



*Digital Marketing and its Impact on SMEs international expansion in Algeria*

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*Abstract*

Globalization has converted the entire world into a single market where individuals and companies can conduct any kind of business. The breakthrough of the Internet provided endless opportunities for companies; especially SMEs; to create new ways of online selling and seek out new marketing techniques. Digital marketing is a growing trend day by day, despite the fact that the internet has been shown to support parts of internalization, there is a lack of understanding of how the internet, combined with marketing capabilities, supports worldwide market expansion. The purpose of this article is to investigate the impact of digital marketing factors on SMEs competitive advantage and therefore their international expansion. To complete this research, a questionnaire was conducted and distributed among target sample to measure the relationship between the variables using SPSS. The findings

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of this study clearly demonstrate that digital marketing positively impacts SMEs internationalization and their competitive advantage.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, SMEs, Competitive advantage, Internationalization

## **1. INTRODUCTION:**

The internationalization of firms has been a subject of interest for many years, firms internationalization has become a more complex phenomenon, many research has identified an increasing number of firms that do not follow the traditional stages in their internationalization process, this is for two reasons: first, the international expansion of companies has grown, in both traditional manufacturing-based business and services, especially in knowledge-intensive services. Second, internationalization is no longer considered as a process followed by large companies, but increasingly involving medium, small and even micro-enterprises (Gluckler, 2006). The majority of researchers agree on the fact that internationalization is based on the experience of large Multinational enterprises (MNEs), and the applicability of this to smaller firms had been questioned. SMEs are limited by their resources, their lack of brand awareness and their inexperienced management, and these limitations can be considered as barriers for SMEs in foreign markets (Zhao & Chin-Chun, 2007), and the decision to launch abroad is more risky for SMEs than it is in large companies, this is why SMEs must explore and rely on unique or non-traditional resources that differ from those used by large MNEs in order to overcome size-related disadvantages (Zhao & Chin-Chun, 2007)

Unlike the entry behavior to foreign market in large firms, the export behavior in small firms is influenced by the individual decision maker(s). Digitalization is playing an increasingly essential role in business growth, resulting in structural and strategic changes. The adoption of digital marketing opens up new avenues for SMEs to develop and prosper in international markets.

Digitalization, or the integration of digital media into a firm's practices, involves digitizing work processes and integrating phone, Internet, and mobile technologies to transform the communication interface with customers, suppliers, and channel partners (Coreynen, Matthyssens, & Van Bockhaven, 2017).

Studies in digital marketing were being conducted right after the breakthrough of the internet in 1991, generating several terms such as: web marketing, e-marketing or digital marketing, in which all of these terms were being used to describe “the use of the internet and other digital technologies for commercial purposes” (Chaffey, Ellis-Chadwick, Issac, Mercanti-Guerin Maria, & Volle, 2014)

Marketing in the digital age isn't just about an innovative idea, a new leader, or a major initiative. It's about taking a set of deliberate and reinforcing steps that result in the development of strong digital decisions. Marketing channels have changed over time as a result of the technological improvements and innovations, aiming at increasing elements such as efficiency and persuasive power as well as attracting more clients and value partners, and with the introduction of the internet, digital marketing stands out as an opportunity with long-lasting potential (Cadavid & Alejandro, 2022)

The internet provides challenges and opportunities to both new and existing companies, which encourages them to innovate and find new ways to grow their market share and therefore expand their international activities. Despite the fact that the internet has been shown to support parts of internalization such as knowledge gathering and network opportunities, there is a lack of understanding of how the internet, combined with marketing capabilities, supports worldwide market expansion. The purpose of this article is to investigate the impact of digital marketing factors on SMEs international expansion.

**The question of the study:**

1- Is there a significant relationship between digital marketing adoption and SMEs competitive advantage?

2- Is there a positive relationship between digital marketing and SMEs internationalization?

