Impact of Digital Marketing on the Performance of Real Estate Companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine the impact of digital marketing on the performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, Kenya. This was supported by technology acceptance model by Davis (1986) and resource-based theory by Barney (1991). The study was based on descriptive correlational research design targeting all real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties. As per Kenya Property Developers Association (2022), there were 40 real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties at the time of this study. This study sampled all the 40 real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties with one top manager selected through purposive sampling. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire which was administered through the drop-wait-and-pick methodology. The data from the field was cleaned and edited for completeness before coding and entry into SPSS for analysis through descriptive and regression statistics. The study adopted a multiple regression model. The study found that search engine optimization ($\beta=0.698$; $p=0.009$); pay per click advertising ($\beta=0.439$; $p=0.000$); social media marketing ($\beta=0.859$; $p=0.014$); and influencer marketing ($\beta=0.725$; $p=0.002$) had a positive impact on organizational performance. The study made a conclusion that digital marketing strategy has a positive impact on the performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, Kenya. The study recommends that the management of real estate companies increase adoption of SEO marketing, level of PPC advertising, their investment in social media marketing and the number of influencers involved in marketing their products at the digital space. The study recommends similar studies based on other factors influencing performance, other digital marketing strategies, other companies and counties outside the coastal region.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Organizational Performance, Search Engine Optimization, Content Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Pay-Per-Click and Influencer Marketing.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In today's digital age, the real estate industry is no exception to the transformative power of digital marketing. Digital marketing plays a pivotal role in influencing organizational performance across various industries, including real estate. Its impact is multifaceted, as it can significantly enhance a company's ability to connect with its target audience, improve brand recognition, and drive revenue (Chaffey & Smith, 2022). Through techniques like search engine optimization (SEO), content marketing, and social media engagement, businesses can increase their visibility and attract potential customers (De Pelsmacker, Van Tilburg & Holthof, 2018).

This study was based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1986) and the Resource-Based Theory by Barney (1991). The TAM examines the factors that influence the adoption and use of technology within organizations. It posits that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are critical determinants of technology adoption. In the case of real estate firms in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, TAM can shed light on how digital marketing technologies are accepted and integrated into their operations. Resource-based theory, on the other hand, suggests that a company's competitive advantage lies in its unique resources and capabilities. The theory creates an understanding of how real estate companies leverage their digital assets, such as a well-designed website, valuable content, and data analytics, to gain a competitive edge and enhance their performance.

Real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties have increasingly recognized the necessity of a strong online presence to remain competitive in a rapidly evolving industry. They have adopted various digital marketing strategies to promote their properties, communicate with clients, and streamline their business processes (Kenya Professional Realtors Association, 2022). Real estate firms in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties have invested in professionally designed websites, ensuring that they offer user-friendly interfaces and comprehensive property listings. Moreover, social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn are widely used for marketing purposes, allowing real estate companies to reach a broader audience and showcase their listings effectively. Despite this, the real estate companies have shown performance challenges in recent years (Estate Agents Registration Board, 2022). This study seeks to establish the impact of digital marketing on the performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, Kenya.

Digital Marketing

Digital marketing has been defined by various authors and experts in the field. Digital marketing, often referred to as online marketing or internet marketing, refers to the strategic use of digital channels and platforms to reach and engage target audiences with the aim of achieving marketing objectives. According to Bala and Verma (2018), it's a social and managerial process whereby people and organizations use digital platforms to create and exchange value with others in order to get what they need and want. In a similar vein, Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019) define digital marketing as the use of digital media and technologies to communicate, promote, and add value to an organization's products and services.

Digital marketing leverages a diverse set of online tools and tactics, such as websites, search engines, social media, email, content marketing, and paid advertising, to create a cohesive and data-driven marketing strategy. Deiss and Henneberry (2020) measured digital marketing in terms of Search Engine Optimization (SEO); Pay-per-click (PPC) advertising; and social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Email marketing, as detailed by Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019), is a tool used for sending targeted messages to a list of subscribers. On the other hand, Diamond (2022) adopted content marketing, influencer marketing, affiliate marketing, and data analytics as digital marketing tools.

The role of digital marketing in an organization is pivotal in the modern business landscape. It serves as a primary means of reaching and connecting with a global audience. Bala and Verma (2018) emphasize that it plays a crucial role in creating and exchanging value with customers. Digital marketing facilitates precise targeting, enabling organizations to tailor their messages to specific demographics, and ensuring efficient resource allocation. Moreover, it's highly measurable, allowing companies to track the performance of campaigns in real-time and make data-driven decisions for optimization. Ultimately, as highlighted by Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019), digital marketing is integral to achieving various organizational goals, including brand awareness, lead generation, customer retention, and revenue growth, making it a cornerstone of contemporary marketing strategies.

