

A digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in the automotive industry

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Abstract

This research uses grounded theory to present a digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in the automotive industry. This qualitative research is based on grounded theory. Semistructured interviews were used to collect information, and the Strauss and Corbin method and the paradigm model were used to analyze data. The data are collected based on purposive sampling through semi-structured interviews with 15 experts and managers from the automotive industry. The sample is large enough to provide the required information and theoretical adequacy. The data obtained from interviews were analyzed through the process of open, axial, and selective coding. Accordingly, a digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in the automotive industry concerning the grounded theory was presented. The proposed model is both descriptive and prescriptive. Thus, we have selected well-known and qualified experts from the field of digital marketing and the automotive industry to provide a better model. However, the proposed model has implications for marketing managers to improve dynamic capabilities in the automotive industry.

Keywords: digital marketing, dynamic capabilities, grounded theory, automotive industry
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1 Introduction

In the current competitive environment, marketing managers acknowledge the necessity to form and maintain online relationships with customers [4]. However, some companies still rely more on traditional media approaches to advertise their products and services because they trust them more than digital media. Understanding the consumer behavior evolution through digital transformation forms a mostly unknown digital consumer culture and provides the necessary grounds for marketing managers and researchers to understand this phenomenon [17]. In addition, digital technologies and devices such as smartphones, innovative products, the Internet of Things, and artificial intelligence all promise significant transformations in consumers' lives soon. Digital evolutions are reshaping the marketing process and strategy. The consequences of this evolution provide broad research space, including digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities, and define a new course for corporate marketing managers [14]. The adaptive process resulting from digital technologies in new digital environments adds value through new approaches. Companies with digital technology activities create basic capabilities to develop values for customers. Companies often create these activities

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using digital technologies through new customer experiences and interaction [6]. In addition, digital technologies are changing the concepts of products and services to provide new value propositions to customers and strengthen products and services with digital tools. Product networking employs digital technologies to create intrinsic values for products and services. These trends provide opportunities for personalizing customer services [9].

Commercial companies use digital space as part of their general communication and marketing strategies. Companies use digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities as a valuable new marketing approach to create significant relationships through communication, interaction, and value-making. Online consumer interactions increase consumers' knowledge regarding companies and service industries. Mikalef et al. [14] found that relatively low cost and low financial investment contribute to the application of digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities as a communication and marketing tool in these companies. Thus, marketing managers motivate interaction, establish online relationships, and achieve digital marketing goals based on dynamic capabilities. Improving communication and advertising through the digital space is a crucial strategy that service organizations can use to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage in markets with intensive competition. As a result, a digital marketing approach based on dynamic capabilities in market activities facilitates and develops the strategic behaviors of marketing managers of companies in the digital space [3]. An essential feature of companies existing in such markets is that they use digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities and internal capabilities and resources to improve their performance; they quickly provide innovative and new products. However, recent studies show that digital marketing tools do not necessarily lead to making rational decisions in this field, which ultimately affects the success or failure of new marketing activities. Thus, digital marketing is essential to strategic assets and new marketing tools. Collecting and evaluating rival companies' information significantly affects the development of new digital marketing approaches. On the one hand, developing digital marketing requires providing the necessary training and skills on digital approaches and the growth of commercial companies concerning society's needs at all levels. On the other hand, businesses' digital development and growth require recognizing and removing obstacles and proving the suitable ground for developing service activities.

Discussion on e-commerce, digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities, electronic autos, and exaggerations on their impacts on the automotive industry and sales network was seriously raised in the last decade of the 20th century. However, at best, electronic autos could be considered a business model along with other models rather than a substitute for them [13]. However, the reason for that includes the complicated nature of many automotive products, organizational automakers, trust and confidence in the auto business, and the personality styles of many automakers who still prefer face-to-face and traditional interactions. Not all cars can be presented electronically, and the new business environment creates new opportunities and roles for automaker representatives [16]. Development, complexities, and multiplicity of websites and portals have faced the automotive industry with important challenges, such as positioning the brand in the virtual space, facing customers' perception, and attracting auto buyers to the website of an automaker company, which requires effective management. Thus, designing a compensation mechanism for the agency network based on dynamic capabilities in the digital marketing space is necessary [19]. Service and financial industries like the automotive industry, which often have a non-flexible, non-transparent, and bureaucratic structure, require particular measures like digital marketing tools based on dynamic capabilities to enhance their abilities in digital business.