**Hypotheses:**

**H1:** There is a positive relation between digital marketing and internationalization of SMEs.

**H2:** There is a significant relation between digital marketing adoption and SMEs competitive advantage.

### **The Objective of the study:**

The aim of this article is to study the relationship between digital marketing and SMEs competitive advantage and their international expansion.

### **2. Digital Marketing:**

Digitalization is considered as one of the main trends that are changing society, business and the economics of globalization in many ways: who takes part, how business is done across borders, and where the economic benefits are flowing (Wautelet, 2017). According to Artur Sawicki (2016) “digital marketing can be defined as exploitation of digital technologies, which are used to create channels to reach potential recipients, in order to achieve the enterprise's goals, through more effective fulfillment of the consumer needs”. Digital marketing is a modern concept of marketing; it helps the company to attract more clients, resulting in higher customer traffic. Digital marketing is not considered as a subset of the traditional marketing, “it has become a new phenomenon that brings together customization and mass-distribution to accomplish marketing goals” (Teresa & Xabier, 2016)

Technological breakthrough and innovation have made it easier for companies to use digital marketing as a tool to create platforms for connecting a large number of prospective viewers, and pushed the boundaries towards new idea of digital marketing that is more user-centered, quantifiable, pervasive and interactive (Zaazou, 2021)

Digital marketing has evolved from a specific term describing the marketing of products and services using digital channels to a general term describing the process of using digital technologies to acquire customers and establish their preferences, promote brands, retain customers and increase sales. Following the American Marketing Association's approach, it is the use of digital or social channels to promote a brand or reach consumers. This type of marketing can be implemented within social media, search engines, the Internet, mobile devices, and other channels. It involves activities, institutions, and processes facilitated by digital technologies to create, communicate, and deliver value to customers and other stakeholders (R.Esqueda-Walle, Marmolejo Rodriguez, & Villarreal Estrada, 2020).

Each company has its own digital identity where it presents itself in the virtual world to a large number of users; a brand can target each customer with its products. Thanks to digital marketing, firms can send personalized contents to specific clients.

Content personalization is based on data from the CRM system and other systems (Hanson, 1999). Businesses can benefit from using digital marketing techniques to reach their potential clients, increase brand awareness and improve their online presence.

Unlike the traditional marketing, digital marketing facilitates for firms to find out the responses from their customers in real time, which makes it easier to track if a particular campaign is working for the product or not based on the feedback. One of the main benefits of digital marketing is that it allows companies to reach out a specific or focused audience in a cost effective and quantifiable manner. Consumers benefit from clear information about products or services provided by digital marketing, the Internet provides extensive product information on which buyers may depend to make purchasing decisions. And since the Internet is available all day long, there is no time restriction for when customer wants to buy a product online. Indeed, small companies are now able to reach targeted markets at a minimized cost and are able to compete with bigger companies, on an equal footing (Palumbo & Paul, 1998)

There are many digital marketing techniques that companies use in order to enhance their brand awareness and promote their products:

1. Search Engine Optimization (SEO): this technique help firms to increase their brand awareness, it is used to improve the company's website traffic and its online presence in search engines like Google.
2. Search Engine Marketing (SEM): also known as paid search marketing. It is an approach that firms use to drive visitors to their website through paid efforts. There are several SEM platforms, and by far the most popular is the Google Ad words on google network, and Bing Ad on Yahoo Bing network.
3. Content Marketing: it is considered as one of the main digital marketing techniques that is used to attract and retain customers through creating and sharing relevant content or articles that represent the firm's activities. The content might be in a form of blog, article, social media posts, video content and a lot more. This technique will help consumers to learn more about the company and its goals.
4. Email Marketing: this technique aims to maintain a good relationship between the firm and its customers. With effective email marketing software,

companies can maintain email lists that are classified based on numerous factors, such as consumer preferences and spending habits.

