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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

**The Role of Social Media Marketing in enhancing the Performance and Growth of Small Businesses**

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| ABSTRACT

Social media marketing has fundamentally changed the landscape of business communication and consumer interaction. Platforms like Facebook and Instagram provide SMEs with a unique opportunity to build brand awareness, drive customer engagement, and boost sales without the need for substantial marketing budgets. This study aimed to explore the role of social media marketing in enhancing the performance and growth of small businesses. By examining the various ways in which social media platforms were leveraged, this research sought to understand how small businesses used social media to increase brand visibility, engage customers, and drive sales. The study employed a descriptive quantitative correlational research design. This study utilized a purposive sampling method to select 50 small business owners in Baungon, Bukidnon, who actively engaged in social media marketing. The T-test and ANOVA were used to determine if there were significant differences in small business performance based on demographic factors such as age, sex, or monthly income. The study used Pearson's R Correlation to determine whether a significant relationship existed between social media marketing strategies and the performance of small businesses in Baungon, Bukidnon. The findings revealed that in terms of age, the data showed that 10 respondents (20%) are below 21 years old, 25 respondents (50%) are between 21 and 30 years old, and 15 respondents (30%) are between 31 and 40 years old. With regard to the average monthly income, the data revealed that 62% of respondents earn below PHP 10,000.00, while 22% earn between PHP 10,001.00 - PHP 20,000.00. Meanwhile, 12% earn between PHP 20,001.00 - PHP 30,000, and only 4% earn between PHP 30,001 - PHP 70,000.00. No respondents earned above PHP 70,001. Further, media engagement received a very high average of (M=3.56; SD=0.77) with an adjectival rate of "very high social media marketing". In addition, content quality got the lowest average (M=3.58; SD=0.75) with an adjectival rating of "very high small business". The study concluded that the revenue was rated 3.57, reinforcing the idea that social media marketing contributes to financial growth and has a statistically significant positive impact on the performance of small businesses in Baungon, Bukidnon.

| KEYWORDS

Media Engagement, Content Quality, Target Advertising.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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**1. Introduction**

In the digital age, social media has emerged as a powerful marketing tool that has transformed how businesses promote their products, communicate with customers, and sustain growth. Unlike traditional forms of advertising that demand large budgets, social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok offer affordable, accessible, and highly interactive channels that small businesses can use to compete with larger firms.

Through these platforms, entrepreneurs can increase brand awareness, attract new customers, and engage in direct conversations that strengthen loyalty and trust.

Several studies highlighted the effectiveness of social media in driving small business success. Calleja (2019), for instance, revealed that consumer perspectives in Pasay City showed how targeted strategies increased visibility, customer interaction, and loyalty. Hernandez (2022) emphasized that the adoption of social media by SMEs in the Philippines significantly improved their organizational performance and sustainability. Likewise, Rellosa (2023) found that micro, small, and medium enterprises in Metro Manila's creative industry benefited from the use of social media, as it enhanced their sales growth and brand recognition despite limited resources. International studies also echo these findings, with Jain (2015) and Adegbuyi (2015) proving that social media marketing contributes to revenue generation and customer retention in diverse contexts.

Further, despite these opportunities, challenges remain for small businesses. Many struggle with creating consistent and high-quality content, managing customer engagement, and analyzing the performance of their marketing campaigns. These challenges are especially evident in rural communities such as Baungon, Bukidnon, where businesses typically operate with low capitalization and limited resources, relying on cost-efficient strategies to survive in an increasingly competitive market.

Furthermore, the study sought to examine how strategies such as media engagement, content quality, targeted advertising, target customers, and promotion affect small business outcomes in terms of sales growth, overall performance, and revenue. This study was anchored on three major theories. The Structure-Conduct-Performance (SCP) Theory explains how the structure of an industry influences business practices and outcomes, suggesting that the availability of digital platforms reshapes how businesses market, compete, and perform. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) provides a lens for understanding why entrepreneurs adopt social media, highlighting perceived usefulness and ease of use as drivers of adoption. Finally, the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) explains how innovations such as social media marketing spread within a community, showing how business owners gradually adopt, adapt, and improve these practices over time. These theories provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing how social media is embraced by entrepreneurs and how it contributes to business success.

This study further illustrates the relationship between demographic profiles, social media marketing, and small businesses. The independent variables were the social media marketing strategies, namely media engagement, content quality, targeted advertising, target customers, and promotion. The dependent variables were small business indicators such as sales growth, business performance, and revenue. Demographic factors such as age, sex, income, years in business, and capitalization were also considered, as these characteristics may influence the adoption and effectiveness of social media practices. The framework suggested that demographic profiles interact with social media marketing strategies to produce varying levels of business performance. This provided the basis for formulating the research questions and guided the interpretation of results.