Organizational Performance

Performance is a critical factor in any organization. Various authors define organizational performance from different angles. For example, Porter (1985) defined organizational performance as the capacity of an organization to establish and maintain a competitive advantage. However, Drucker (1964) defined organizational performance as the enterprise's output in relation to its inputs. Both financial and non-financial measures have been used to evaluate the performance of a company. Financial measures include profitability, costs and revenues (Panno, 2020). Non-financial measures include customer satisfaction, market share, service quality and sustainability (TulcanazaPrieto et al., 2020; Al-Mamary et al., 2020).

Digital Marketing and Organizational Performance

According to Karki (2020), any organization that wants to thrive in today's marketplace and remain competitive must employ digital marketing. By making the most of their marketing initiatives, including their online presence, businesses may increase revenue and brand exposure. Moreover, it enhances other measures like client happiness and retention (Smith, 2011). As per Deiss and Henneberry (2020), digital marketing increases market exposure of a firm which in turn leads to more business and customers which ultimately lead to improved performance metrics. In support, Bala and Verma (2018) state that organizations that adopt digital marketing also perform better compared to those that use conventional marketing strategies.

Empirically, digital marketing and organizational performance have produced different results in line to their relationship. Some studies have shown that a positive relationship exists between digital marketing and organizational performance. For example, Orzan et al. (2020) found that digital marketing has a positive influence on the organizational performance of banks. Another study by Ocansey (2022) found that companies that invested to harnessed the power of digital marketing claimed better returns, more customers and more sales. Other studies have shown that no significant relationship exists between digital marketing and organizational performance. A good example is Islami, Wahyuni and Tiara (2020) who found that the adoption of digital marketing improved organizational performance but insignificantly. There is a need to look at digital marketing and organizational performance.

Real Estate Companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties

Mombasa and Kilifi counties, coastal counties in Kenya, are a prominent hub for real estate development and investment. The cities' real estate market has experienced significant growth and transformation in recent years. The city's geography and proximity to the ocean have contributed to the development of luxury resorts, hotels, and residential properties with stunning sea views. Mombasa and Kilifi counties. According to the Kenya Property Developers Association (2022), there are 40 real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties with more than 5000 real estate agents. Mombasa's and Kilifi's real estate market offers a wide range of property types, including apartments, houses, townhouses, villas, commercial buildings, and vacant land for development (Association of Real Estate Stakeholders, 2022). The diversity of options caters to both residential and commercial investors.

Real estate companies in various regions, including Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, Kenya, are increasingly relying on digital marketing strategies to connect with potential clients and streamline their operations. Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, Kenya, has witnessed a remarkable surge in its real estate sector, owing to a burgeoning middle class and rapid urbanization. This growth has intensified competition among real estate companies, prompting many to turn to digital marketing as a means to reach and engage potential customers effectively. This research sought to address this gap by shedding light on the impact of digital marketing on organizational performance within the real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi.

Research Problem

The real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi have been displaying a reduction in their performance in recent years. This has been reflected in increased costs as well as a reduction in their revenues with increased challenges related to customer satisfaction. Despite this the companies have adopted various digital marketing tools in their business. These have included but not limited to search engine optimization; pay-per-click advertising; and social media. These have been driven by the increased competition and other challenges which have faced the real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties.

Empirical studies were done on digital marketing and organizational performance. The studies, however, have produced different results in line to their relationship. Some studies have shown that a positive relationship exists between digital marketing and organizational performance. For example, Orzan et al. (2020) found that digital marketing has a positive influence on the organizational performance of banks. Another study by Ocansey (2022) found that companies that invested to harnessed the power of digital marketing claimed better returns, more customers and more sales. Other studies have shown that no significant relationship exists between digital marketing and organizational performance. A good example is Islami, Wahyuni and Tiara (2020) who found that the adoption of digital marketing improved organizational performance but insignificantly. There was a need to look at digital marketing and organizational performance.

Local studies showed various research gaps. For instance, Kasimu (2017) studied digital marketing strategies and marketing performance of top 100 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Kenya. The study focused on marketing performance other than organizational performance hence creating a conceptual gap. The study was also done among SMEs other than real estate companies creating a contextual gap. Mugambi and Karugu (2017) studied the effect of entrepreneurial marketing on performance of real estate enterprises based on Optiven Limited in Nairobi. The study related performance to entrepreneurial marketing other than digital marketing. This showed a conceptual gap. Further, the study was done on Optiven other than real estate companies in Mombasa. Wanjiru (2019) studied social media advertising and market performance of real estate companies in Nairobi. The study looked at social media assuming other digital marketing tools. The study also related it to market performance other than organizational performance. This created a conceptual gap. The studies also based their analysis on different research methods, hence creating methodological gaps. The question was: what is the impact of digital marketing on the performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, Kenya?