Successful companies in competitive conditions distinguish themselves from rivals, and their favorable advantages give them a unique market position. This research seeks to eliminate the shortcomings of existing models and employs a comprehensive and systematic approach to evaluate digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities in the automotive industry. As a result, theorists and managers can use digital marketing to provide a valuable and practical plan to improve their dynamic capabilities.

2 Theoretical foundations and research background

Digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities evaluates the application of information technologies in developing service delivery, changing organizational trends and culture, and influencing value creation [12]. Digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities are widely used to promote products or services and consumer communication through digital channels [8, 20]. Conceptually, digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities is wrongly perceived as using technologies to facilitate marketing activities and improve customer knowledge by adapting to their needs. The Digital Marketing Institute Based on Dynamic Capabilities defines digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities as follows: using digital technologies to create an integrated, purposeful, and measurable customer communication to help retain customers and deepen relationships with them [5]. Digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities has the main advantage of access to the target audience cost-effectively and measurably. Other main advantages of digital

marketing based on dynamic capabilities are increasing brand loyalty and driving online sales.

Motlaqi and Shahmohammadi [15] investigated the impact of digital marketing strategies based on dynamic capabilities on export development. They showed that covering part of the participation costs in digital marketing business delegations based on dynamic capabilities sent to target markets has no significant effect on export development. In addition, supporting the development of digital marketing training activities based on dynamic capabilities had no significant effect on export development. Moreover, establishing digital marketing agencies abroad based on dynamic capabilities had no significant effect on export development, and assisting digital marketing programs based on dynamic capabilities significantly affected export development.

Golian and Ghasemi [2] examined the effect of digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities on the competitiveness of economic enterprises and found a direct and positive effect. They hoped presenting a conceptual model would guide the future researchers' path.

Busca and Bertrandias [1] examined four cultural periods in digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities and presented a digital marketing research framework based on dynamic capabilities. They found that behaviors and platforms are interdependent, and the Internet is a consequence and, at the same time, a determinant of the behaviors of consumers and companies. This article investigates this issue by reconstructing the cultural history of the Internet and its relationship with marketing. To this purpose, a combined cultural framework for further research in digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities is presented.

Authors in [11] investigated the effect of digital transformation and marketing based on dynamic capabilities on brand promotion, positioning, and e-commerce. They found that determinant factors like the implementation period significantly affect individuals' perceptions of digital marketing efficiency based on dynamic capabilities. However, investigating social networks was the most common form of digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities in the market, and Google analysis was the most common method to measure their effects. In addition, the results showed that the more a company relies on digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities in its business, the more significant its impact would be on brand promotion and positioning. Investigating challenges and solutions for marketing in the digital age, Leeflang et al. [9] showed that the continuous use of the Internet is increasing worldwide, and digital marketing has become a critical source of competitive advantage in both B2C and B2B marketing. Reviewing the literature and theoretical foundations showed that existing digital marketing models are incomprehensive to provide all the requirements for the success of the marketing processes through digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities. Thus, understanding the digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in this field is necessary.

3 Methodology

The present study is qualitative. The grounded theory is used to develop a geo-marketing model for Tehran's urban tourism infrastructure and to fill the existing theoretical gap. The grounded theory is a qualitative research method that inductively applies to a series of systematic procedures to develop a theory about the study subject [18]. This study uses purposive and nonprobability sampling. The purposive sampling used in qualitative research means that the researcher selects effective participants to understand the research subject. Data are collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with experts. The research population includes experts, private sector activists, and experts and managers of the automotive industry public sector. The interviews and feedback were recorded, corrected, and coded using the grounded theory. Overall, 22 participants were interviewed (Table 1).

Table 1: Characteristics of the research participants

Row	Expertise	Experience (year)	Field of study	Education
1	Marketing Director	20	Marketing Management	Ph.D.
2	Private sector activist	15	Public Administration	Ph.D.
3	Private sector activist	25	Marketing Management	Ph.D.
4	Private sector activist	20	Marketing Management	Ph.D.
5	Private sector activist	10	DBA	Ph.D.
6	Private sector activist, e-marketing	17	Marketing Management	Ph.D.
7	University professor	10	Public Administration	M.Sc.
8	Researchers	12	Marketing Management	M.Sc.
9	Public sector activist - Director General	18	Marketing Management	Ph.D.
10	Public sector activist - Deputy Director General	20	MBA	M.Sc.
11	Auto expert	14	MBA	M.Sc.
12	Auto expert	9	English literature	M.Sc.