### **1.1 Research Questions:**

The study sought to determine the relationships between social media marketing strategies and the performance of small businesses, with a particular focus on the impact of media engagement, content quality, target customers, promotion, and targeted advertising. The study also considers the influence of demographic factors, including age, sex, and monthly income.

### **1.2 Purpose of the Study:**

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of social media marketing in improving the performance of small businesses in Baungon, Bukidnon. It specifically focused on strategies such as media engagement, content quality, targeted advertising, customer targeting, and promotions, and how these influence sales growth, revenue, and overall business performance. Moreover, the study aimed to describe the demographic profile of small business owners, including age, sex, income, years in business, and capitalization, and determine how these characteristics affect the adoption and effectiveness of social media marketing. Moreover, the study sought to establish the

relationship between social media marketing and business performance, while also providing practical recommendations to help small business owners strengthen their competitiveness through effective digital marketing strategies.

### **1.3 Significance:**

This study is significant because it provides small business owners with practical insights on how social media marketing strategies can improve customer engagement, sales, and overall growth. It also contributes to academic research by refining theories and serving as a reference for future studies on digital marketing. Policymakers and government agencies benefit from the findings by designing programs that promote digital literacy and support small businesses. Lastly, marketers and practitioners can apply the results to create more effective and personalized campaigns for small enterprises.

## **2. Methods**

### **2.1 Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive quantitative correlational design to examine the influence of social media marketing on the performance of small businesses in Baungon, Bukidnon. Descriptive statistics were applied to summarize the respondents' demographic profiles as well as their social media marketing. The analysis further explored the relationship between social media marketing, specifically content quality, media engagement, and targeted advertising, and target customers, and small businesses.

### **2.2 Participants and Sampling Method**

The study involved 50 small business owners in Baungon, Bukidnon, who actively used social media platforms to promote their businesses. A purposive sampling method was applied. This method ensured that only respondents with actual experience in social media marketing were included, making the data more relevant and reliable.

Inclusion Criteria included:

- Must be a registered or recognized small business owner in Baungon, Bukidnon.
- Must have been operating their business for at least six months prior to the study.
- Must use at least one social media platform (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) as part of their business marketing strategy.
- Must be primarily serving customers within the local area.

Businesses that did not use social media for promotion or had been in operation for less than six months were excluded from the study.

### **2.3 Research Instrument:**

The data was gathered using a structured questionnaire designed with three main parts to collect data from small business owners in Baungon, Bukidnon.

- Part I – contained items pertaining to the demographic profile, such as age, gender, monthly income, number of years in business, and capitalization
- Part II – This section assessed the respondents' use of social media, including platforms used, posting frequency, types of content shared, and perceived effectiveness of these strategies. A Likert scale was employed to measure the level of agreement and provide a detailed understanding of their marketing approaches.
- Part III – This section focused on business outcomes, asking respondents to report changes in customer acquisition, revenue growth, and brand awareness since adopting social media marketing strategies.

To ensure validity and reliability, a pilot test was conducted with a small group of business owners who were not part of the main study. Their feedback was used to refine and finalize the questionnaire. By structuring the

instrument into these parts, several items were adapted from validated studies by Rietveld et al. (2020) to ensure the instrument's reliability and relevance. The study was able to gather comprehensive and organized data on the role of social media marketing in enhancing small business performance.

**2.4 Data Gathering Procedure**

The data collection process was carried out systematically to ensure reliability and validity. First, the researcher secured permissions from local authorities and business associations to access the target respondents. A pilot test of the questionnaire was conducted with a small group of business owners, and their feedback was used to refine the instrument. After finalization, the questionnaire was administered in person through face-to-face interactions, with recruitment supported by local business networks, community events, and social media groups. Respondents were informed of the study's objectives and procedures, and informed consent was obtained prior to participation. Once data collection was completed, responses were compiled and organized, then analyzed using appropriate statistical software to examine the relationship between social media marketing practices and business performance.

**2.5 Ethical Considerations**

- Integrity and Responsibility – The study avoided endorsing deceptive practices such as false advertising, misleading content, or exploitation of consumer vulnerabilities.
- Stakeholder Protection – The potential impacts on customers, competitors, employees, and the online community were carefully considered, ensuring that strategies did not lead to digital harassment, unfair competition, or privacy violations.
- Data Privacy and Confidentiality – All data were obtained from reliable and publicly accessible sources. No private or proprietary information was used without consent, and the confidentiality of individuals and organizations was respected at all times.
- Promotion of Ethical Practices – The research encouraged the adoption of fair, sustainable, and trustworthy social media marketing strategies to support small business growth.

