed around zero, as seen by the histogram's shape in the picture below.



Graph 4.5.1.1 - Histogram with normal curve plotted, (Source own data)



Graph – 4.5.1.2 - Normal curve of P-P Plot of Regression
Source: Own data

As shown above on the graph, straight diagonal line means that normally distributed data. The P-P plots show the soundness of the theoretical distribution models of normal data distribution.

4.5.1.2. Multicollinearity

When two or more regression model predictors have a high correlation with one another, this is known as multicollinearity. Because multicollinearity involves more than two predictors, it only becomes an issue for multiple regressions. When at least one predictor is a perfect linear combination of the other, perfect collinearity occurs (Gujarati, 2004). The variance-inflating factor (VIF) is one technique used to provide collinearity diagnostic. A predictor's strong linear link to the other predictor(s) is shown by the VIF. For this reason, several writers employ the VIF as a multicollinearity indicator. The more troublesome or collinear the variable, the higher the VIF value. According to Gujarati, (2004), variables that have a VIF value more than 10.0 are generally considered to have a multicollinearity issue. The reciprocal of the VIF, or tolerance statistics, is related to the VIF. With a minimal tolerance value, the variable under consideration recommends that it shouldn't be included in the regression equation since it is almost a perfect linear combination of the independent variables currently in play. Zero to one is the tolerance range. A degree of multicollinearity is indicated by any variable with tolerance value is less than 0.10 or is closer to zero. According to Gujarati (2004), the closer the Tolerances value gets to one, the more evidence it is that the variables are noncollinear with the other variables.

Based on the study's regression model, the SPSS regression findings, the table below demonstrate that all independent variables have tolerances greater than 0.10 and that the independent variables' variance inflation factor, or VIF, is less than the maximum value of 10.0. As a result, we can say that the independent variables are not showing multicollinearity.

Variable	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Social Media Marketing	0.864	1.157
Content marketing	0.968	1.033
Email marketing	0.910	1.099
Search engine optimization	0.866	1.155
Affiliated marketing	0.899	1.112

Table 4.5.1.2 Collinearity Statistics for the independent variables, Source: Own data

4.5.1.3. Autocorrelation

In a regression study, autocorrelation is measured using the Durbin-Watson statistic. Values near 2 in the statistic's range of 0 to 4 indicate no autocorrelation. When the Durbin-Watson statistic is between 1.5 and 2.5, there is often no autocorrelation; when it is below 1.5, there is positive autocorrelation; and when it is beyond 2.5, there is negative autocorrelation. In general, it is seen to be optimal when the Durbin-Watson statistic ranges from 1.5 and 2.5. The Durban-W value in the table below, which is 1.5, indicates that the factor variables are not autocorrected.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \varepsilon$$

Whereby Y is service delivery enhancement, β_0 is regression constant, $\beta_1 - \beta_5$ is regression coefficients, X_1 is social media marketing, X_2 is content marketing, X_3 is email marketing, X_4 is search engine optimization and X_5 is affiliate marketing and ε model's error term.

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.816 ^a	.666	.660	.64974	1.5
a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Marketing, Content marketing, Email marketing, Search engine optimization, Affiliated marketing					
b. Dependent Variable: Service delivery quality					

Table 4.5.1.3 - Autocorrelation Statistics for the variables, Source: Own survey data

The study sought to establish how dimensions of digital marketing would influence service delivery enhancement using linear regression analysis. The dimensions were: social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing, search engine optimization and affiliate marketing. Regression analysis was done to determine how the digital marketing determinants (social media marketing, content marketing, affiliated marketing, email marketing and search engine optimization) and service delivery quality related to each other. The results are summarized in this model review. As indicated by the R Square value of .666, around 66.6% of the variance in service delivery quality can be explained by the predictors included in the model. A more precise indicator of the variance explained, the Adjusted R Square score of .660 accounts for the number of predictors in the model.

The average distance between the observed values and the regression line is shown by the Standard Error of the Estimate of .64974; with smaller values indicating a better fit of the model. Overall, this model suggests that the digital marketing dimensions considered have a significant impact on Service delivery improvement.

4.5.1.4. Analysis of Variance - ANOVA

ANOVA ^a					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	239.084	5	47.817	113.266	.000 ^b
Residual	119.895	284	.422		
Total	358.979	289			
a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery quality					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Affiliated marketing , Content marketing , Email marketing , Social Media Marketing, Search engine optimization					

Table 4.5.1.4 - The regression ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) result,
Source: Own survey data

Regression analysis findings on the dependent variable of service delivery improvement are shown in the following ANOVA table. The whole regression model is statistically significant (F=113.266, p<.000), suggesting a substantial relationship with the predictors (email marketing, search engine optimization, associated marketing, content marketing, and social media marketing) and service delivery quality. The regression model, with a sum of squares of 239.084, explains a significant amount of the variance in service delivery quality. Overall, the ANOVA results show that, the

regression model's predictors can account for a significant amount of the variance in service delivery quality.

