



Malaysian E Commerce Journal (MECJ)

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.26480/mecj.01.2023.15.20>



REVIEW ARTICLE

FACEBOOK AS A DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORM USED BY THE PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIS) IN LAGUNA, PHILIPPINES

Deobela F. Fortes*, Adoree A. Ramos

San Pablo Colleges, San Pablo City, Laguna, Philippines
 *Corresponding Author Email: deobelafortes@yahoo.com

This is an open access journal distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License CC BY 4.0, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited

ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History:

Received 22 December 2022
 Revised 12 January 2023
 Accepted 22 February 2023
 Available online 25 February 2023

ABSTRACT

This study assessed the performance of the HEIs' marketing campaigns using Facebook as a platform based on the enrolment funnel in terms of gaining visibility, converting prospects to leads, convincing the student to apply, and convincing the student to enrol. The challenges encountered by the marketing managers with the use of Facebook in marketing campaigns were also presented. A total of 29 private higher education institutions in Laguna Province were the participants of this quantitative study. The descriptive method was used to carry out the research. The HEIs' marketing campaigns performed well in the first stage and were gradually moved down to the succeeding stages of the marketing funnel, resulting in high student acquisition costs. Slow adoption of technological advances and hiring marketers to support new marketing strategies were the top challenges in utilizing digital marketing.

KEYWORDS

Digital Marketing, Facebook Marketing, Higher Education Institutions, Digital Marketing Guidebook

1. INTRODUCTION

The marketing landscape is changing, with the focus shifting from traditional marketing methods towards digital marketing. Increased technology and newer trends have been exerting pressure on companies to change the way they market themselves and adapt their practices to the modern and diverse mechanisms that society is currently demanding (Fierro et al., 2017). In addition, businesses have implemented strategies that are carried out with the use of digital platforms to provide an interactive, focused, and measurable way of reaching consumers, called "digital marketing" (Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). This form of marketing involves the use of websites, social media, search engines, mobile apps, emails, and related information and communication technologies to accomplish marketing goals (Barone, 2022). Particularly, digital marketing has turned into an essential tool to compete in the market since everyone is unintentionally immersed in the digital era (Kannan, 2017).

Research shows that there are an increasing number of organizations that are already engaging in digital marketing as part of their marketing strategy (Constantinides and Zinck, 2012). Digital marketing has expanded the boundaries of education. As higher education institutions face the challenge of appealing to a growing and diverse student body, effective outreach and marketing have become increasingly important activities for the institutions. Today, digital marketing is considered to be the best option when it comes to reaching out to both parents and students (Infotech, 2019). Institutional industries must work on their digital presence and invest strategically in digital marketing to reach a larger number of parents and students. The digital marketing for the education sector assists universities, schools, and college institutions in generating brand awareness effectively, reaching a wider audience at a low cost, and amplifying the student recruitment process (Care, 2018).


However, private higher education institutions face a challenge in remaining relevant in a world where students are increasingly reliant on

technology as a means of communication, which poses internal and external challenges to HEIs worldwide. This challenge requires higher education marketing to move traditional marketing tools to digital marketing platforms to capture prospective students' attention. The higher education institutions need to develop a comprehensive marketing plan to gain visibility and convert prospects into enrollees because, without enrolment growth, private higher education institutions will not be sustained. Furthermore, limited technological and human resources, slow tech adoption, and the difficulty of maintaining institutions' images across digital platforms were also experienced (Staff Skyword, 2021).