Research Objective

To determine the impact of digital marketing on the performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, Kenya.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The study was based on Technology Acceptance Model by Davis (1986) and the Resource-Based Theory (Barney, 1991).

Technology Acceptance Model

Davis (1986) introduced the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). This model is a revision to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and demonstrates the way other factors like attitude, ideologies, and intent to use impact the behaviour of technology users (Dai & Kauffman, 2001). The model aids in explaining and predicting of the behaviour that consumers exhibit of new technology. According to the notion, a user's attitude, objectives, and impression of the system's utility and simplicity of use all have an impact on how often a new technology system is used, in either the direct or indirect way.

According to TAM, a person's attitude towards using technology and their opinion of its utility can both contribute to explaining how strongly they intend to use it. For Rowley (2011), technology ought to be simple to use and easy to master. This suggests that users' perceptions of usability should positively impact their view of trustworthiness and intention to use internet marketing. Given that digital marketing is still a relatively new phenomenon globally and that most methods are straightforward and simple to employ for individuals with basic technological skills, this theory is appropriate for this study. TAM contends, nonetheless, that the consumer's assessment of a technology's utility and usability—in this case, digital marketing—determines whether or not it is adopted. Therefore, as opposed to continuing to employ traditional marketing methods, the acceptance and efficacy of digital marketing strategies are determined by how simple they are to use and how SMEs perceive their usefulness. The performance of the organization is impacted by the adoption in turn.

Resource-Based Theory

Barney (1991) introduced the resource-based theory, which aims to explain the sources of company growth and competitive advantage. According to Barney (1991), firms are collections of resources whose combinations directly affect the results of organizational performance. The foundation of a company's long-term competitive advantage is its unique, uncommon, precious, and non-replaceable resources. According to Barney (1991), competitive advantage is a reflection of how well internal resources and competencies are created or acquired and applied to meet organizational objectives. The notion is predicated on the costly-to-copy idea, which holds that expensive resources that necessitate a protracted learning curve or a shift in company culture are the sources of competitive advantage because of their rarity and expense to duplicate.

Numerous studies examining the effects of various resources on organizational performance have used the RBV theory. This theory helps explain how information technology creates a durable competitive advantage to enhance organizations, which makes it relevant in this study. It also informed research on the relationship between digital technologies and operational performance. It demonstrated how businesses may leverage digital technologies in a variety of ways to enhance their service and product offerings, which in turn enhances organizational performance.

Empirical Review

A study on internet reviews, hotel performance, and digital marketing methods was conducted by De Pelsmacker, Van Tilburg and Holthof (2018). The study was conducted in 132 hotels in Belgium. The findings show that review valence affects hotel performance and review volume drives room occupancy. Hotel performance is positively impacted by digital marketing plans and tactics like SEO and PPC, which also have an impact on the quantity and quality of online reviews.

A research investigation on the impact of digital marketing on MSMEs' business performance during the Covid-19 epidemic in North Minahasa was conducted by Rotinsulu, Kindangen, and Pandowo in 2022. This kind of study employs quantitative research techniques and a descriptive-analytic strategy. The 98 respondents who made up the sample size for this study are MSMEs who operate in North Minahasa, particularly within the districts of Airmadidi and Kalawat. Purposive sampling is the sampling strategy employed in this study, while Google Forms is the tool utilized to distribute questionnaires and gather data. The researcher processed the data using SPSS 26 to test and analyze it. The study's findings indicate that MSMEs' business performance is positively impacted by both content marketing and social media marketing at the same time. Furthermore, business performance was insignificantly impacted positively by influencer marketing.

Saira, Sohailb, and Rehmana (2023) did an examination on the critical role of digital marketing practices on the organizational performance of telecommunication sector in Pakistan. A structured questionnaire and a quantitative research design were employed in the study to gather data from a sample of telecommunications providers located in a specific geographic area. The results of the study show a strong correlation between organizational effectiveness and digital marketing strategies. The highest effects on customer acquisition, retention, and satisfaction were found to be social network marketing and mobile marketing. These factors have a beneficial impact on organizational success. Furthermore, it has been discovered that pay-per-click advertising and internet marketing raise telecom firms' exposure and brand recognition, both of which improve organizational performance.

A study on the impact of digital marketing on organizational performance through perceived quality and intellectual capital in Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in East Java was conducted by Islami, Wahyuni, and Tiara (2020). In this study, which aims to provide explanations, survey questions are distributed using a quantitative methodology, and PLS is used for data analysis. The results showed that adoption of digital marketing improved the organizational performance through SEO but insignificantly.