4.6. Collinearity Diagnostics Tests

The regression approach uses tolerance and the variance inflation factor (VIF) to assess the variables' collinearity. The percentage of an independent variable's variability that cannot be accounted for by another independent variable in the model is known as its tolerance. A significant multiple correlation with another independent variable is indicated by a score of less than 0.1. A multicollinearity problem is indicated by a VIF rating greater than 10.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	-1.095	.230		-4.766	.000		
Social Media Marketing	.437	.040	.405	10.968	.000	.864	1.157
Content marketing	.167	.033	.176	5.038	.000	.968	1.033
Email marketing	.427	.035	.440	12.244	.000	.910	1.099
Search engine optimization	.179	.042	.159	4.306	.000	.866	1.155
Affiliated marketing	.130	.039	.120	3.332	.001	.935	1.112

a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery quality

Table 4.6 – Collinearity Statistics

Source: Own survey data

The link between the dependent variable (service delivery quality) and the independent variables (social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing, search engine optimization, and affiliate marketing) is represented by the coefficients in this multiple linear regression model. The coefficient for social media marketing is 0.437, meaning that the quality of service delivery expected to rise by 0.437 units for every unit increase in social media marketing. The coefficient for content marketing is 0.167, meaning that the quality of service delivery expected to rise by 0.167 units for every unit increase in content marketing. The coefficient for email marketing is 0.427, which means that the service delivery quality should rise by 0.427 units for every unit increase in email marketing. The coefficient for search engine optimization is 0.179, meaning that there will be a 0.179 unit increase in service delivery quality for every unit increase in search engine optimization. The coefficient for affiliate marketing is 0.130, meaning that the quality of service delivery expected to rise by 0.130 units for every unit increase in affiliate marketing.

Generally speaking, all of the coefficients are positive, indicating that an increase in each of the independent variables are linked to higher levels of service delivery quality. Coefficients are considered statistically significant if their p-values (Sig.) are less than 0.05 for each analysis.

4.7. Structural Model Analysis

Structural model was assessed for overall explanatory power of constructs through R² value, Predictive relevance through the coefficient β-values. Findings of structural model are presented in the structural model figure below.

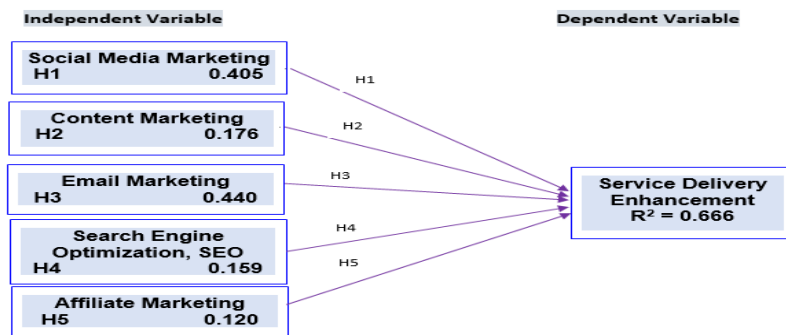


Figure 4.7 – Findings of Structural Model, Source: Own survey data

Hypothesized Path		β- Value	t-Value	p-Value	Decision
H1	Social Media Marketing → Service delivery enhancement	.405	10.968	.000	Positive and significant
H2	Content marketing → Service delivery enhancement	.176	5.038	.000	Positive and significant
H3	Email marketing → Service delivery enhancement	.440	12.244	.000	Positive and significant
H4	Search engine optimization → Service delivery enhancement	.159	4.306	.000	Positive and significant
H5	Affiliated marketing → Service delivery enhancement	.120	3.332	.001	Positive and significant

Table 4.7 Hypothesis assessment between digital marketing dimensions and service delivery enhancement, Source: Own survey data

The R² value of our structural model is 0.666, as shown in figure above, suggesting that the proposed conceptual model has satisfactory explanatory significance. Thus, the suggested structural model's overall predictive significance has been well achieved.

Accordingly, the following hypotheses were investigated and shown below in relation to the objectives articulated conceptual framework, addressing the effect of digital marketing dimensions on the service delivery improvement of Ethiopian airlines.

Hypothesis 1: Social media marketing has significant and positive effect on service delivery enhancement of Ethiopian airlines.

The standard coefficient Beta and p-value of social media marketing was positive and have significant effect on service delivery improvement (Beta = .405 p-value < 0.05).

Hypothesis 2: Content marketing has significant and positive effect on service delivery enhancement of Ethiopian airlines.