4 Qualitative research findings

The data were collected through interviews with experts. The participants were CEOs, board members, and marketing managers of automotive companies. A sample of auto company managers was interviewed based on the interview protocols, and the necessary information was collected. The data were analyzed based on the grounded theory and the data coding and categorization. First, the managers are familiarized with the research subject through open interviews. In addition, researchers examined the behavior of company managers to deepen their knowledge. The conceptual model of the research is drawn after the data coding and categorization.

The researcher extracted and coded the texts from the interviews after each interview. Open, axial, and selective coding were applied to the data. The data was read exactly, and open codes, i.e., the participant's own words, were extracted. The resulting codes were compared to the previous ones, the conceptually similar codes were placed in the same category, and the categories were formed gradually. The categories were compared to each other and, if necessary, integrated. Some categories were divided into two or more categories. In addition, some codes moved from one category to another until the axial category was obtained. The linking basis of axial coding is based on expanding one of the categories. For example, the digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in the automotive industry is chosen as the axial category of the current research, which originates from causal conditions, affects the process and strategy, and leads to the final consequence. Selective coding reveals the relationship between categories. A digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in the Iranian automotive industry based on the grounded theory was developed after scientific interviews with scientific and executive experts of the organization. A summary of this process is mentioned below to document the validity and reliability of the research.

4.1 Axial coding

The next analytic stage of grounded theory is axial coding, which relates the generated categories to one another (i.e., the open coding stage). This stage is based on a pattern model to facilitate the theory process. The linking process in axial coding begins with expanding one of the categories. However, the axial coding process is more complex and requires four simultaneous and separate analyses: part of the analysis is performed through open coding.

The open coding process began after the completion of the interviews. The codes relating to the interviews with 15 experts and specialists were extracted during the open coding. Then, these common codes and those necessary from the researcher's viewpoint were chosen as the final codes. Each concept is separated and labeled to precisely categorize the concepts. Then, the text of interviews and contextual notes are scrutinized to conceptualize the data. Axial coding connects categories and subcategories according to their dimensions and characteristics. Strauss and Corbin's analytical tool is used to identify the relationship between the categories. Then, the coding performed on detailed categories was examined based on the six conditions of the grounded theory.

4.2 Causal conditions

Causal conditions create situations and issues relating to a phenomenon and describe why and how individuals and groups respond in certain ways [18]. Causal conditions include items that directly affect digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities in Iran's automotive industry or examine factors creating and developing the study's phenomenon. The current research's categories, like digital marketing identity based on dynamic capabilities in the automotive industry, digital infrastructure, digital evolutions, and digital system enhancement, are empirical factors leading to the causal conditions of the study. The categories relating to causal conditions are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: The primary and secondary causal conditions

Primary category	Secondary category	Concepts extracted from interviews
Causal conditions	Digital infrastructure	Promoting digital business platform
		Activating business interactions
		Cooperative economy
		IT systems upgrade
	Digital evolutions	Consumer behavior change
		Customer interactions through online media
		Increased use of digital marketing
		Increasing enhancement of shopping channels
	Digital system enhancement	Collection, management, display and analysis of spatial data
		Increasing digital knowledge
		Information management through digital marketing platform
		Smart systems for users

4.3 Contextual conditions

Contextual conditions include a specific set of the phenomenon's characteristics that generally refers to the place of and issues relating to events. Contextual characteristics include factors required for realizing digital marketing based on dynamic capabilities in the automotive industry and provide specific conditions in which strategies are used to manage, control, and respond to the phenomenon. These conditions include concepts, categories, and contextual variables. In this research, dynamic branding, structural coherence, and optimization of digital activities are the primary contextual factors of the digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in the Iranian automotive industry (refer to Table 3).

Table 3: The primary and secondary contextual categories

Primary category	Secondary category	Concepts extracted from interviews
Contextual conditions	Optimization of digital activities	Digital sales development
		Expansion of digital sales channels
		Software and hardware equipment
		Maximizing profit
		Precise studies on online consumer behavior
	Dynamic branding	Site optimization
		Digital advertising
		Digital standardization
		Appropriate image improvement
		Appropriate slogan
	Structural coherence	Development of mixed digital processes
		Expert human capital
		Using inclusive media
		Improving and organizing the existing infrastructure

4.4 Intervening conditions

Intervening conditions refer to more general conditions, including time, space and culture. They are used to facilitate or limit strategies. These conditions facilitate or restrict mutual action/reaction in a specific context, and each has varied influences. In this research, digital evolutions, environmental factors, and customer characteristics are the intervening conditions resulting from the digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in the automotive industry (refer to Table 4).