A study on digital marketing and the performance of Ghanaian cashew exporting companies was conducted by Ocansey (2022). With the aid of questionnaires, the research project simply sampled 200

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individuals from exporting firms in Ghana using primary data, a quantitative technique, and a descriptive survey design. The results showed that social networking sites had a detrimental yet substantial effect on the performance of cashew exporting enterprises in Ghana, whereas online advertisements had a favourable impact on financial performance of certain export cashew companies.

Kasimu (2017) investigated the marketing performance and digital marketing tactics of Kenya's top 100 SMEs. Regression analysis was utilised in the investigation. The group of participants for the investigation consisted of 100 SMEs, and the researcher created questionnaires to collect data from them. Thirty (30) of the Top 100 SMEs were selected using a method involving stratified random sampling. Only SMEs listed in the Top 100 list of 2016 were included in the research. The SMEs were given questionnaires by person conducting the study by drop-and-pick technique. Regression analysis was done. According to the report, SMEs' marketing performance was significantly impacted by digital marketing methods like influencer marketing.

Kawira, Mukulu and Odhiambo (2019) did a research on the impact of digital marketing on the performance of MSMES in Kenya. A descriptive survey design was employed. In TharakaNithi County, 8,526 MSMEs with licences were part of the research's participant group. Stratified sampling methodologies were used. Questionnaires were used to gather data. A combination of descriptive and inferential statistics was used for analysis of quantitative data. The results of this investigation showed that 38.8% of the variance in MSMEs' performance may be attributed to digital marketing. The results of the study also demonstrated a substantial favourable regression value and a high positive association between MSMEs' performance and social media marketing.

Wanjiru (2019) investigated the market performance of Nairobi-based real estate firms and social media advertising. Because the entire population was easily accessible, a census model was used instead of sampling. Carefully constructed surveys and interviews with professionals in the field were used to gather data. Regression analysis was performed using regression model to ascertain the association between social media advertising and the market performance of real estate companies in Nairobi. The data was assessed through the use of computer software. The research project discovered a strong link between market performance and social media advertising.

The impact of entrepreneurial marketing on the performance of real estate companies based on Optiven Limited in Nairobi was investigated by Mugambi and Karugu (2017). In order to combine qualitative and quantitative research methods, a descriptive research design was used. The KEMRA member companies were the intended audience. Out of the 85 enterprises in the frame, 70 firms were chosen as the sample size. Primary data gathered from questionnaires sent to targeted businesses was the main focus of the study. The gathered qualitative data was examined using content analysis. However, to examine the quantitative data, the investigator employed descriptive and inferential statistics. Statistical and graphical methods were used to present the data that had been examined. According to the study, entrepreneurial marketing had an equal impact on performance of real estate enterprises.

Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables Dependent Variable

Digital Marketing

- Search Engine Optimization Organization Performance
- Pay-per-click Number of customers
- Social media marketing Customer satisfaction Influencer marketing Marketing costs

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

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SUMMARY OF LITERATURE AND RESEARCH GAPS

The study reviewed literature relating to digital marketing and organizational performance and shows that a relationship exists between the two. The study was based on the TAM and resource-based theories. The independent variables included in this research include search engine optimization, pay-per-click advertising, social media marketing, and influencer marketing.

The studies showed research gaps with some studies adopting different concepts other than digital marketing and organization performance. For example, Mugambi and Karugu (2017) looked at entrepreneurial marketing other than digital marketing as the influencer. On the other hand, some of the studies focused on different contexts other than real estate firms in Mombasa and Kilifi creating a contextual gap. For instance, Kasimu (2017) based his study on SMEs other than real estate companies.

Further, the studies adopted different research methodologies creating methodological gaps.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive correlational research design. This design investigates relationships between two or more variables without the researcher controlling or manipulating any of them. This research design enabled the researcher to establish the cause-effect relationship around the variables. This made the design relevant to the study in that it enabled the research to establish the impact of digital marketing on the performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties.

This study targeted all real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties. As per Kenya Property Developers Association (2022), there are 40 real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties. The real estate companies showed increased challenges in their performance in recent years. The companies also adopted digital marketing in their business operations as they sought to be digitally savvy.

This study involved all the 40 real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties. The study involved one respondent from the company. This was based on one top manager within the firms. This gave a sample of 40 employees. The employees were selected through purposive sampling where the researcher used his expertise and knowledge to select the most fit person for the study.

Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contained closed ended questions where respondents would tick from specific options. This guided the research and made it easy to collect data. The uestionnaire contained three sections. The first section had questions related to the general information relating to the respondents and the companies. The second section had questions related to digital marketing while the third section had questions relating to organizational performance. The second and third sections had Likert questions based on a scale where 1 is strongly agree and 5 strongly disagree. The questionnaires were administered through drop-wait-and-pick methodology. This enhanced the response rate as there were no delays as is the case when the questionnaires are left to be picked later. The data from the field was cleaned and edited for completeness. It was then coded and entered SPSS for analysis. The analysis was done through descriptive and regression statistics. The descriptive statistics took the form of frequency, percentages, standard deviation and mean. Multiple regression was used to establish the impact of digital marketing on performance. It took the form of:

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

Y = organization performance

X_1	= Search Engine Optimization
X_2	= Pay-per-click
X_3	= Social media marketing

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X_4	= Influencer marketing
$\beta 0$	= Constant
β_1- β_4	=Regression coefficients
ε	= Error term

Data Analysis, Results and Discussions

This section presents findings based on the research objective. The study sought to determine the impact of digital marketing on the performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, Kenya. This was based on the data analysis through descriptive and regression statistics. The section also makes a discussion of the findings where the findings were compared and contrasted with those of other empirical studies reviewed. The researcher issued 40 questionnaires from which 35 were filled in and returned. This gave a response rate of 87.5% which was above 50% as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2012). This shows that the response rate was adequate for analysis.

Demographic Analysis

This study looked at demographic information relating to the respondents and the companies. This was based on the position in the company, highest level of education, years orked in the current company and the operation period of their organization. On position held in the company, the findings indicated that the respondents held various positions in the companies. They include CEOs, managing directors, Property managers, Human resource managers, accountants, and sales representatives.

Table 4.1: Respondent's Highest Level of Education

	Frequency	Percent
Secondary and below	1	2.9
College certificate	3	8.6
College diploma	8	22.9
Bachelor's degree	14	40.0
Postgraduate	9	25.7
Total	35	100.0

The researcher sought to know the education level of respondents. From the findings, the majority had a bachelor's degree. This was shown by 42.9% who indicated they had a bachelor's degree as highest education and 25.7% who indicated post graduate degree. However, 34.3% did not have a bachelor's degree. This shows that majority the managers in real estate companies involved had a bachelor's degree. This enabled them to have an understanding on digital marketing and performance of their companies and the impact digital marketing has on performance. All levels of education were involved showing that there was no bias in terms of education.

Table 4.2: Years worked In The current Company

	Percent	Frequency
Less than 1 year	4	11.4
1-5 years	8	22.9
6-10 years	12	34.3
11-15 years	7	20.0
More than 15 years	4	11.4
Total	35	100.0

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The research sought to know the period of time the respondents had worked in their current company. From outcomes, 34.3% had worked for 6-10 years, 22.9% 1-5 years while 20% had worked for 11-15 years and 11.4% had worked for less than 1 year or more than 15 years. This indicates that only 34.3% indicated less than 6 years. Hence, the majority (65.7%) worked in the current companies for more than 6 years. Therefore, the respondents had worked in their organizations for time enough to feel and understand the impact of digital marketing on the performance of their companies.

Table 4.3: Period of Operation

	Percent	Frequency
Less than 5 years	9	25.7
5-10 years	11	31.4
11-15 years	7	20.0
16-20 years	5	14.3
More than 20 years	3	8.6
Total	35	100.0

The research looked at the duration of operation of the organization. From results, 25.7% of the respondents indicated that their organizations had operated for less than 5 years. However, 74.3% had operated for more than 5 years. This was shown by 31.4% who indicated 5-10 years, 20.0% who indicated 11-15 years, 14.3% indicating 16-20 years and 8.6% who indicated more than 20 years. This depicts that most of the sampled organizations had operated for more than 5 years and hence experienced the impact of digital marketing techniques adopted on their performances.

Digital Marketing

The researcher established the level on agreement on statements relating to digital marketing. Digital marketing was looked at as SEO, PPC advertising, social media marketing and influencer marketing as shown below.

Table 4.4: Search Engine Optimization

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
My company has adopted search engine optimization in its digital marketing strategy	3.784	0.873
SEO has enabled access to new markets and customers	3.986	0.904
SEO has increased the number of unique visitors to my ompany's website	3.669	0.960
SEO has increased the number of unique visitors to our website	3.486	0.797

From table 4.4, the respondents agreed that their companies had adopted search engine optimization in its digital marketing strategy with a mean of 3.784 and standard deviation of 0.873. Further, SEO enabled access to new markets and customers with a mean of 3.986 and standard deviation of 0.904. Similarly, they agreed that SEO had increased the number of unique visitors to their companies' website with a mean of 3.669 and standard deviation of 0.960. Additionally, SEO had increased the number of unique visitors to their websites with a mean of 3.486 and standard deviation of 0.797. The standard deviation was below 2 for all the statements indicating that the opinions didn't differ much from the mean. This depicts that the real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties adopted SEO in their marketing strategy.