The standard coefficient Beta and p-value of content marketing was positive and have significant effect on service delivery enhancement (Beta = .176 p-value <0.05).

Hypothesis 3: Email marketing has significant and positive effect on service delivery improvement of Ethiopian airlines.

The standard coefficient Beta and p-value of email marketing was positive and have significant effect on service delivery enhancement (Beta = .440 p-value <0.05)

Hypothesis 4: Search engine optimization has significant and positive effect on service delivery improvement of Ethiopian airlines.

The standard coefficient Beta and p-value of search engine optimization was positive and have significant effect on service delivery improvement (Beta = .159 p-value <0.05)

Hypothesis 5: Affiliate marketing has significant and positive effect on service delivery improvement of Ethiopian Airlines. The standard coefficient Beta and p-value of affiliate marketing was positive and have significant effect on service delivery improvement (Beta = .120 p-value <0.05)

4.8. Results and Discussion

The data collection expected to provide insight into the service delivery quality offered by Ethiopian Airlines Group, evaluating the performance of the digital marketing determinants in relation to consumer expectations for overall satisfaction. In addition to offering EAG suggestions for improving service delivery quality and maintaining consumer satisfaction, data analysis may also assist in designing strategies to draw in new business. When it comes to service delivery quality and

other influencing elements, the results reveal the values that passengers look for when selecting an airline (Avram, 2017).

The study assessed the effect of digital marketing on the quality of EAG's service delivery to travellers arriving, transferring and departing to/from Addis Ababa Bole International Airport, who were provided questionnaires as part of the research process. As a result, the dimension of digital marketing that includes social media; email, content, affiliate, and search engine optimization positively predict the quality of service delivery. According to data collected from 290 respondents, out of which 52.8% are male and 47.2% are female of which 63.1% were foreigners and 36.9% were Ethiopians. The greatest respondents, 33.4% were within the age range of 36-45 and the least respondents, 11% were from 18-25 age group. The educational background of the respondents majorly, 51.3% have BSc/BA and above. Customers who travel frequently, 1-5 times in a year are 52.1% and those respondents who travelled 16 and more times in a year are 5.4%. In purpose of travel, most of the respondents 33.8% were traveling for business purpose and 7.2% travel for medical purpose. Regarding income of customers, 42.8% of the respondents earn below \$5,000 per annum the smallest respondents, 3.4% earns more than \$20,000 per annum.

The result shows that the digital marketing dimensions: Social Media marketing shows a positive relationship with service delivery enhancement at ($r=0.605$, $p<0.01$) and in case of content marketing shows a positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.290$, $p<0.01$). The other dimension email marketing also shows a strong positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.606$, $p<0.01$). The dimension search engine optimization shows also a positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.402$, $p<0.01$) and the dimension affiliate marketing shows a moderate positive correlation with service delivery enhancement ($r=0.331$, $p<0.01$).

The finding of the regression analysis attested that digital marketing determinants (social media marketing, content marketing, affiliated marketing, email marketing and search engine optimization) and service delivery quality of the airline are related to each other. As indicated by the R Square value of .666, around 66.6% of the variance in service delivery quality can be explained by the predictors included in the model. Email marketing, content marketing and affiliate marketing emerged as the most influential determinant, followed by social media marketing and search engine

optimization. This supports the study's hypotheses and highlights the importance of these elements in enhancing the service delivery quality of Ethiopian Airlines Group.

The study's conclusions are consistent with those of another study conducted in 2021 by Ayodeji Awokunle, which discovered that online internet marketing characteristics had a major impact on customer satisfaction.

The study's findings underscore the significant impact of social media marketing, content marketing, affiliated marketing, email marketing and search engine optimization on the service delivery quality of the airline. The theoretical framework provided by authors like (Lockett, 2018), (Baltes L. 2016), (Dave Chaffey, 2020), and others helps explain the strong association between these variables and quality of service delivery, reinforcing the importance of these factors in digital marketing strategies.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

On this chapter the summary findings, conclusion and recommendations are revealed. Limitations and ideas are well explained to give insights for future researchers.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The objective of this study was to assess the effect of digital marketing on service delivery improvement of Ethiopian airlines. The research was conducted by distributing questionnaires to 320 passengers, of which 290 have been collected. This study aimed to understand the impact of digital marketing on airline service delivery improvement. Customer feedback revealed that the most important attributes of digital marketing were ease of search, speed, and responsiveness of social media, with a mean value of 3.8668. The study found that content marketing significantly improved airline service delivery quality, while receiving important original videos from the airline was the least effective, with an overall mean value of 3.9969. Respondents rated email marketing quality and standard, with the highest mean score of 4.0551, while frequent airline emails about product launches and discounts received the lowest, resulting in a mean value of 3.7965. The study analysed email marketing in digital marketing, with the highest mean score of 4.0551 for meeting customer expectations with quality and standard, and the lowest score of 3.7965 for receiving frequent airline emails about product launches and seasonal discounts. The study found that customers evaluated alternatives when purchasing online, with the highest mean score of 4.5414, and the lowest mean score of 3.9711, indicating a preference for online affiliate marketing. The respondents' highest mean score (4.3448) was related to improved waiting times at ticket offices and check-in counters due to ET's digital services, while the lowest mean score (4.1379) was on sufficient language options on the ET website for the dimension service delivery improvement which is the dependent variable.