**2.6 Data Analysis**

Collected data were encoded and analyzed using SPSS software.

- Descriptive Statistics: Used to summarize demographic data and responses (e.g., frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations).
- T-test and ANOVA: Applied to test significant differences in business performance when grouped by demographics (e.g., age, income, years in business).
- Pearson R Correlation: Used to determine the relationship between social media marketing strategies and business performance (sales growth, revenue, overall performance).

Responses were quantified using a four-point Likert scale, interpreted as follows:

Scale	Range of Means	Description	Interpretation
4	3.26 - 4.00	Strongly Agree	Very High
3	2.51 - 3.25	Agree	High
2	1.76 - 2.50	Disagree	Poor
1	1.00 - 1.75	Strongly Disagree	Very Poor

### 3. Results

Table 1 . Demographic Profile of Respondents

Factor	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
Below 21 years old	10	20
21-30 years old	25	50
31-40 years old	15	30
41-50 years old	0	0
Over 50 years old	0	0
Sex		
Male	10	20
Female	40	80
Prefer not to say	0	0
Average monthly		
₱ 10,000.00 below	31	62
₱ 10,001.00- ₱ 20,000.00	11	22
₱ 20,001.00- ₱ 30,000.00	6	12
₱30,001.00- ₱ 70,000.00	2	4
₱70,001.00 and above	0	0
Capitalization		
₱ 50,001.00 and below	36	72
₱ 50,001.00- ₱ 150,001.00	13	26
₱150,001.00- ₱250,001.00	1	2
₱250,001.00- ₱350,001.00	0	0
₱350,001.00 and above	0	0
Number Of Years in Business		
Less than 1 year	8	16
1-3 years	28	56
4-6 years	12	2
7-10 years	0	0
More than 10 years	0	0

Table 2. Summary of Respondents Assessment on Social Media Marketing  
 Social Media Marketing on Small Business was evaluated in five domains: media engagement, content quality, target advertising, target costumer, and promotion.

DOMAIN	Mean	St. Deviation	Interpretation
Media Engagement	3.7	0.50	Very High Engagement
Content Quality	3.51	1.16	Very High Content Quality
Target Advertising	3.52	1.20	Very High Target Advertising
Target Costumer	3.52	0.51	Very High Target Costumer
Promotion	3.55	0.5	Very High Promotion
Average	3.56	0.77	Very High Social Media Marketing

Table 3. Summary of Respondents Assessment on Social Media Marketing

Domain	Mean	St. Deviation	Interpretation
Sales Growth	3.64	0.92	Very High Sales Growth
Business Performance	3.54	0.55	Very High Business Performance
Revenue	3.57	0.55	Very High Revenue
Overall	3.58	0.67	Very High Small Business

Table 4. A Significant Difference Between Small Business When Group According to Their Profile

Profile	Customer Engagement					
	Interest		Loyalty		Commitment	
	p-value	Decision on H0	p-value	Decision on H0	p-value	Decision on H0
Age	< 0.05	Reject	< 0.05	Reject	< 0.05	Reject
Sex	> 0.05	Accept	> 0.05	Accept	< 0.05	Reject
Civil Status	< 0.05	Reject	< 0.05	Reject	< 0.05	Reject
Monthly Income	< 0.05	Reject	> 0.05	Accept	< 0.05	Reject

Significant if P-value <0.05. Legend: Ho is rejected if Significant Ho is accepted if Not Significant

Table 5. Significance Relationship Between Social Media Marketing

Variables	Small Businesses	
	r	P
Social Media Marketing	0.25251	< 0.001
Strength	Weak	
Interpretation	Very Highly Significant	
Legend	Strenght: 0.00-0.19      Very Weak 0.20-0.39      Weak 0.40-0.59      Moderate 0.60-0.79      Strong 0.80-1.00      Very Strong INTERPRETATION $p \leq 0.05 \rightarrow$ Significant $p \leq 0.01 \rightarrow$ Highly Significant $p \leq 0.001 \rightarrow$ Very Highly Significant	

**4. Discussion**

The study found that most small business owners in Baungon, Bukidnon, are young women with limited income and capitalization, making social media an affordable tool for marketing. All five strategies, such as media engagement, content quality, targeted advertising, target customers, and promotions, were rated very high, with media engagement as the strongest and content quality needing improvement. Business performance was likewise rated very high, showing that social media contributes to growth in sales, revenue, and overall success.