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Table 4.5: Pay per click advertising

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
Pay-per-click dvertising is a key digital tool adopted by my organization	3.846	0.7054
Pay-per-click is effective based on cost because businesses only pay when a user visits their website	3.583	0.3162
Pay-per-click enables the companies to choose its audience according to demographics	3.942	0.5278
Pay-per-click advertising allows the company to measure results for each ad, each keyword, and even each user.	3.770	0.9861
Pay per click advertising enables more customers to utilize our company websites	4.371	0.9524

Findings in Table 4.5 on PPC advertising, the respondents agreed that pay-per-click advertising was a key digital tool adopted by their organizations with a mean of 3.846 and standard deviation of 0.7054. They further agreed that pay-per-click was effective based on cost because businesses only pay when a user visited their websites with a mean of 3.583 and standard deviation of 0.3162. Moreover, pay-perclick enabled the companies to choose their audience according to demographics with a mean of 3.942 and standard deviation of 0.5278; and allowed them to measure results for each ad, each keyword, and even each use with a mean of 3.770 and standard deviation of 0.9861. In addition, the respondents agreed that pay per click advertising enabled more customers to utilize their companies' websites with a mean of 4.371 and standard deviation of 0.9524. The statements showed standard deviations below 2, hence, the opinions on the statements didn't differ much from the mean. Hence, PPC advertising is a key aspect of digital marketing strategy among real estate companies.

Table 4.6: Social media marketing

Social media marketing	Mean	Std. Dev.
My rganization has set p social media latform to interact ith customers	4.415	0.3010
My rganization uses social edia platforms to drive traffic on ur website	3.731	0.5109
My rganization uses ocial media platforms o acquire new customers	4.095	0.8340
My rganization uses social media platforms o build on ustomer relationships	3.942	1.2201
Social media creates strong impact on brand awareness	3.588	0.9732
Social media platforms can be used to meet customer expectations and convert customers to brand supporters	4.000	0.5661

For social media marketing, the respondents agreed that their organizations had set up social media platforms to interact with customers as shown by a mean of 4.415 and standard deviation of 0.3010. Further, their organizations used social media platforms to drive traffic on their websites with a mean of 3.731 and standard deviation of 0.5109; and acquire new customers as shown by mean of 4.095 and standard deviation of 0.8340. Moreover, their organizations used social media platforms to build on customer relationships with a mean of 3.942 and standard deviation of 1.2201; and create a strong impact on brand awareness with a mean of 3.588 and standard deviation of 0.9732. Additionally, as indicated by a mean score of 4.000 and a standard deviation of 0.5661, they concurred that social media platforms were utilized to satisfy consumer expectations and turn them into brand advocates. The standard deviation supported the mean as it fell below 2, indicating low variation in opinions. Hence, social media marketing was adopted in the digital marketing strategies among real estate companies involved in the study.

Table 4.7: Influencer Marketing

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.
My company uses influencers in its marketing strategy	4.330	0.8226
My organization looks into new influencers in the market to work with on upcoming and future campaigns	4.157	0.9001
A larger percentage of the marketing budget goes to influencer marketing	3.861	0.7142
Influencer marketing is cheaper than other marketing strategies	3.914	0.5370
Influencer marketing attracts customers to buy our products	3.647	0.4252
Influencer marketing has a direct contribution to sales in my organization	4.789	1.2011

On statements relating to influencer marketing, the respondents agreed that their companies used influencers in their marketing strategies with a mean of 4.33 and standard deviation of 0.8226. Moreover, their organizations looked into new influencers in the market to work with on upcoming and future campaigns with a mean of 4.157 and standard deviation of 0.9001. Similarly, a larger percentage of marketing budgets went to influencer marketing with a mean of 3.861 and standard deviation of

0.7142. Likewise, influencer marketing was cheaper than other marketing strategies with a mean of 3.914 and standard deviation of 0.5370; and attracted customers to buy their organization's products with a mean of 3.647 and standard deviation of 0.4252. Additionally, influencer marketing was found to have a direct contribution to sales in their organizations with a mean of 4.789 and standard deviation of 1.2011. This indicates that influencer marketing was adopted in the real estate companies as a digital marketing strategy.

Organizational Performance

The researcher established the performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties. This was done using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation. Table 4.8 presents the outcome.

Table 4.8: Organizational Performance

	Mean	Std. Dev.
My company has high level of marketing costs	4.379	0.2562
My company has a large number of customers	2.471	0.6831
The customers in my company are loyal	2.090	0.4337
My company offers quality services	2.286	1.0482
The customers in my company are highly satisfied	1.877	0.6811

From Table 4.8, the respondents agreed that their companies had high level of marketing costs as shown by a mean of 4.379 and standard deviation of 0.2562. Nevertheless, they disagreed that their companies had large number of customers shown by mean of 2.471 and standard deviation of 0.6831. In addition, they disagreed that customers in their companies were loyal shown by mean of 2.090 and standard deviation of 0.4337; and offered quality services with a mean of 2.286 and standard deviation of 1.0482. They also disagreed that customers were highly satisfied as shown by a mean of 1.877 and standard deviation of 0.6811. This shows that performance of real estate companies involved in the study were performing poorly in terms of costs and customer satisfaction.