Below are summary of findings from the research;

- For each of the 20 questions used in the pilot survey, Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated in order to assess the dependability of the data collection tool. The appropriate range was occupied by the Cronbach alpha coefficients.

- The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to measure the relationships between the various factors. The outcome demonstrated that all of the independent and dependent variables had positive correlations, ranging from mild to high.
- Regression analysis shows that the independent variables, social media marketing, content marketing; email marketing, search engine optimization and affiliate marketing are statistically significant towards service delivery enhancement of Ethiopian airlines.
- Based on the study's regression model, the SPSS regression findings, all independent variables have tolerances greater than 0.10 and that the independent variables' variance inflation factor, or VIF, is less than the maximum value of 10.0, that is the independent variables are not showing multicollinearity.
- The R value represents the multiple correlations and is .816, which indicates a high degree of correlation between the variables. The R square value indicates that 66.6% of the dependent variable is being explained by the independent variables. Adjusted R square is .660, measures the number of independent variables.
- The Durbin-Watson statistic to measure autocorrelation was employed and according to a general guideline, there is no autocorrelation when the Durbin-Watson statistic ranges between 1.5 and 2.5, and is seen to be optimal when the Durbin-Watson statistic ranges from 1.5 and 2.5. The Durban-W value in this study exhibits 1.5, indicating that the factor variables are not autocorrected.
- The results of a regression analysis on the dependent variable of service delivery improvement in the ANOVA analysis shows the whole regression model is statistically significant ($F=113.266$, $p<.000$), suggesting a substantial relationship with the predictors (email marketing, search engine optimization, associated marketing, content marketing, and social media marketing) and service delivery quality.
- Skewness and Kurtosis, non-normality measurements are analysed in determining if the distribution of the data was normal and the normality test result revealed that the data is normally distributed as the Skewness and Kurtosis results fall within the predicted range.

5.2. Conclusions

This study could demonstrate certain links between digital marketing and service delivery improvement, which contributes to a deeper understanding of the connection and interaction between the two. The results confirm the hypothesis that the quality of service delivery can be improved through digital marketing elements. The analysis delivery enhancement conducted to evaluate the correlation between digital marketing dimensions and service revealed that the five dimensions of digital marketing have a beneficial impact on service delivery enhancement.

The descriptive statistics analysis proved the significant impact of digital marketing dimensions; social media marketing, content marketing, affiliated marketing, email marketing and search engine optimization on the service delivery quality of the airline

Overall, when employing digital marketing strategies, the type of service a customer will receive is developed inside a more simplified framework. Customers of the airlines will have access to important alternative modes of transaction through digital platforms. This method reduces long wait times, line waiting, and the intensity of in-person transactions while increasing the comfort level of the service recipient, like the online check-in and baggage service.

5.3 Recommendations:

It is possible to make the following recommendations to the airline from the results of the research:

1. The airline should give considerable thought to personalization and consumer segmentation when developing digital marketing platforms. To understand customers' travel habits, demands, and preferences, data analysis and artificial intelligence technology should be employed. Every consumer can then receive unique offers, suggestions, and experiences.
2. Given the growing daily usage of mobile devices, the airline had to adopt marketing methods tailored specifically for mobile platforms. Mobile apps and user-friendly software are essential. Additionally, giving clients access to mobile payment choices and well-designed websites will make their experience simpler and more seamless.

3. Usage of credit/debit card is essential issue to increase the use of the company's digital platforms and make payments. The airline should closely work with the local and international banks to facilitate the use of credit/debit card by customers.
4. The use of social media by airlines to communicate with customers directly is quite beneficial. Transactions may efficiently use their social media profiles to convey intriguing information, including trip deals and marketing. It has the ability to react quickly to consumer feedback.
5. The airline should invest in big data analytics and cutting edge digital technology. This data will thus be helpful for anticipating consumer needs, comprehending customer behavior, and enhancing operational efficiency. For example, using flight search and booking data allows for the modification of marketing strategies and the presentation of more focused and customized offers to customers.
6. The airline may be able to give its passengers advanced experiences thanks to digital marketing. It is possible to provide customers with pre-flight experiences by utilizing technology like virtual and augmented reality. Additionally, it can let clients digitally experience places before they visit. Options for in-flight entertainment can also be increased.
7. Airlines have the opportunity to enhance customer loyalty and boost conversion rates through digital marketing. Businesses may increase their base of returning customers and fortify customer connections by using strategies like loyalty programs, exclusive deals, and customized messaging.
8. The Airline should focus on advanced and impressive content in their digital marketing plans. It is possible to enable customers to establish emotional bonds with their brands by storytelling through visual and written content. Original and engaging content can strengthen the brand image and increase customers' loyalty to the brand.
9. Airlines can effectively leverage social media influencers as a marketing tool. Working with pertinent travel and lifestyle influencers might provide you the chance to connect with the target market and build brand recognition. Selecting the proper influencer guarantees that the business can communicate with its target audience in a way that is both suitable and successful..