In accordance with all the challenges, this study examined the digital marketing platforms utilized by the HEIs in Laguna. It also identified the performance of the marketing campaigns of the HEIs using the digital platforms based on the four stages of the enrolment marketing funnel: gaining visibility, converting prospects to leads, convincing the student to apply, and convincing the student to enrol. In addition, it also assessed the challenges encountered by marketing directors and managers with the use of digital platforms in marketing campaigns. Insights on the digital marketing adoption by the HEIs in Laguna and the experience obtained from the study were valuable in devising a digital marketing guide for higher educational institutions. This study may also add to the body of knowledge in the discipline of marketing and inspire higher education institutions to adopt digital marketing, measure the performance of marketing campaigns using key performance indicators, and reduce the challenges experienced in utilizing digital marketing.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of related literature focuses on the study's variables: digital marketing definition, social media marketing, enrolment marketing funnel, key performance indicators for Facebook digital marketing campaigns, and digital marketing challenges.

Quick Response Code	Access this article online	
	<p>Website: www.myecommercejournal.com</p>	<p>DOI: 10.26480/mecj.01.2023.15.20</p>

2.1 Definition of Digital Marketing

Chattopadhyay in pointed out that digital marketing is used for targeted, measurable, and interactive marketing of products or services by using various digital technologies to enhance reachability at consumer doorsteps (Chattopadhyay, 2019). The key objective of digital marketing is to promote the product or service and, at the same time, work on the brand image of the company so that, with its help, brand equity can be created in the marketplace. Finally, it will help to build an increasing number of prospective buyers and would be beneficial to increase the sale of goods and services by employing the various types of digital marketing techniques that are available in the market. It is basically the use of digital channels to market or promote any product or service in a B2B or B2C marketplace.

Online marketing, internet marketing, and web marketing are all terms used to describe digital marketing. Digital marketing refers to the promotion of products or services through digital technology, primarily the Internet but also mobile phones, display advertising, and any other digital medium. Moreover, digital marketing is the use of all digital media, including the internet, mobile, and interactive channels, to develop customer communication and exchanges (IBIMA Publishing, 2020). To reach potential students, most higher education institutions feel it necessary to use digital marketing tactics (Kannan, 2017). Digital marketing has changed the globe, and the higher education industry is no exception (Martin, 2015). Colleges and universities will not be able to survive without increased enrolment. Colleges and universities are struggling to stay relevant in an age when students are increasingly reliant on technology for communication. Most universities and educational institutions now report using digital marketing in some capacity to engage with students and reach potential applicants, and higher education providers are increasingly reporting high levels of success from their digital marketing campaigns (Lorange, 2017).

2.2 Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing (SMM) is a digital marketing technique that uses social technological platforms for marketing purposes (Hayes, 2023). Another definition of social media marketing is "online resources that people use to share content: video, photos, images, text, ideas, insight, humor, opinion, gossip, and news" (Drury, 2008). Further, social media marketing (SMM) is defined as a form of internet marketing that uses social media apps as a marketing tool that enables brands to connect with their audience to build a brand, increase sales, drive traffic to a website, and build a community of followers to share and engage with content. Examples of common social media platforms are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Social networking through an online community allows users to communicate with each other. The social networking platform allows marketing between individuals or organizations to be facilitated through online information posting and messaging.

2.3 Enrolment Marketing Funnel

The enrolment funnel is a marketing concept used to define a sequence of activities a potential student goes through before reaching an enrolment decision. The enrolment funnel is normally separated into numerous stages: awareness, consideration, yield, and enrolment. It is called a "funnel" due to the fact that the audience measurement shrinks as potential students make their selections to either go away or move nearer to enrolment. In higher educational terms, faculties favor building cognizance amongst many potential students, convincing some of them to engage, and then eventually pressing the right-fit students to enrol (Povejsil, 2022). The enrolment funnel in this study was categorized by stages namely; gaining visibility (awareness stage), convert to leads (consideration stage), convince the students to apply (decision stage) and convincing the students to enrol (enrolment stage). During awareness stage, the prospect first identifies pursuing education as a potential avenue to help them reach their goals. The marketing director/manager or marketing team must track all the inquiries coming from all your digital platforms being utilized.