Table 4: The primary and secondary contextual categories

Primary category	Secondary category	Concepts extracted from interviews
Intervening conditions	Digital evolutions	Employee resistance
		Customer resistance
		Online sales channel
		Customer communication
	Environmental factors	Legal barriers (laws, policies, and regulatory problems)
		Infrastructure problems
		Internet speed reduction
	Customer characteristics	Customer information analysis
		Increasing number of shopping channels
		Diversification of the customer shopping experience
		Purchase applications

4.5 Axial categories

The phenomenon in question must be like an axis that other primary categories are related to it. It must repeatedly appear in the data. In other words, all or almost all the cases should have signs pointing to that concept. An axial phenomenon is an essential or axial idea, and other primary categories are related to it. In this research, the three categories of standardization, marketing capabilities, and digital integration of the auto services are selected as the axial categories of the digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in the automotive industry (refer to Table 5).

Table 5: The primary and secondary axial categories

Primary category	Secondary category	Concepts extracted from interviews
Axial categories	Standardization	Optimizing new digital concepts in a dynamic environment
		Identify the exact measures of digital marketing
		Providing optimal platforms
		Analysis of digital space
	Marketing capabilities	Marketing training
		Promotion of brand position in digital marketing activities
		Agility and speed
		Innovative capacity in the digital platform
	Digital integration	Customer interaction
		Synergy
		Effective communication methods
		Developing ground for brand communities

4.6 Strategies

Strategies are some plans and actions extracted from the axial category and causing consequences. They include measures to manage, administer or respond to the phenomenon under investigation [18]. In this research, three categories of brand positioning, strategic digital capabilities, and brand value creation are selected as the strategic categories of the digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in Iran's automotive industry (refer to Table 6).

Table 6: Category of strategies (action/reaction, primary, secondary)

Primary category	Secondary category	Concepts extracted from interviews
Strategies	Brand positioning	Establishing the brand position in customers' minds
		Direct communication with customers' feelings and desires
		Establishing a favorable communication network
		Creating stable behavior in the market
	Strategic digital capabilities	Using the desired patterns of rivals
		Examining environmental opportunities and threats
		Development of startups
		Development of capital, skills and capabilities
	Brand value creation	Evaluating the internal environment, and weaknesses and strengths
		Integrating smart sales technologies
		Information content quality
		Favorable interactions with the audience
		Digital content strengthening
		Transformative innovation
		Digital value chain
		Developing new services based on needs
Customer feedback		

4.7 Consequences

Consequences are the outputs or the results of actions and reactions. Consequences constitute the last part of the digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in the automotive industry. The concepts relating to the consequences of the model are extracted using open coding. Then, they are extracted and named based on the back-and-forth movement between themes and concepts of the primary categories. Finally, three categories of sustainable competitive advantage, dynamic digital capabilities, and dynamic digital business are selected as the consequences of the digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in Iran's automotive industry. Table 7 presents the categories and concepts relating to the consequences.

4.8 Paradigm model

Selective coding selects the primary category based on the results of previous coders, systematically relates them to other categories and validates and develops it. Selective coding begins with integrating and providing the categories and subcategories in open and axial coding obtained from the digital marketing model based on dynamic capabilities in Iran's automotive industry. Figure 1 presents a better and clearer display of the paradigm model.

Table 7: The primary and secondary consequence categories

Primary category	Secondary category	Concepts extracted from interviews
Consequences	Sustainable competitive advantage	Awareness of competitors' situation
		Advertising advantage over competitors
		Maintaining long-term relationships
		Determining long-term position
		Profitability
	Dynamic digital capabilities	Improving the service quality
		Improving responsiveness
		Gradual innovation
		Using new ideas
		Increasing productivity
	Dynamic digital business	Reducing operating costs
		Improving competitiveness
		Increasing the quality of electronic services
		Online sales development
		Increasing successful business models
		Promoting the business position