10. Digital marketing strategies offer a chance to communicate with customers and obtain their opinions. Through surveys, comment sections, or social media platforms, the airline may engage with passenger feedback regarding their experience. In response to these comments, they have the chance to keep enhancing their offerings and clientele's experience
11. It is recommended that EAG devise tactics aimed at enhancing the quality of service delivery at every stage of the process, while taking into account the preferences of the market segments they target effectively

These recommendations can assist the airline in strengthening its strategies for digital marketing and ensuring its continued success. Given the rapid advancement of digitization in our day and age, airlines must stay abreast of emerging trends in digital marketing to stay relevant, engage with their clientele, and deliver unique experiences.

5.3. Limitation and suggestion for future research

The purpose of this part is to discuss some of the study's shortcomings so that same can be addressed in future research.

- The sample population includes consumers who have at least one flight with the airlines.
- Owing to the convenience sampling method and small sample size used, the results might not be universally applicable to all areas of arrival and departure at all locations where the airline operates.
- Owing to time constraints and resource limitations, only respondents at the carrier's headquarters at Addis Ababa Bole International Airport were included in the study.
- The results of the study are entirely dependent on the unique responses provided by each survey participant.

- The shortage of sufficient research on digital marketing and structured data, particularly empirical literatures that might support the study with more pertinent information.

APPENDIX I A – QUESTIONNAIRE

Addis Ababa University School of Commerce
Post Graduate Programs - Department of Marketing Management
Questionnaire for Customers of Ethiopian Airlines

Dear respondents;

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your thoughtful cooperation to express your real feeling in the questionnaire. I am a student of Marketing Management at Addis Ababa University School of Commerce, and am conducting a survey on the title "The Effect of Digital Marketing on Service Delivery Enhancement: The Case of Ethiopian Airlines". The questionnaire is mainly for the completion of academic research for the requirement of Master's Degree in Marketing Management program.

I want to assure you that the information you provide will be kept confidential and that this questionnaire will only be used for academic purposes and your ideas and comments will be respected and kept private. You are not required to write your name in order to build a conducive atmosphere for your free and genuine answer. If you have any questions, please contact:

Name: Genet W/Michael

Telephone: 0911373252, Email: genetminuta@gmail.com

Part I: General Information:

In answering to the questionnaire, please use tick (✓) mark in the boxes provided.

1. Gender
 Male Female
2. Age
 18 to 25-year-old 26 to 35-year-old 36 to 45-year-old 46 year & above
3. Nationality
 Ethiopian Others
4. What is your educational level?
 Below Diploma Diploma University Degree Masters and above
5. What is your occupational status?
 Student Employed Self-employed House wife/husband
6. In terms of air travel, how would you classify yourself?

Business Leisure Holiday Medical Education Other

7. How many round-trip flights have you taken in the last year?

1 to 5 6 to 10 11 to 15 16 to 20 More than 20

8. What is your Yearly income (in USD)?

Below \$5,000 \$5,001 to \$10,000 \$10,001 to \$15,000 \$15,001 to \$20,000 above \$20,000

9. Which airline do you fly with on a regular basis?

Ethiopian Emirates Turkish Egypt Air Kenya Airways Other

10. When flying, which class do you normally use?

Economy Class Business Class First Class

11. How do you go about purchasing airline tickets?

Website/mobile app Airline ticket office Call Centre Travel Agency other

Part II: Digital marketing and service delivery enhancement determinants;

Directions: On a 5-point Likert scale, you are required to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the number against it. Where (1=strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4= Agree and 5= Strongly Agree). Please circle one number per line to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

No	Questions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Social Media Marketing (SM)						
SM1	ET social media is easy to search and to find what I am looking for	1	2	3	4	5
SM2	I am satisfied with the speed and responsiveness of ET social media	1	2	3	4	5
SM3	ET's social media frequently adds important new features and has all social networks (Twitter, yahoo, Instagram, face book, Tik-Tok, Telegram, LinkedIn, Weibo)	1	2	3	4	5
SM4	My recent experience on ET online service was excellent	1	2	3	4	5
SM5	ET social media provides timely & accurate flight information	1	2	3	4	5