It is also important to identify which inquiries result in completed enrolment and what do those prospects have in common. In the consideration stage, a prospect begins doing more in-depth research into their options. The institution's goal is to drive prospects to convert to leads by making an inquiry with your school. However, in the stage three of enrolment marketing funnel, convince the students to apply/decision stage, prospects consider all the information in order to determine whether or not to apply to your school. Once a lead reaches this point, your team should be working to connect with them and convince them to apply.

The marketing team may contact prospects by phones, create templates for email follow-up, use IM platforms such as WhatsApp, Messenger to follow-up them. Finally, during the enrolment stage, a lead has successfully applied to your school. Your aim is to help them become paying students. The team may create content for the incoming students, send a pre-arrival email to welcome them, engage the students on social media, and encourage current students to review your school.

2.4 Key Performance Indicators for Measuring Digital Marketing Campaigns

Any effective digital marketing campaign starts with setting the right digital marketing plan, which starts with digital marketing objectives. When defining business digital marketing objectives, they need to know how they will effectively align with their overall business' goals and their key performance indicators (KPIs). The next and most important step to consider after defining objectives is to start projecting some nominal KPI targets, how to measure the success of your digital marketing plan, and which measurements you will use to monitor success. Using any analytics tools (Google Search Console, Google Analytics, Facebook Insights, Google My Business, CRM, and Marketing Automation), the performance of the marketing campaign from the awareness to enrolment stages can be measured. Gaining visibility using social media marketing platforms was measured in terms of organic and paid reach and impressions using Facebook insights.

Reach refers to the number of people who saw any of the posts at least once, and the metric is estimated. Paid reach consists of users who see posts as a result of paid advertising. Paid ads or boosted posts on Facebook involve HEIs paying the platform to make these promotions visible. It enables to target people who have not liked the page but have similar interests or are in a similar demographic. Organic reach is the reach Facebook gives you for free. It is a measure of the number of people who see the content of the HEIs' marketing campaigns published on the social platform when they do not pay to boost that content. To increase your institution's visibility, use paid advertising to increase social media visibility, increase search visibility with Google Ads campaigns. Another metric used to measure the performance of marketing campaigns using social media platforms, particularly Facebook, is impressions.

Facebook impressions are the number of times that a post has been seen on Facebook while impressions are commonly confused with reach but are very different. Unlike reach, impressions are non-unique (Hill, 2021). This practically means that if 1 user sees the same post 3 times, that post will have 3 impressions but only a reach of 1 (Hill, 2021). Performance of the Facebook ads in stage of the enrolment marketing panel can be measured in terms of audience engagement through post clicks and reactions, comments and share and engagement rate. Engagement rate is the percentage of followers who engage with HEIs marketing posts. It is then calculated by dividing the total engagements to the total number of followers multiplied to 100. At stage 3 of enrolment marketing funnel, prospects consider all the information in order to determine whether or not to apply to your school. Once a lead reaches this point, your team should be working to connect with them and convince them to apply.

The marketing team may contact prospects by phones, create templates for email follow-up, use IM platforms such as WhatsApp, Messenger to follow-up them. Also in this stage, the team should monitor the decision stage key performance indicators using messaging conversations started metric includes the number of times two-way messaging conversations started in messaging apps (including Facebook Messenger, Instagram Direct, and WhatsApp Business), either when people clicked your ad in a messaging app or when they clicked a button in your ad on another Facebook-owned platform (such as Facebook News Feed) to send a message to your business.

However, the cost per messaging reply on Facebook indicates the average cost for each messaging reply. It is calculated by dividing the total spent by the number of message replies. On the final stage of the enrolment marketing funnel, a lead has successfully applied to your school. Your aim is to help them become paying students. The team may create content for the incoming students, send pre-arrival emails to welcome them, engage the students on social media, and encourage current students to review your school. Student acquisition cost can be computed to measure the overall results of marketing strategies using digital marketing platforms.