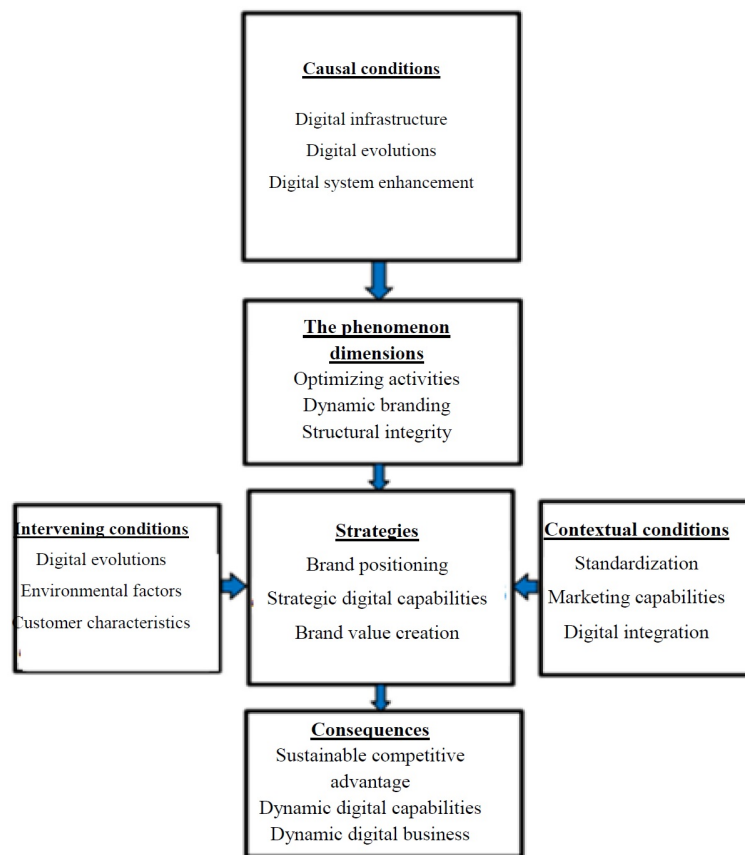


Figure 1: The research paradigm model

4.9 Evaluating the validity of the paradigm model

The theory’s reliability was examined based on the proportionality and applicability indicators [18] and the interviewees’ opinions. In the case of the appropriateness index, we discussed with three interviewees the proportionality of the research findings with the real world, and some categories’ names were adjusted. Regarding the applicability index, a continuous comparison was carried out between the data and the background and theoretical foundations of the research. Adjusting semi-structured questions at different stages of the interviews resolved potential issues and increased the applicability of the research.

5 Conclusion

This research provides a model for the influence of mass media on the expansion of auto culture using grounded theory. The research results examine causal, contextual, and interventional factors, axial category, consequences, and formulation of strategies to identify the effects of mass media on the expansion of auto culture, which is presented in the form of the final research model. Kansanga et al. [7] found that mass media, including radio and television, have a more significant impact on women, and written media have a greater impact on men, which is consistent with the results of the present study. In addition, in the field of digital culture, it is found that auto culture requires developing a comprehensive communication, informant, educational, and advertising program, which is consistent with the results of the present study. Our results are also consistent with Mehri [10]. They concluded that mass media, as the dominant source of formation and realization of social facts, have a significant role in building auto culture in society. As a result, mass media should promote values such as foresight, forward-looking, ambiguity, caution, and rationality in their programs, especially in series and story collections. Promoting such values provides cultural beds for insurance in society indirectly. In addition, the mass media should examine the country's insurance industry through various programs, especially commentary and round table programs, and take the attention of the society's elites to this critical industry. Moreover, the mass media can emphasize news and issues relating to the insurance industry to realize insurance in society. The media can do their best as pressure levers to enact strict insurance laws.

Managers of automotive companies should strengthen their interactions with mass media such as the press, radio, television, and news agencies and better advertise their insurance services. The automotive industry is very extensive inside and abroad. Thus, an efficient media system, as an essential strategy for developing penetration and auto culture, is needed to increase the attractiveness of the auto market. This way, the company can create a comprehensive information and advertising evaluation system to guide automotive companies using relative domestic advantages to develop digital marketing.

The results show mass media's great importance in promoting auto culture's position in customers' minds. Therefore, companies should improve their accountability, regularly check customer satisfaction, and identify their current and future needs. In addition, a comprehensive examination of competitors and their strengths and weaknesses is essential. The competitors' position and the changes they create in their media must be widely and constantly analyzed.

The researchers are suggested to use the fuzzy Delphi technique to identify and prioritize factors affecting the spread of automotive culture. In addition, they can evaluate the effects of mass media on other automotive fields. This research is conducted cross-sectionally, which makes it difficult to draw causal conclusions. A large number of questions in the questionnaires was time-consuming, affecting the accuracy of the participants' answers.

Limitations

The findings of this study depend on the views and experiences of experts and the environmental conditions of the research, and the results can only be generalized in similar conditions and environments. Other study limitations were finding the right experts and satisfying them to participate.

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