5. Social Media Marketing (SMM): this technique is an outstanding way for firms to make a strong online presence and promote brand awareness globally. It involves driving traffic to the company's website through platforms like Facebook and Instagram. With the emergence of social media, the tools and tactics for engaging with the customers have changed greatly, and therefore, businesses must learn how to utilize social media in a way that is compatible with their plans and goals.

### **3. Digital marketing and competitive advantage:**

Digitalization fundamentally changes business practices, challenges the competitive advantages of well-established businesses, and provides opportunities to new firms (Cao, Navare, & Jin, 2018). The digital value that customers receive from digital marketing strategies differs from the value of the physical product. Smart, connected products are completely changing the value chain and that is why companies should reconsider what they are doing (Porter & Heppelmann, 2015).

Today's digital economy provides new channel for commercial relationships, which enables firms to gather all the information needed on markets and potential competitors, distance and entry costs are decreasing, and some trade barriers are being exceeded (Jin & Hurd, 2018). In order for SMEs to succeed in international markets, they must have strategic capabilities, and digitalization is considered as a distinct resource that contributes to the firm's competitive advantage (B, Enjolras, & Monticolo, 2020).

The aim of this article, as mentioned before, is to investigate the impact of digital marketing on SMEs international expansion, it is crucial to clarify the latter concepts. SME has no standard definition, what is considered as SME in one country can be viewed differently in another country. According to the European definition: "SMEs can be defined considering their staff headcount and annual turnover or annual balance sheet total. Therefore, when a firm has less than 250 employees and an annual turnover of 50 million euros or an annual balance sheet total unit 43 million euros, it is defined as an SME" (EC, 2003)

Small and medium-sized enterprises form the backbone of the Algerian private sector. SMEs play a major role in most economics; they can increase the economic

growth of their countries, create job opportunities and increase global economic development. The new circumstances that the Algerian economy is facing led the country to slowly wean itself of its dependence on hydrocarbons and to create and develop a more dynamic sector through the creation of SMEs. The Algerian economic remains dominated by very small enterprises in which they represent 95.51% with less than 10 employees. At the end of the first half of 2021, the overall population of SMEs amounted to 1 267 220 entities, in which 225 are public enterprises and 1 266 955 are private companies (ONS, 2021).

Digital technology adoption has become a requirement for any organization; no firm can add a competitive advantage without using these technologies in their business plan. In today's competitive environment, digital marketing has become an absolute necessity; it helps the company in attracting more customers, resulting in increased customer traffic to its portals. Brand awareness can also be easily generated through digital marketing. It is a valuable tool not only for large organizations, but also for small businesses seeking to compete with a limited advertising budget. Small businesses can benefit from the initial stage of digitization to improve their performance and competitiveness. The internet connectivity provides so many opportunities for SMEs such as reaching new target markets, enhancing performance and efficiency, and increasing growth and competitiveness (Zaazou, 2021)

According to Porter and Miller, the information revolution changes the structure of industry and therefore changes the rules of competition. They suggest that the availability of information results in competitive advantage and can also spawn new businesses (M.E & Millar, 1985). Social media for example is based on information and so much of what Porter and Miller suggest applies to social media, their usage can raise barriers to entry and make it difficult to new entrance to compete. A successful social media initiative requires huge investments in big data, cloud and mobile technologies and analytic software, and all of this requires investments that are not easily replicated in terms of human resources, hardware and software. Technology can be used as a mean to gain and sustain competitive advantage. Gathering necessary information is powered by technology which provides adopters with an advantage that could be developed into a sustainable edge over the competition (Lipovich, 2020).

Ismail Daud (2014) suggested that in order for SMEs to gain competitive advantage in foreign markets, they need to seek out cooperative connections with oversea partners, and their capacity to compete is directly linked to human resources and managerial skills. Digitization provides SMEs the ability to compete in all markets (domestic and internationally) and interact with larger target, it also facilitates and allows enterprises to achieve and maintain competitive advantage in the global markets.