2. Content Marketing (CM)						
CM1	I receive content, such as blogs, posts, articles, and newsletters about ET regularly	1	2	3	4	5
CM2	I receive original videos from ET that are important & informative	1	2	3	4	5
CM3	I will recommend the service to my friends and family	1	2	3	4	5
CM4	It provides accurate information on ET services on ground and on the flight	1	2	3	4	5
CM5	It improves the service delivery quality of the airline	1	2	3	4	5
3. Email Marketing (EM)						
EM1	I feel secured and have confidence on the online payment options	1	2	3	4	5
EM2	ET email marketing is easy to use and I get timely response	1	2	3	4	5
EM3	I get more privilege and incentives for using online booking, online purchase and online check-in services	1	2	3	4	5
EM4	I often receive emails from ET on future sales events, seasonal discounts, and new product launches	1	2	3	4	5
EM5	The quality and standard of ET email marketing meets its customers' expectations	1	2	3	4	5
4. Search Engine Optimization (SEO)						
SEO1	It is easy to search for flight schedule availability on ET's website	1	2	3	4	5
SEO2	ET website content loads fast and is compatible with my mobile device	1	2	3	4	5
SEO3	Whenever I go online for the best price offers for tickets, ET consistently appears among the top 10 airlines.	1	2	3	4	5
SEO4	My rights and obligations regarding internet purchases are stated clearly on ET website.	1	2	3	4	5
SEO5	The quality of service delivery is significantly improved by ET digital marketing.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Affiliate Marketing (AM)						
AM1	I regularly receive ET adverts from third-party publishers.	1	2	3	4	5
AM2	I receive valuable and helpful information from ET's affiliates.	1	2	3	4	5
AM3	While using ET online services I evaluate my alternatives	1	2	3	4	5
AM4	ET's online customer support is very helpful and consumer-focused.	1	2	3	4	5
AM5	The online service fees for ET are fair and reasonable.	1	2	3	4	5

Part III. Service Delivery Enhancement related questions:

Please circle one number per line to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

No	Questions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
6. Service Delivery quality (SDQ)						
SDQ1	ET offers best service with its digital marketing platform	1	2	3	4	5
SDQ2	To book online, purchase online and check-in online makes travel hassle free	1	2	3	4	5
SDQ3	ET's digital services satisfies customers' needs	1	2	3	4	5
SDQ4	ET provide safe and secure payment options for online transactions	1	2	3	4	5
SDQ5	I spent less time and gets better service by using ET online service	1	2	3	4	5
SDQ6	ET website offers enough language options for ease understanding	1	2	3	4	5
SDQ7	The inconvenience and wait times at ticket office and check-in counters are minimized with ET online	1	2	3	4	5
SDQ8	The customer service call centre team are available 24/7 to assist on any challenge on the online service	1	2	3	4	5
SDQ9	The overall service quality has improved through online services	1	2	3	4	5
SDQ10	My appreciation for ET has grown as my experience exceeded my expectations	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you!!

Appendix IB

የጽሁፍ ቃለ-መጠይቅ በአማርኛ:

ውይይት የዚህ ቃለ-መጠይቅ ተሳታፊዎች:

ስሜን ገነት ወልደሚካኤል ሲሆን በአዲስ አበባ ዩንቨርሲቲ በድህረ ምረቃ (በማርኬቲንግ ማኔጅመንት) ተመራቂ ተማሪ ነኝ ። ከታች የተገለጹት መጠይቆች የኢትዮጵያ አየር መንገድ ከዲጂታል ማርኬቲንግ አገልግሎት ጋር በተያያዘ ያለውን ግንዛቤና ልምድ ለመመዘን የቀረቡ ናቸው። መረጃው ለትምህርታዊ አላማ ብቻ የሚውል ሲሆን ለመረጃው የሚሰጥ መልስ በምስጢር የሚያዝይህ ነው። መልስ ይሆናል ብለው የሚያስቡትን ምርጫ በመጨረሻ ይመልሱ።