2.5 Challenges to the Adoption of Digital Marketing

Many studies have identified challenges in the adoption of digital marketing. Slow adoption of technological advances and hiring marketers to support new marketing strategies were reported as challenge facing

digital marketing. Lack of resources were seen as inadequate in terms of human resources, time, and expertise (Mero et al., 2012; Leeftang et al., 2014). Further, according to the report on India’s digital marketing landscape, the lack of clear metrics to measure the efficacy of such a campaign is the biggest hurdle in executing digital marketing campaigns. However, lack of training, security, and legal practices were found to be the biggest challenges that hinder digital marketing adoption among SMEs in Jordan (Kumar, 2009). Marketing teams and departments operate in silos (admissions operate separately from the departments) were also found as hurdle in adopting digital marketing. Marketing silos occur when a company delegates certain aspect of a marketing strategy to independent departments or teams.

Each team then operates independently of the other teams to deliver marketing content for their particular channel. This commonly occurs when a company grows rapidly or exclusively hires experts to create content for a particular marketing channel. It is typical for marketing silos to operate based on different data sets and develop an individual message, vision or strategy for delivering promotional content. Some of the disadvantages of marketing silos were reduced communication, saturated market and fewer resources. Difficulty in developing balance and supply to the digital marketing campaigns and other vending techniques were also reported as hurdle in the use of digital marketing. Handling prospective students’ information overload was also felt in the adoption of digital platform in marketing of HEIs.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Performance of The Heis’ Marketing Campaigns Using Social Media in Terms of Gaining Visibility (Awareness Stage)

Platform	HEIs	Campaign Length	Budget per Boost	Reach			Impressions		
				Total	Organic	Paid	Total	Organic	Paid
Social Media Marketing	HEI1	28 days	1500	1.9K	356	1,544	2.1K	357	1,743
	HEI2	28 days	1500	36.7K	26,063	11,532	162.6K	27,137	135,463
	HEI3	28 days	1500	54.9K	5,742	50,899	151K	9,710	141,326
	HEI4	28 days	1500	16.5K	2,261	14,720	47.6K	3,069	44,521
	HEI5	28 days	1500	13.6K	5,440	8,160	23.2K	4,832	18,368
	HEI6	28 days	1500	18.9K	7,560	11,340	23K	13,800	9,200
	HEI7	28 days	1500	31K	20,110	14,492	117.1K	54,140	62,982
	HEI8	28 days	500	12.7K	5,456	7,154	22.6K	9,944	12,656
	HEI9	28 days	1500	37K	23,276	14,445	149.9K	113,437	36,463
	HEI10	28 days	1500	200K	80,000	120,000	300K	296,000	4,000
	HEI11	28 days	1500	38.5K	23,225	15,857	149.1K	121,963	27,137
	HEI12	28 days	1500	21.4K	9,156	12,244	35K	158,300	123,300
	HEI13	28 days	500	47.6K	28,560	19,040	7.4K	449	7,026
	HEI14	28 days	1500	11.6K	1,212	10,677	20.4K	1,315	19,036
	HEI15	28 days	1500	8.7K	1,410	7,595	19K	1,640	18,200

Table 1 shows the performance of the digital marketing campaigns of the HEIs using social media in terms of gaining visibility or awareness stage.

Almost every HEI spent P1500 on boosted ads that ran for over 28 days. The findings revealed that paid reach and impressions were greater than organic reach and impressions. It also revealed that the impressions and reach are far from comparable, which implies that the ad fairly caught the attention of the audience. If the company or institution wants to make sure that its customer base is continuously expanding, connecting with more of the audience, and improving awareness, reach can help monitor the progress. Additionally, Facebook reach reveals whether an institution is engaging its audience. The Facebook algorithm prioritizes high-quality content from pages that users engage with frequently. High reach can be an indicator of good quality and great engagement. Finally, once the institution knows how many people see their content, they have a better idea of the possible results.