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Regression Analysis

The researcher established impact of digital marketing strategy on performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi Counties, Kenya. This was done using multiple regression analysis which gave three tables of model summary, ANOVA and regression coefficients.

Table 4.9: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.562[a]	0.316	0.225	1.54962

a. Predictors: (Constant), influencer marketing, social media marketing, Search Engine Optimization, Pay per click advertising

From the model summary, the model had a corelation (R) of 0.562. This is an indication that digital marketing (SEO, PPC advertising, social media marketing and influencer marketing) had a strong relationship with performance of real estate companies. The R square value was 0.316 showing digital marketing strategy contributed 31.6% to the change in performance of real estate companies. Other factors contribute to a 69.4% change in the performance of real estate companies.

Table 4.10: Analysis of Variance

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20.254	4	5.064	20.415	0.000[b]
	Residual	7.441	30	0.248		
	Total	27.695	34			

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), influencer marketing, social media marketing, search engine optimization, Pay per click advertising

From the ANOVA table, the F-statistics (20.415) showed a significance value of 0.000 which was less than 0.05. Hence, the researcher concludes that the regression model was significant. Therefore, digital marketing (SEO, PPC advertising, social media marketing and influencer marketing) showed a significant impact on performance of real estate companies.

Table 4.11: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	9.420	3.373		2.793	0.009
	Search engine optimization	0.698	0.210	0.323	3.321	0.002
	Pay per click advertising	0.439	0.121	0.412	3.628	0.000

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	Social media marketing	0.859	0.332	0.732	2.587	0.014
	Influencer marketing	0.725	0.214	0.665	3.382	0.002

The regression coefficients showed that holding digital marketing constant, the performance of real estate companies would stand at 9.420. In addition, SEO showed positive impact on organizational performances (β=0.698; p=0.009). In addition, pay per click advertising showed a positive impact on organizational performance (β=0.439; p=0.000) similar to social media marketing (β=0.859; p=0.014). The findings also showed that influencer marketing also had a positive impact on organizational performance (β=0.725; p=0.002). This indicate that digital marketing strategy has a positive impact on organizational performances.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Generally, digital marketing strategy positively impacted organizational performance. Specifically, the findings showed that SEO had positive impact on organizational performances with significant regression coefficient. Hence an increased adoption of search engine optimization would lead to increased organization performance. The findings are in concurrence with the findings of De Pelsmacker, Van Tilburg and Holthof (2018) who found that organizational performance was positively impacted by digital marketing plans and tactics like search engine optimization. They were, however, different from those of Islami, Wahyuni, and Tiara (2020) whose results showed that adoption of digital marketing through SEO improved the organizational performance but insignificantly.

Pay per click advertising has a positive impact on organizational performances. This was a sign that an increased adoption of pay per click advertising improved organizational performance. They are similar to findings of Saira, Sohailb, and Rehmana (2023) who found that pay per click advertising positively impacted organizational performance. However, they are different from those of Islami, Wahyuni, and Tiara (2020) who found that adoption of PPC advertising had an insignificant impact on organizational performance.

The findings showed that social media marketing positively impacted organizational performances. This showed that increased social media marketing would lead to improved organizational performance among real estate companies. For Kawira, Mukulu and Odhiambo (2019), a high positive association existed between MSMEs' performance and social media marketing. They are also similar to Rotinsulu, Kindangen, and Pandowo (2022) who found that business performance was significantly and partially positively impacted by social media marketing. However, they differed with those of Ocansey (2022) found that social media sites possess detrimental yet substantial effect on performances.

Further, an increase in influencer marketing would lead to increased organizational performance. Hence, influencer marketing had a positive impact on organizational performances. These were comparable to the findings of Kasimu (2017) that found performance as significantly impacted by influencer marketing. However, they differed with the results of Rotinsulu, Kindangen, and Pandowo (2022) who found that business performance was insignificantly impacted positively by influencer marketing.

CONCLUSIONS

From the descriptive statistics, the study concluded that the real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties adopted SEO in their marketing strategy. The study also concluded that SEO marketing has a positive impact on performance real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties. This shows that an increased SEO adoption within the companies will lead to increased performance in terms of reduced marketing costs, improved service quality and increased customer satisfaction.