በቅድምያ ለትብብርዎ የላቀ ምስጋናዬን አቀርባለሁ።

ክፍል አንድ፡ ጠቅላላ መረጃ

1. **ፆታ**

- ወንድ ሴት

2. **የዕድሜ ደረጃ**

- ከ18-25 ዓመት ከ26-35 ዓመት ከ36-45 ዓመት ከ46 ዓመት በላይ

3. **ዜግነት**

- ኢትዮጵያዊ/ት ሌላ

4. **የትምህርት ደረጃ**

- ከ ዲፕሎማ በታች ዲፕሎማ የመጀመሪያ ዲግሪ ማስተርስ እና ከዚያ በላይ

5. **የሥራ ሁኔታ**

- ተማሪ ተቀጣሪ ሰራተኛ የግል ሥራ ሥራ አጥ

6. **የአየር በረራን በተመለከተ፤ እርስዎ በየትኛው ይመደባሉ?**

- ለንግድ ለመዝናናት ለበዓል ለህክምና ለትምህርት ሌላ

7. **ምን ያህል ደርሶ መልስ በረራዎች በዓለፈዉ አመት ተጠቅመዋል?**

- 1 - 5 6 - 10 11 - 15 16 - 20 ከ 20 በላይ

8. **አመታዊ ገቢዎ ምን ያህል ነዉ?**

- ከ \$5,000 በታች \$5,001 - \$10,000 \$10,001 - \$15,000 \$15,001 - \$20,000 ከ \$20,000 በላይ

9. **የትኛውን አየር መንገድ በመደበኛነት ይጠቀማሉ?**

- የኢትዮጵያ አየር መንገድ የኤምሬትስ አየር መንገድ የቱርክ አየር መንገድ
 የግብፅ አየር መንገድ የኬንያ አየር መንገድ ሌላ

10. **ለበረራ የትኛውን የበረራ ክፍል በአብዛኛው ይጠቀማሉ?**

የኢኮኖሚ ክፍል

የቢዝነስ ክፍል

የአንደኛ ደረጃ ክፍል

11. ትኬት የምገዛው:

በአየር መንገዱ ድረ ገጽ/ሞባይል በ ቲኬት ቢሮ በ ጥሪማእክል በ ጉዞ ወኪል ሌላ

ክፍል ሁለት: የዲጂታል ግብይት እና የአገልግሎት አሰጣጥ ማሻሻያ መወሰኛዎች :

የአንላይን ግብይትን በተመለከተ ለሚከተሉት ጥያቄዎች በተመለከተው ደረጃ ሳጥን ላይ የራይት ምልክት በማድረግ በምን ያክል እንደሚስማሙ እባክዎን ያመልክቱ።

በአ = በጣም አልስማማም አ = አልስማማም አል = አልወሰንኩም እ = እስማማለሁ
በእ = በጣም እስማማለሁ

ተ ቁ	መጠይቆች	የስምምነት ደረጃ				
		በአ	አ	አል	እ	በእ
የማህበራዊ ትስስር ገፅ ግብይት						
1	የአየር መንገዱ ማህበራዊ ሚዲያ ለማሰስ እና የምፈልገውን ለማግኘት ቀላል ነው።					
2	በአየር መንገዱ ማህበራዊ ሚዲያ ፍጥነት እና ምላሽ ረክቻለሁ።					
3	የአየር መንገዱ ማህበራዊ ሚዲያ ብዙ ጊዜ ጠቃሚ አዳዲስ ባህሪያትን ይጨምራል እና ሁሉም ማህበራዊ አውታረ መረቦች አሉት።					
4	በአየር መንገዱ ኢሜል ግብይት ላይ ያለኝ የቅርብ ጊዜ ልምድ በጣም ጥሩ ነበር።					
5	የአየር መንገዱ ማህበራዊ ሚዲያ ወቅታዊ የበረራ መረጃን ይሰጣል።					
የይዘት ግብይት						
1	ስለ አየር መንገዱ በተደጋጋሚ እንደ ብሎጎች፣ መጣጥፎች እና ጋዜጣዎች ያሉ ይዘቶችን እቀበላለሁ።					
2	አስፈላጊ እና መረጃ ሰጭ የሆኑ ኦሪጅናል ቪዲዮዎችን በመደበኛነት እቀበላለሁ።					
3	አገልግሎቱን እንዲጠቀሙ ለጓደኞቼ እና ለቤተሰቤ እመክራለሁ።					
4	በመሬት ላይ እና በበረራ ላይ ስለ አየር መንገዱ አገልግሎቶች ትክክለኛ መረጃ ይሰጣል።					
5	የአየር መንገዱን የአገልግሎት አሰጣጥ ጥራት ያሻሽላል።					
የኢሜል ግብይት						
1	በአየር መንገዱ የመስመር ላይ የክፍያ አማራጮች ላይ ደህንነት እና በራስ መተማመን ይሰማኛል።					