The findings also revealed significant differences in performance when grouped by demographics such as income and years in business. A strong positive relationship was confirmed between social media marketing and small business performance, meaning that better strategies result in higher growth. Overall, the study emphasized that social media is essential for small businesses, though entrepreneurs still need training to improve content and maximize results.

**4.1 Interpretation of Results**

The findings revealed that most small business owners in Baungon, Bukidnon, were young women with limited income and capitalization. This shows that social media became their most affordable and practical tool for promoting products and services. The reliance on digital platforms highlights a shift toward accessible and low-cost marketing options among resource-constrained entrepreneurs.

Further, social media marketing strategies were assessed at a very high level across all dimensions. Media engagement obtained the highest mean score, underscoring the importance of customer interaction through likes, comments, and shares. Content quality, while still rated very high, received the lowest score, suggesting that entrepreneurs must improve creativity and consistency.

In addition, business performance was also rated very high in terms of sales growth, overall performance, and revenue. This confirms that the use of social media contributes directly to tangible business outcomes. It also supports earlier studies showing that digital platforms serve as powerful drivers of growth even for entrepreneurs with limited resources.

Moreover, statistical tests revealed significant differences in business performance when grouped by demographic profile. Income and years in business showed the strongest variations, indicating that more experienced and better-resourced entrepreneurs apply strategies more effectively. This suggests that demographic characteristics play an important role in influencing marketing success.

The study confirmed a significant positive relationship between social media strategies and small business performance. This validates the Technology Acceptance Model and the Innovation Diffusion Theory, which explain how entrepreneurs adopt and improve the use of new technologies over time. Overall, the results emphasize that social media is an essential and cost-effective marketing tool that requires continuous improvement in content and strategy.

#### **4.2 Comparison with Existing Literature**

The findings of this study revealed that social media marketing strategies—including media engagement, content quality, targeted advertising, and promotion—have a very high level of effectiveness in enhancing small business performance in terms of sales growth, business performance, and revenue. This aligns with the work of Hernandez (2022) and Nguyen (2023), who emphasized that active social media engagement and targeted advertisements are key drivers of business growth and customer loyalty.

Moreover, the study supports Sharma (2023), who found that structured social media strategies such as consistent content creation and targeted advertising result in improved customer acquisition and retention. Similarly, Lee (2024) concluded that promotional strategies and user-generated content foster community trust and increase brand loyalty, which corresponds with this study's finding of high promotional effectiveness.

However, while the present research found a significant relationship between social media marketing and business performance, the strength of the relationship was weak ( $r = 0.25251$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This suggests that other factors, such as digital literacy, business size, and financial capability, may play a larger role in business success, consistent with Tan (2023), who observed that firms with lower capitalization benefit more from affordable digital platforms like social media.

Overall, these results reinforce previous literature asserting that effective use of social media marketing can improve sales, brand awareness, and customer engagement, but also highlight the need for broader strategies that integrate financial, technological, and managerial components.

### **5. Conclusion and Implications of the Findings**

The findings of this study have important implications for small business owners, policymakers, and future researchers. For business owners, the results emphasize the necessity of strengthening social media marketing strategies—particularly through quality content and targeted advertising—to improve customer engagement and sustain business growth. By implementing training programs such as digital workshops and mentorship initiatives, small business owners can enhance their digital marketing skills and adapt to emerging online trends.

For policymakers and government agencies, the study suggests the importance of supporting small enterprises through programs that encourage digital literacy and technology adoption. This can be done by providing affordable access to online marketing tools and capacity-building initiatives for entrepreneurs.

Finally, for researchers, the study expands existing theories such as the Structure-Conduct-Performance Paradigm (SCP), Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), and Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) by showing how social media strategies are influenced by demographic factors. These theoretical models demonstrate how small businesses adopt and apply marketing technologies to gain a competitive advantage in the digital marketplace.

#### **5.1 Limitations**

This study encountered several limitations that must be acknowledged in interpreting its results. The research was conducted among small businesses in Baungon, Bukidnon, which may not represent the experiences and practices of small enterprises in other regions or industries. The varying demographic profiles of respondents, such as age, income, and educational background, may have influenced their perceptions of social media marketing effectiveness, potentially affecting the consistency of the findings. Differences among social media platforms, each with unique engagement features and audience characteristics, might also have impacted how respondents

evaluated marketing outcomes. The use of self-reported survey data presents a possible response bias, as participants may have provided answers that appeared more favorable or socially acceptable. Moreover, because social media technologies and trends rapidly evolve, the findings may reflect only the current digital landscape and could change over time. Despite these limitations, the study provides meaningful insights into how social media marketing contributes to small business performance and serves as a useful reference for future research exploring wider contexts and longer timeframes.

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