In the consideration stage of the marketing funnel, the performance of HEI’s digital marketing campaigns was measured in terms of post clicks and reactions, comments and shares, and an engagement rate. The engagement rate is the percentage of followers who engage with HEI’s marketing posts. Table 2 exhibits the performance of the HEIs’ marketing campaigns over a 28-day period. HEI8 got the highest engagement rate of

3. METHODS

The researcher employed a quantitative study technique. The researcher used a survey questionnaire. The research was conducted at Laguna’s private higher education institutions, which are overseen and regulated by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). There were 29 marketing directors of CHED registered private higher education institutions in Laguna Province. The list of the registered private higher education institutions in Laguna was retrieved from the official website of CHED Region IV. Out of these 29 private schools with registered marketing directors, two have closed, three have stopped their operations due to the pandemic, two were not using digital platforms in marketing, and six refused to answer the survey questionnaires distributed. A total of fifteen marketing directors of private higher education institutions in Laguna participated in the study. A Google form containing the validated questionnaires was created. The link to the Google form was distributed to the marketing directors and managers through their institutions’ Facebook fan pages. After two weeks, the Google Form survey link was sent, and reminders or follow-ups were conducted to boost response rates. Frequency, percentage and weighted mean were used as statistical tools. The digital marketing performances of the higher education institutions were reported and analyzed using analytics tools Facebook Insights and Facebook Ads.

100% with a total of 3351 post clicks, reactions, comments, and shares. HEI5 got the highest engagement, however, with only a 12% engagement rate. HEI11’s marketing campaign post got the lowest engagement rate of 3%, while HEI15 got a 4% engagement rate, and HEI1 got a 9% engagement rate. The marketing campaign post by HEI5 got the highest engagement of 15,891; however, the engagement rate was only 23%. Posts by HEI12 and HEI14 received 18% engagement, HEI9 received 19%, HEI10 received 23%, and HEI13 received 24%. The performances of the HEIs’ marketing campaigns using social media digital tools are not scaled to 100, so it is perfectly normal to see an engagement rate above 100 if the post is highly engaging. The engagement rate should be tracked, whether high or low (Kumar, 2009). An engagement rate per impression shows how interesting the post was based on the number of times it was shown. Engagement rate can be affected by factors such as when the institution posts on Facebook, the use of images or videos, and other content. The higher the engagement percentages are, the higher the number of engaged people.

Table 3 presents the performance of the HEIs’ marketing campaigns using digital marketing platforms in terms of convincing the student to apply (decision stage) using the Facebook social media platform. The messaging conversations started, and cost-per-messaging performance indicators were used to monitor the performance of marketing campaigns for HEIs.

Table 2: Performance of the HEIs' Marketing Campaigns using Social Media Marketing and Content Marketing as Digital Marketing Platforms in terms of Converting Prospects to Leads (Consideration Stage)

Platform	HEIs	Campaign Length	Budget per Boost	Engagement			
				Post Clicks	Reactions. Comments & Share	Engagement Rate	
						Followers	Rate
Social Media Marketing and Content Marketing	HEI1	28 days	1500	89	56	1,694	9%
	HEI2	28 days	1500	4,300	731	12,490	40%
	HEI3	28 days	1500	3,300	510	4,469	85%
	HEI4	28 days	1500	2,200	231	21,081	12%
	HEI5	28 days	1500	2,300	1,300	15,891	23%
	HEI6	28 days	1500	98	21	7,96	28%
	HEI7	28 days	1500	3,000	2,500	10,279	54%
	HEI8	29 days	1500	2,931	420	3,361	100%
	HEI9	28 days	1500	3,334	501	20,422	19%
	HEI10	28 days	1500	9,173	3,274	54,320	23%
	HEI11	28 days	1500	320	400	25,382	3%
	HEI12	28 days	1500	2,678	1,513	22,935	18%
	HEI13	28 days	1500	5,905	4,300	42,470	24%
	HEI14	28 days	1500	137	37	963	18%
	HEI15	29 days	1500	866	117	26,790	4%