#### **4. Digital marketing and internationalization:**

In a rapidly globalizing economy, many companies are motivated by the desire to extend their business to foreign markets. The decision-making mechanism for internalization is focused on the choice of market, timing and entry mode. Globalization has converted the entire globe into a single market where individuals or companies can conduct any kind of business. Technology has benefited worldwide trade, people across the world are using the Internet for everything in their daily tasks, from research to online shopping, that is why many businesses, especially SMEs, are adopting the Internet for many of their activities giving them the opportunity to achieve a broader range of customers at a low cost and increase their share of international activities, and gain market and operational efficiency internationally (Margarida & Rebelo , 2020).

In recent years, the expansion of digital sector has been an important motive of economic growth. The foreign expansion of firms' business activities is known as internalization (M, Hisrich, & Antoncic, 2006). Internalization is the most crucial strategy adopted by any company, in which the fundamental motive is to gain access to rising market globalization.

Internalization of SMEs has been one of the trend topics on research for the past years, however the literature on SMEs' internalization through digitalization remain scarce. Most of the researches are focusing on Born Global or International new ventures (firms that internationalize within three years of their creation and entering foreign markets through export). Since the late 1990s, online sales have been adopted as a new internationalization strategy. E-commerce fundamentally altered the way business was conducted by dematerializing borders and lowering costs (J.H, Wright, & Turner, 2001). Exporting to foreign markets through online sales becomes a significant competitive strategy (M & Gabrielsson , 2011).



Thanks to the decrease of government imposed barriers and the technological improvements that the world is witnessing, SMEs are facing new opportunities to expand their activities worldwide. Furthermore, being more comfortable with technology and more reactive to innovation, small firms can be actively engaged in businesses outside of their domestic markets, and thereby benefit from global trade despite having limited initial resources (G.A & Liesch, 2016). Researches have shown that digital platform adoption positively impacts SME's entrance to the international market, these platforms can facilitate and allow companies to edit and distribute data on a wide scale. Digital tools and technology can be used as facilitators for mobilization to reach the international market goals of SMEs (Lindh, Rovira, Melen , Safari, & Hadjikhani, 2020). SMEs can benefit from using social media, it allows them to increase their level of visibility and accessibility and therefore they can enter more markets that they were unable to reach before and increase their sales (Pagano, Roberta, & Marco, 2017).

Despite the lack of resources, the internalization path has increased SMEs' agility in targeting markets and expanding their network (Watson, Weaven, Perkins, Sardana, & Palmatier, 2018). According to Coviello and colleagues (2017), emerging digital technologies have democratized global consumption, paved the way for a large database for knowledge acquisition in foreign markets, improved communication and information exchange, and facilitated cross-border transactions by increasing intangible flows and decreasing location dependencies. These technologies will cause businesses to base their production decisions on proximity to customers rather than production costs.

SMEs can expand its business internationally while remaining in their home country by adopting e-commerce (Eduardsen, Van Tulder, Verbeke, & Piscitello, 2018). The use of websites or marketplaces help reducing transaction costs, advertising and promotion costs, reducing delivery costs as well as speeding the communication between parts and help SMEs to reach global and niche markets faster and with greater ease (WTO, 2019).

There is no denying that the world is living in digital age now. The growth of social media and social networking has changed the way firms create new ideas, the use of Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube and other social media tools, as well as the use of external knowledge, can help in the entrepreneurial journey of the firm and its

willingness to expand their activities abroad by boosting customer relationship management and business performance and productivity in the long run (Marques, José M, & Pedro Soto, 2015). That is why the purpose of this research is to examine the relation between digital marketing and SMEs competitive advantage and therefore their international expansion.