Further, PPC advertising is a key aspect of digital marketing strategy among real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties. The PPC advertising positively impacts performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties. PPC advertising make more customers utilizing their companies' websites and allows for demographic grouping of the customers. This increases the number of customers in the companies leading to an improvement in organizational performance.

The researcher concludes that social media marketing is adopted in the digital marketing strategies among real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties. This is based on social media sites that are set up by the companies where they showcase their products and services. The study also makes a conclusion that social media marketing possesses a positive impact on performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties.

The study also concluded that influencer marketing is adopted in the real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties as a digital marketing strategy. This is done through the involvement of influencers in campaigns. It’s a cheaper option for real estate companies compared to other digital marketing strategies. Further, influencer marketing has a positive impact on performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties. Therefore, an increased adoption of influencer marketing would improve performances of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Researcher concludes that SEO marketing has a positive impact on performances of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties. This is an indication that real estate companies that have a high level of SEO marketing display a high level of performance in terms of customer satisfaction, service quality and reduced costs. This calls for increased adoption of SEO marketing among real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties for an increased performance level. This would optimize their presence online, which would attract more customers and increase customer loyalty.

The study also concluded that PPC advertising positively impacts on performances of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties. This shows that an increased usage of PPC marketing enhances organizational performance in terms of customers, service quality, customer satisfaction, and marketing costs. The real estate companies, therefore, need to increase the level of PPC advertising in their digital marketing. This can increase the paid clicks on their websites, which would increase the number of customers accessing their products.

The study also makes a conclusion that social media marketing possesses positive impact on the performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties. This depicts that where the real estate companies increase the adoption of social media marketing, the more their performance improves. Hence, real estate companies ought to increase their investment in social media marketing for improved performance. They should also increase the number of products and services posted on these social media sites for increased brand exposure and awareness.

Outcomes showed that influencer marketing has a positive impact on performance of real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties. The real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi counties should increase the number of influencers involved in marketing their products at the digital space. This would enhance performance as they would be able to tap into the influencers followers on digital sites which would in turn lead to more business. Customers would also associate well with the influencer as they would feel that the product is legit and of good quality. This would also reduce the marketing costs since the influencer marketing is cheap.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to the variables adopted. The study looked at digital marketing and performance. Unconsidered factors influencing the performance of the companies were assumed creating a limitation in terms of scope. Its focus was real estate companies in Mombasa and Kilifi. This limited the generalizability of findings to other counties which created the limitation as companies in other counties may have differing digital marketing strategies where their performance is influenced differently. The adoption of real estate companies also limited the study where the findings may not be generalizable to other companies.

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Questionnaire

1. What is the name of your company?

2. What is your position in the company?

3. What is your highest level of education?

Secondary and below ( ) College certificate ( ) College diploma ( ) Bachelor's degree ( ) Post graduate ( ) 4. How long have you worked in the current company?

Less than 1 year ( ) 1-5 years ( ) 6-10 years ( )

11-15 years ( ) More than 15 years ( )

5. How long has your organization been in operation? Less than 5 years ( ) 5-10 years ( ) 11-15 years ( )

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16-20 years ( ) More than 20 years ( )

Section II: Digital Marketing

6. What is your level on agreement on the following statements relating to digital marketing. Use the scale where 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Search Engine Optimization (S.E.O)					
My company has adopted search engine optimization in its digital marketing strategy					
SEO has enabled access to new markets and customers					
SEO has increased the number of unique visitors to my company's website					
SEO has increased the number of unique visitors to our website					
Pay-per-click					
Pay-per-click advertising is a key digital tool adopted by my organization					
Pay-per-click is effective based on cost because businesses only pay when a user visits their website					
Pay-per-click enables companies to choose their audience according to demographics					
Pay-per-click advertising allows the company to measure results for each ad, each keyword, and even each user.					
Pay per click advertising enables more customers to utilize our company websites					
Social media marketing					
My organization has set up social media platform to interact with customers					
My organization uses social media platforms to drive traffic on our website					
My organization uses social media platforms to acquire new customers					
My organization uses social media platforms to build on customer relationships					
Social media creates a strong impact on brand awareness					
Social media platforms can be used to meet customer expectations and convert customers to brand supporters					
Influencer marketing					
My company uses influencers in its marketing strategy					
My organization looks into new influencers in the market to work with on upcoming and future campaigns					
A larger percentage of marketing budget goes to influencer marketing					
Influencer marketing is cheaper than other marketing strategies					
Influencer marketing attracts customers to buy our products					
Influencer marketing has a direct contribution to sales in my organization					

Section III: Organizational Performance

7. What is your level on agreement on statements relating to digital marketing. Use the scale where 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
My company has high level of marketing costs					
My company has a large number of customers					
The customers in my company are loyal					
My company offers quality services					
The customers in my company are highly satisfied					

Thank You