Table 3: Performance of the HEIs' Marketing Campaigns using Social Media Digital Marketing Platforms in terms of Convincing the Student to Apply (decision stage)

HEIs	Social Media Marketing	
	Messaging Conversations Started	Cost per Messaging
HEI1	118	₱12.71
HEI2	171	₱8.77
HEI3	101	₱14.85
HEI4	58	₱25.86
HEI5	208	₱7.21
HEI6	43	₱34.88
HEI7	54	₱27.78
HEI8	21	₱71.43
HEI9	2106	₱0.71
HEI10	79	₱18.99
HEI11	41	₱36.59
HEI12	20	₱50.00
HEI13	66	₱22.73
HEI14	44	₱34.09
HEI15	83	₱18.07

The metric messaging conversation started includes the number of times a two-way messaging conversation started in messaging apps (including Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp Business), either when people clicked your ad in a messaging app or when they clicked a button in your ad on other Meta technologies (such as Facebook Feed) to send a message to your business. The messaging conversion performance of HEIs ranged from 21 to 2106 with a cost per message as high as 71.43 and as low as 0.71. The higher the value of messaging conversations, the better the performance of marketing campaigns. Hence, the lower the cost of messaging, the better.

Table 4 shows the performance of the HEIs' marketing campaigns using the Facebook social media marketing platform in terms of convincing the students to enrol (Enrolment Stage).

The student acquisition cost was obtained by dividing the budget by the number of acquired students. In interpreting the results, the researcher only considered the amount spent using the Facebook social media platform. The cost of acquiring students at Laguna HEIs via social media ranges from ₱6.24 to ₱33.33. Businesses use this customer acquisition cost to determine their profitability because it compares the amount of money, they spend on attracting customers against the number of customers they

actually gain. The business must reduce acquisition costs in order to have higher returns on its total profit.

Table 5 presents the challenges encountered by the marketing managers on the use of Facebook as marketing platform.

The slow adoption of technological advances and the hiring of marketers to support new marketing strategies (WM = 1.0) were greatly experienced by the marketing directors of HEIs in the adoption of social media platforms for implementing marketing campaigns. Further, marketing teams and departments work in silos, and admissions operates independently of the departments (WM = 2.27). HEIs unanimously agreed that resources and budgets are not always available to support digital marketing campaigns and that the performance of the campaigns, in particular, was not measured by the institutions (WM = 1.53). In addition, the institutions also experienced the high cost of maintaining the institutions' image by updating the system to include all the school's information for the audience (WM = 1.67).

Marketing directors also experienced difficulty developing and structuring the content of digital marketing ads and campaigns, which reflects the demands for a diverse range of audiences (WM = 1.53). The marketing department agrees that they experienced difficulty developing

balance and supply for the digital marketing campaigns and other vending techniques (WM = 2.00). Furthermore, the HEI's marketing team had difficulty dealing with prospective students' information overload (WM = 1.87) and the changing demands on technology (WM = 1.93).

Also, the marketing department encountered difficulties in connecting with students in meaningful ways (WM = 2.00) and in differentiating

between the audiences for the marketing techniques (WM = 1.87). The strict policies on using digital marketing platforms (WM = 1.20) were also experienced by the HEIs when implementing marketing campaigns using social media platforms. Finally, the unreliable and inefficient telecommunications infrastructure needed to support digital marketing campaigns (WM = 2.40) was another challenge felt by the HEI marketing team when using digital marketing platforms.