#### **4. The empirical methodology:**

A research is generally defined as the process of collecting existing data from related sources to the research, to provide a better understanding of the topic and give it a more realistic market perspective. In order to test and verify the hypothesis, a questionnaire was conducted and distributed among target sample. The self-administrated surveys were considered the appropriate tool for this research. The research population is the exporting firms that are using digital marketing in their strategy. The questions were organized according to the flow of information, starting with the general information to the restricted. The questionnaire was written in both English and French languages in order to ease the engagement process for all the respondents, and was distributed online (via professional emails).

The researchers of this paper targeted a sample of 30 exporting firms (in different sectors) but only 15 of them were selected. The sample technique is non-probability sampling, which is considered as an applying tool for this study as we were targeting a specific population. In order to analyze the results in this study, a computer program called SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) software was used.

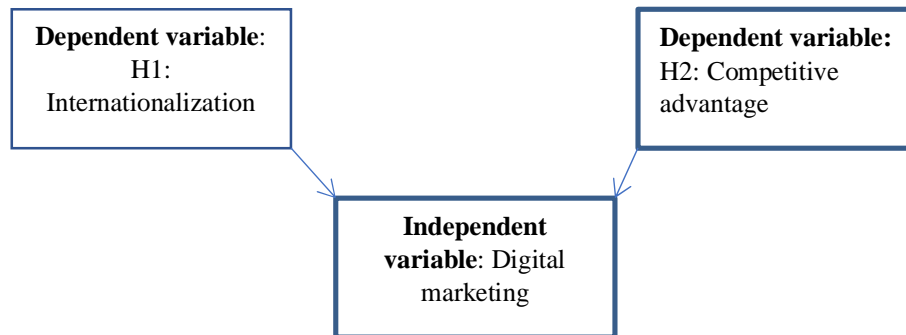
As mentioned before, the aim of this article is to study the relationship between digital marketing and SMEs competitive advantage and their international expansion. Two main hypotheses are being tested in this work:

H1: There is a positive relation between digital marketing and internationalization of SMEs.

H2: There is a significant relation between digital marketing adoption and SMEs competitive advantage.

Based on the previous information and the hypotheses, a research model was created:

**Figure 1: Research Model**



**Source:** Made by the researchers

#### 4. Results and discussion:

A descriptive statistic is a summary of the data points; it helps to describe the main features of data collected. In our case, the questionnaire was sent to 25 enterprises, but only 15 were selected. All of the enterprises were small-medium firms that are active in the field of export, from different sectors (agro-food products and household appliances industries), in which all of them had a digital marketing strategy.

Table 01 shows which digital marketing tools are used by these firms. All the enterprises said that they use Instagram to interact with the clients and customers, 14 said they use emails and 11 said they use Facebook, and only 6 firms use e-commerce website.

**Table 1: Digital marketing**

Digital marketing	Number
Facebook	11
Instagram	15
LinkedIn	6
Youtube	5
Twitter	4
SEA	7
E-commerce website	6
Email	14
Mobile apps	4

**Source:** SPSS 25

46.70% of the respondents said that they strongly agree that their firm has a clear and coherent digital marketing strategy (table 02). All of the firms agreed that digital marketing can help firms to gain competitive advantage and can be used as a strategy to internationalize (table 03).

**Table 2:** firm has a clear digital marketing strategy

Our firm has a clear and coherent digital marketing strategy	Responses	
	N	Percent
Strongly Disagree	04	26.70
Disagree	00	0.00
Neutral	01	6.70
Agree	03	20.00
Strongly Agree	07	46.70
Total	15	100

Source: SPSS 25

**Table 3:** digital marketing as a strategy to internationalize and to gain competitive advantage

	Yes	No
Digital marketing as a competitive advantage to enter foreign markets	15	0
Digital marketing as a strategy to internationalize	15	0

Source: SPSS 25

Cronbach's alpha coefficient measures the internal consistency, or reliability, of a set of survey items. Reliability analysis allows studying the properties of measurement scales and the items that compose the scales. The Alpha de Cronbach coefficient is used to estimate the stability of the study; its values should be between 0 and 1. Its acceptable range is between 0.7 and 1.