2	በአዋጅ መንገድ የኢሜል ግብይት ለመጠቀም ቀላል ነው፡ ወቅታዊ ምላሽም አገኛለሁ፡፡					
3	በአንላይን በታ ማስያዝ እና የመግቢያ አገልግሎቶችን በመጠቀም ተጨማሪ ልዩ መብቶችን እና ማበረታቻዎችን አገኛለሁ፡፡					
4	ስለ ወቅታዊ ቅናሾች፣ የሽያጭ ዝግጅቶች እና ጅምር የምርት ግንዛቤን እና መረጃ ሰጪን የሚያሳድጉ ኢሜይሎችን በተደጋጋሚ እቀበላለሁ፡፡					
5	የአዋጅ መንገድ ኢሜል ግብይት ጥራት እና ደረጃ ደንበኞቼ የሚጠብቁትን ያሟላል፡፡					
የፍለጋ ሞተር ማቀላጠፍ						
1	የምፈልገውን ለማግኘት የአዋጅ መንገድን ድህረ ገጽን ማሰስ ቀላል ነው፡፡					
2	የአዋጅ መንገድ ድህረ ገጽ ይዘት በፍጥነት ይጨምራል፤ ከሞባይል መሳሪያዬ ጋር ተኳሃኝ ነው፡፡					
3	ምርጥ የቲኬት ዋጋ ቅናሾችን ለማግኘት በአን ላይን በምፈልግበት ጊዜ ሁል ጊዜ አዋጅ መንገድ ከምርጥ 10 አዋጅ መንገዶች መካከል አገኛለሁ፡፡					
4	የበይነመረብ ግዢን በተመለከተ የእርስዎ መብቶች እና ግዴታዎች በአዋጅ መንገድ ድህረ ገጽ ላይ በግልጽ ተገልጿል፡፡					
5	የአገልግሎት አሰጣጥ ጥራት በአዋጅ መንገድ ዲጂታል ግብይት በእጅግ ተሻሽሏል፡፡					
የተቆራኝ ግብይት						
1	ከሶስተኛ ወገን አታሚዎች በተደጋጋሚ የአዋጅ መንገድ ማስታወቂያዎችን አገኛለሁ					
2	ከአዋጅ መንገድ ተባባሪ የሚገኘው መረጃ በጣም ጠቃሚ እና አስፈላጊ ነው፡፡					
3	የአዋጅ መንገድ አንላይን አገልግሎቶችን በመጠቀምበት ጊዜ አማራጮችን እገመግማለሁ፡፡					
4	የአዋጅ መንገድ አንላይን የደንበኛ ድጋፍ ከችግር ነፃ እና በደንበኛ ላይ ያተኮረ ነው፡፡					
5	የአዋጅ መንገድ አንላይን አገልግሎት ክፍያዎች ምክንያታዊ እና ፍትሃዊ ናቸው፡፡					

ክፍል ሦስት: የአገልግሎት አሰጣጥ ማሻሻያ ተዛማጅ ጥያቄዎች:

በሚከተሉት መግለጫዎች ምን ያህል እንደሚስማሙ ወይም እንደማይስማሙ ለማመልከት እባክዎን ደረጃ ሰጥን ላይ የራይት ምልክት ያመልክቱ።

ተቋ	መጠይቆች	የስምምነት ደረጃ				
		በአ	አ	አል	አ	በአ
1	አዋር መንገዱ ከተወዳዳሪዎቹ ጋር ሲነጻጸር በዲጂታል የግብይት መድረክ እጅግ በጣም ጥሩ አገልግሎት ይሰጣል።					
2	አዋር መንገዱ ከተወዳዳሪዎቹ ጋር ሲነጻጸር በዲጂታል የግብይት መድረክ ላይ ተመጣጣኝ ዋጋ ያስከፍላል።					
3	የአዋር መንገዱ ዲጂታል የክፍያ አማራጮች አጥጋቢ ናቸው					
4	ለአንላይን ግብይቶች ደህንነቱ የተጠበቀ የክፍያ አማራጭ ይሰጣል።					
5	የአዋር መንገዱ አንላይን አገልግሎትን በመጠቀም ከችግር ነፃ አገልግሎት ባነሰ ጊዜ አገኛለሁ።					
6	የአዋር መንገዱ ድህረ ገጽ በቀላሉ ለመረዳት ብዙ የቋንቋ አማራጮችን ይሰጣል።					
7	የአዋር መንገዱ አንላይን አገልግሎቶች የመቆያ ጊዜን እና በቲኬት ቢሮ እና በመግቢያ ቆጣሪዎች ላይ ያለውን ችግር በእጅግ ይቀንሳል።					
8	የደንበኞች አገልግሎት የጥሪ ማእከል ቡድን በመስመር ላይ አገልግሎት ላይ ማንኛውንም ችግር ለመርዳት ሁል ጊዜ 24/7 ይገኛል።					
9	አጠቃላይ የአገልግሎት ጥራት በአንላይን አገልግሎቶች ተሻሽሏል።					
10	ልምዴ ከምጣብቀው በላይ በመሆኑ ለአዋር መንገዱ ያለኝ አድናቆት አድጓል።					

አመሰግናለሁ!!

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