Table 4: Performance of the HEIs' Marketing Campaigns using Digital Marketing Platforms in terms of Convincing the students to enrol (Enrolment Stage)

HEIs	No of Acquired Students	Digital Marketing Platform	
		Social Media/Content Marketing	
		Budget	Student Acquisition Cost
HEI1	2687	₱36,000	₱13.40
HEI2	2750	₱48,000	₱17.45
HEI3	1289	₱12,000	₱9.31
HEI4	779	₱9,000	₱12.71
HEI5	458	₱30,000	₱33.33
HEI6	447	₱9,000	₱20.13
HEI7	1100	₱7,500	₱6.82
HEI8	407	₱9,000	₱22.11
HEI9	1077	₱9,000	₱8.33
HEI10	8011	₱50,000	₱6.24
HEI11	2750	₱40,000	₱14.54
HEI12	320	₱6,000	₱17.39
HEI13	2666	₱48,000	₱18.00
HEI14	610	₱15,000	₱24.60
HEI15	2432	₱48,000	₱19.50

Table 5: Challenges Encountered by the Marketing Managers on the Use of Facebook as Marketing Platform

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED ON THE USE OF DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORMS	WM	AR	Rank
Slow adoption of technological advances and hiring marketers to support new marketing strategies	1.07	Strongly Agree	1
Marketing teams and departments operate in silos (<i>admissions operate separately from the departments</i>)	2.27	Agree	11
Resources are not always available and budgets for digital marketing campaigns do not measure	1.53	Strongly Agree	3.5
Marketing units have competing priorities - allows them to operate somewhat independently, which can lead to inconsistent messaging or even duplication of resources	3.53	Disagree	13
High cost of maintaining the institutions' image by updating system to include all school's information to the audience	1.67	Strongly Agree	5
Difficulty in developing and structuring the content of digital marketing ads/campaigns which reflects the demands for diverse range of audiences	1.53	Strongly Agree	3.5
Difficulty in developing balance and supply to the digital marketing campaigns and other vending techniques	2.00	Agree	9.5
Difficulty in handling pprospective students' information overload	1.87	Agree	6.5
Increasing demands in technology changes	1.93	Agree	8
Difficulty in connecting with students in meaningful ways	2.00	Agree	9.5
Strict policies on the digital marketing platforms	1.20	Strongly Agree	2
Difficulty in differentiating between the audiences the marketing techniques	1.87	Agree	6.5
Unreliable and inefficient telecommunication infrastructure to support digital marketing campaigns	2.40	Agree	12

5. CONCLUSION

The performance of the HEIs' digital marketing campaigns was measured in four stages: gaining visibility, converting prospects to leads, convincing the student to apply, and convincing the student to enrol, based on the enrolment marketing funnel. The marketing campaigns by the HEIs performed well in the first stage, however, the prospects were slowly moved down to the succeeding stages of the marketing funnel. The cost of acquiring students is quite high compared with industry standards. The challenges experienced by the institution were mainly due to limited

human resources to handle the digital marketing strategies and slow adoption of technological advances and hiring marketers to support new marketing strategies.

Hire and train marketers to support new marketing strategies, specifically in developing and structuring the content of digital marketing ads or campaigns that reflect the demands of a diverse range of audiences. The marketing team must carefully review the policies on the digital marketing platforms and allocate budget and resources for the implementation of digital marketing campaigns. The performance of digital marketing campaigns must be consistently measured using key performance

indicators to help marketing directors and managers better understand the student journey and how they can make improvements to reach more engaged users within their target audience.