In this study, the value of this coefficient is 0.768 which means that data has passed the reliability test because the value is greater than 0.7

**Hypotheses testing:**

H1: there is a positive relationship between digital marketing and internationalization of SMEs.

Table 4 shows the extent of participants' agreement on the effect of digital platforms adoption. The entire firms strongly agreed that digital marketing adoption made it easier for them to track customers' traffic and facilitated the interaction with

their audience, which allowed the firms to utilize customers’ traffic to advertise new products and attract new customers.

**Table 4 :** Descriptive statistics for digital marketing adoption

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral
The higher customer engagement on the firm's digital platforms increase their probability in entering international markets	46.7%	46.7%	6.7%
Digital platforms make it easier for firms to track customers traffic and facilitate interaction between them	93.3%	6.7%	
Digital platforms allow firms to be up to date with their customers’ needs	66.7%	33.3%	
Digital platforms allow firms to utilize customers traffic to advertise new products	93.3%	6.7%	
Digital platforms help firms to attract new customers	93.3%	6.7%	

**Source:** SPSS 25

Table 5 shows the extent agreement of participants’ on the SMEs internationalization. 86.7% of the respondents said that digital platforms help their firms in increasing their international sales, and 40% said that it can help them in attracting new customers.

**Table 5:** Descriptive statistics for SMEs internationalization

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral
Digital platforms help firms to increase their international sales	86.7%		13.3%
Digital platforms adoption help in supporting SMEs internationalization	40%	40%	20%
Digital platforms adoption helps in attracting customer base		40%	60%
Digital platforms adoption help firms to attain an international competitive advantage		20%	80%
Digital platforms can be used as a tool to limit the cultural gap which helps firms to enter foreign markets	6.7%	13.3%	80%

**Source:** SPSS 25

The following table presents Pearson correlation between digital marketing adoption and SMEs internationalization. Pearson correlation coefficient is a correlation that measures linear correlation between two sets of data; it shows the strength of relationship between two variables. Values less than 0 indicates negative relationship, while values greater than 0 indicates a positive relationship. The stronger the relationship between the two variables, the closer the coefficient between -1 and 1.

**Table 6:** Testing hypotheses H1

H1	Correlation	P-Value	Decision
There is a positive relation between digital marketing and internationalization of SMEs	0.520	0.047	Accepted

**Source:** SPSS 25

Based on the results obtained using SPSS, we can conclude that there is a moderate positive relation between digital marketing and internationalization of SMEs.

H2: There is a significant relation between digital marketing and SMEs competitive advantage.

**Table 7:** Descriptive statistics of SMEs competitive advantage

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral
Digital platforms boost firm's flexibility to adapt to new trends	93.3%	6.7%	
Digital platforms sharpen firm's competitive capabilities	93.3%	6.7%	
The different variety of digital platforms support firms to present their product attributes, which boosts their competitive advantage.	93.3%	6.7%	
Digital platforms enhance firm's utilization of the resources which boost their competitive advantage	73.3%	6.7%	20%
Firm's digital marketing adoption to new ideas and trends gives it an edge to enter international markets	93.3%	6.7%	
Digital platforms help firms to be more efficient at handling new projects of internalization	53.3%	26.7%	20%

**Source:** SPSS 25

Table 7 shows that the majority of the respondents strongly agree with the importance of digital marketing adoption and how it can affect the competitive advantage of SMEs. Digital platforms can boost firm's flexibility to adapt to new trends, sharpen firm's competitive advantage and enhance their ability to utilize the resources in which all can boost the competitive advantage.