REFERENCES

- Barone, A., 2022. Digital Marketing Overview: Types, Challenges, and Required Skills." Investopedia, Investopedia, 21 Dec. 2022, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/d/digital-marketing.asp#:~:text=The%20term%20digital%20marketing%20refers,engines%2C%20and%20other%20similar%20channels.>
- Care, Venture. 2018. Importance of Digital Marketing for Education Sector - Venture Care. Medium, Medium, <https://medium.com/@venturecare17/importance-of-digital-marketing-for-education-sector-venture-care-da386bb209d1>.
- Chattopadhyay, P., 2019. A Study on Various Aspects of Digital Marketing: Literature Review Approach. International Journal of Research Culture Society. ISSN: 2456-6683
- Constantinides, E., and Zinck, S.M., 2012. Higher Education Marketing: A Study on the Impact of social media on Study Selection and University Choice. International Journal of Technology and Education Marketing, 2, Pp. 41 - 58. 10.4018/ijtem.2012010104.
- Drury, G., 2008. Opinion piece: Social media: Should marketers engage and how can it be done effectively? J. Direct Data Digit Mark Pract., 9, Pp. 274-277. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.ddmp.4350096>.
- Fierro, I., Cardona, A., Diego, A.G., Jihna, 2017. Digital marketing: a new tool for international education. Pensam. Gest, 43, Pp. 241-260.
- Hayes, A., 2023. Social Media Marketing (SMM): What It Is, How It Works, Pros and Cons. Investopedia, Investopedia, [https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/social-media-marketing-smm.asp#:~:text=Social%20media%20marketing%20\(SMM\)%20\(sales%2C%20and%20drive%20website%20traffic.](https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/social-media-marketing-smm.asp#:~:text=Social%20media%20marketing%20(SMM)%20(sales%2C%20and%20drive%20website%20traffic.)
- Hill, T., 2021. Facebook Metrics - The Complete Guide in 2021. Social Status, 10 Sept. 2022, <https://www.socialstatus.io/facebook-metrics/>.
- IBIMA Publishing, 2020. Impact of Digital Marketing on Student Decision-Making Process of Higher Education Institution: A Case of Indonesia. <https://ibimapublishing.com/articles/JELHE/2019/267057/>.
- Infotech, Trappist. 2019. Importance of Digital Marketing for the Education Sector. LinkedIn, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/importance-digital-marketing-education-sector-trappist-infotech.>
- Kannan, P., 2017. Digital marketing: A framework, review and research agenda. International Journal of Research in Marketing, 34 (1), Pp. 22-45.
- Kannan, P.K., 2017. Digital marketing: A framework, review and research agenda. International Journal of Research in Marketing, 34 (1), Pp. 22-45.
- Kumar, R., 2009. Information and Communication Technologies, Laxmi Publications, Ltd.
- Lamberton, C., and Stephen, A.T., 2016. A Thematic Exploration of Digital, social media, and Mobile Marketing: Research Evolution from 2000 to 2015 and an Agenda for Future Inquiry. Journal of Marketing, 80 (6), Pp. 146-172. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jm.15.0415>.
- Leefflang, P.S.H., Verhoef, P.C., Dahlström, P., and Freundt, T., 2014. Challenges and solutions for marketing in a digital era. European Management Journal, Elsevier, 32 (1), Pp. 1-12.
- Lorange, P., 2017. Higher Education Digital Marketing', accessed on January 28th, 2018, from <https://www.keystoneacademic.com/higher-ed-marketing/Higher-EducationDigital-Marketing.>
- Martin, C.M., 2015. Social Media Engagement and Collegiate Recruitment: An Examination of the Use of Social Networks in the College Recruitment and Student Choice Processes. Dissertations. Paper 93. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/diss/93>.
- Mero, J., Aarne, T., Karjaluo, H., Jayawardhena, C., 2012. Digital and social media marketing usage in B2B industrial section. Marketing Management Journal, 22, Pp. 102-117.
- Povejsil, E., 2022. How Colleges Can Reinvent the Enrollment Funnel: Collegis Education." Collegis Education - Tech-Enabled Higher Ed Solutions, <https://collegiseducation.com/news/marketing/reinventing-the-enrollment-funnel/>.
- Staff, S., 2021. How the Marketing Funnel Works from Top to Bottom. Skyword, <https://www.skyword.com/contentstandard/how-the-marketing-funnel-works-from-top-to-bottom/>.
- Yaseen, H., Al-Adwan, A., and Al-Madadha, A., 2019. Digital marketing adoption among SMES in Jordan: A mixed-method approach. Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology, 97, Pp. 1401-1412.