**Table 8:** Testing hypothesis H2

H2	Correlation	P-Value	Decision
There is a significant relation between digital marketing and SMEs competitive advantage	0.309	0.63	Accepted

**Source:** SPSS 25

Based on the results obtained, there is a low correlation between digital marketing and the competitive advantage of SMEs, but this correlation is not significant, this could be due to the fact that most firms do not rely only on digital

marketing to gain competitive advantage. In several studies the relation between these two variables (digital marketing adoption and competitive advantage) were proven to be moderate or low.

### **5. Recommendations:**

It has been mentioned in previous studies that digital marketing can help firms in collecting data on a wide scale, SMEs can benefit from using social media, it allows them to increase their level of visibility and accessibility and therefore they can enter more markets that they were unable to reach before (Pagano, Roberta, & Marco, 2017). Digital tools and technology can be utilized as facilitators to help SMEs in their internationalization process (C, Roviro, Melen Hamell, Safari, & Hadjikhani, 2020) and can also increase firms' visibility which can allows them to enter foreign markets.

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that digital marketing positively impacts SMEs internationalization. Based on the survey, the majority of the respondents agreed that digital platforms adoption helps in attracting customer base, and it can help firms to increase their international sales.

As mentioned before the information revolution changed the structure of industry and therefore changed the rules of competition. It is crucial for any enterprise to gain and sustain a competitive advantage needed to survive locally and internationally. Digital platforms provide SMEs the necessary information in order for them to adapt and be flexible with the new trends that help in sharpening their competitive capabilities. Many studies have shown that the use of technology and digital platforms provides adopters with an advantage that could be developed into a sustainable edge over the competition (Lipovich, 2020); the firm's ability to use digital marketing and adapt to new ideas and trends gives it an edge to enter international markets.

The results obtained in this research showed that there is a correlation between digital marketing and SMEs competitive advantage, but this correlation is low and not significant. This may be due to the fact that in the Algerian context, the digitalization is considered as a new phenomenon which means that the firms are not relying only on digital marketing to gain and sustain competitive advantage, even though the decision makers in these firms are aware of the importance of digital but they are depending on it.

Digital marketing and digitalization are important aspects in any business, and SMEs should be able to adapt to the newest advances and digitize their offerings in order for them to gain access to new opportunities globally and become more competitive. A proper investment in digital platforms will help in supporting and speeding SMEs process of internationalization. Government must make it easier for businesses to access the information by developing infrastructures outside the industrial areas, increasing online services for new international stakeholders, and expanding the information base.

Digital marketing tool such as e-marketing, social media...etc. should be adopted by the Algerian SMEs to create awareness and to compete in the dynamic and competitive market, locally and internationally. SMEs must develop their websites and rely more on e-commerce, the use of websites or marketplaces help reducing transaction costs, advertising and promotion costs, reducing delivery costs as well as speeding the communication between parts.

Digital marketing can be considered as a competitive advantage, by doing so firms must create consistent brand identity, content that is centered on customers' value and select the appropriate digital marketing channel for their audience by implementing the best techniques.

#### **6. Limitations and Areas for further research:**

The main limitation in this study was the sample unit. The questionnaire was distributed among 50 SMEs but only 15 were selected and this can affect the accuracy of the results. Further research can be done to eliminate this limitation and also to investigate and measure the impact of digital marketing on SMEs internationalization. Future research can also focus on the effect of digital marketing maturity on SMEs market entry and how it can affect their performance internationally.

#### **7. Conclusion:**

The goal of this article was to use two main hypotheses to assess the relation between digital marketing and SMEs competitive advantage and their internationalization.

Digital tools can be considered as mobilization facilitators that can assist SMEs in achieving their worldwide market goals, increase their profitability and enhance their performance by relying more on their own resources and capabilities.



Digital platforms adoption can help firms in gaining durable competitive advantage. Technology provides adopters in collecting big data that can help firms to develop sustainable edge over their rivals. To be innovative, enjoy high-quality resources of all kinds, obtain a durable competitive edge, and have a substantial opportunity to expand locally and globally, SMEs should use and embrace technology in all business activities.

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