

# The Role of Digital Marketing in Sustainable Tourism: Evidence from Indonesia

## Abstract

Al Taqdir BADARI 

Management Department, BINUS  
Business School, Bina Nusantara  
University,  
Email, [al.taqdir@binus.ac.id](mailto:al.taqdir@binus.ac.id)  
**Corresponding Author**

Tirta Nugraha MURSITAMA 

International Relations Department,  
Faculty of Humanities, Bina Nusantara  
University, Email, [mursitama@binus.edu](mailto:mursitama@binus.edu)

Amalia E. MAULANA 

Creative Marketing Program,  
Management Department, BINUS  
Business School Master Program, Bina  
Nusantara University, Email,  
[amalia.maulana@binus.ac.id](mailto:amalia.maulana@binus.ac.id)

Yosef Dedy PRADIPTO 

Psychology Department, Faculty of  
Humanities, Bina Nusantara University,  
E-mail, [dedy.pradipto@binus.ac.id](mailto:dedy.pradipto@binus.ac.id)

This study examines the role of digital marketing capabilities in enhancing the performance of public sector organisations and local communities, with a focus on sustainable tourism. It explores how digital marketing capabilities influence the effectiveness and efficiency of organisational operations, the promotion of regional tourism destinations, and overall organisational performance while supporting sustainable tourism principles. A quantitative approach was adopted to test the hypotheses and analyse the relationships between variables. The analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings indicate that digital marketing capabilities significantly enhance destination branding, operational efficiency, and overall organisational performance. Specifically, the results show that digital marketing capabilities positively affect organisational effectiveness and efficiency, the promotion of regional tourism destinations, and the overall performance of local government, while supporting sustainable tourism practices. This study concludes that integrating digital marketing strategies within public sector organisations, particularly in the context of sustainable tourism, can substantially improve operational outcomes and organisational performance. These insights provide valuable guidance for practitioners and policymakers to leverage digital marketing in enhancing public service delivery and promoting sustainable tourism.

**Keywords:** Digital marketing capabilities, sustainable tourism, organization performance, operational efficiency, destination branding

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## Introduction

Public sector organisations, particularly local governments in Indonesia, play a crucial role in managing and promoting tourist destinations and ensuring effective and efficient tourism development. They are responsible for maintaining the competitiveness of tourist destinations in the global market by providing adequate infrastructure (Lasisi et al., 2023), ensuring customer experience and service quality (Samala et al., 2022), and executing effective marketing campaigns. However, public sector organisations face challenges in managing and promoting sustainable tourism destinations, which could provide a competitive advantage for those destinations. Law No. 10 of 2009 on Tourism grants local governments the authority to promote tourism destinations and products within their regions. Furthermore, Law No. 23 of 2014 on Regional Government emphasises that local governments have a vital responsibility in developing tourism, particularly in marketing. Additionally, Government Regulation No. 38 of 2017 on Regional Innovation instructs local governments to innovate continuously to accelerate community welfare. Regional tourism development can be achieved by strengthening the image of destinations and diversifying marketing strategies through digital destination marketing (Kusumastuti et al., 2024; Madzik et al., 2023). Local governments must also create a supportive environment, formulate appropriate tourism policies (Lasisi et al., 2023; Qalati et al., 2024), and ensure good destination governance. Moreover, enhancing the competitiveness of the tourism ecosystem, including accessibility, attractions, and amenities, is crucial (Kusumastuti et al., 2024; Bitakou et al., 2024). Previous studies have highlighted various aspects and challenges in implementing digital marketing in the public sector. Bitakou et al. (2024) found that applying branding strategies in government services can improve communication, citizen trust, and service quality. However, challenges such as centralisation, loss of identity, and lack of brand awareness still need to be addressed. Beyari & Garamoun (2024) emphasised the importance of customer-focused brand management in destination branding, highlighting elements like word-of-mouth, destination loyalty, and social media. They also identified gaps in research on digital strategies, word-of-mouth promotion, and destination loyalty, which are essential for enhancing client relationships. Mistilis et al. (2014) noted that innovative technologies are crucial for visitor engagement but pointed out gaps in understanding the long-term implications of electronic destination marketing strategies. Walsh (1994) argued that marketing strategies can enhance public sector organisational effectiveness but identified challenges in applying marketing techniques tailored to the unique constraints of the public sector.

Existing literature suggests that digital marketing holds substantial potential to enhance public sector performance in the tourism industry. However, its implementation still faces various challenges and controversies. For example, Bitakou et al., (2024) noted challenges related to centralisation and brand awareness, while Mistilis et al. (2014) highlighted the need for proactive visitor engagement through innovative technologies. In this context, it is essential to recognise that digital marketing is not just about using technology but also about how it can be leveraged to achieve strategic organisational goals. Therefore, this study aims to provide deeper insights into the strategic role of digital marketing in public sector organisations and the tourism industry, while also identifying best practices and key challenges in implementing effective digital marketing strategies.



## Research background and hypotheses development

### *Digital marketing capabilities (DMCs)*

Digital marketing capabilities (DMCs) refer to an organization's ability to leverage digital technologies and channels to achieve its marketing objectives. According to Herhausen et al. (2020), DMC refers to firm's ability to execute a cohesive range of digital tasks, whether operational or dynamic, by leveraging digital resources to gain a competitive advantage. DMCs enhance the efficiency of market analysis and social networking related to stakeholders (Wang, 2020), providing firms with the flexibility and responsiveness required to navigate changing market conditions (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000). For local governments and public sector organisations, DMCs can improve market analysis, social networking efficiency, stakeholder engagement, and service delivery. DMCs enable organizations to coordinate relationships and enhance social network efficiency with channel members, customers, and suppliers, ultimately improving organisational performance (Masrianto et al., 2021; Abeysekara et al., 2019). Moreover, they support digital transformation by facilitating effective communication and collaboration across various platforms (Cherrafi et al., 2022). DMCs significantly influence customer behaviour by enhancing customer brand engagement (CBE). They foster positive online shopping experiences and promote customer interactions (Scheinbaum, 2016; Farook & Abeysekara, 2016). Businesses can create competitive advantages by leveraging digital platforms, as demonstrated by the successful implementation of digital marketing strategies across various industries (Porter, 1980). In the tourism context, digital marketing plays a vital role in promoting destinations and engaging potential tourists. Mobile technology facilitates personalised marketing strategies, social media engagement, content marketing, SEO optimisation, and mobile advertising (Srinivaasan & Kabia, 2020). Smartphones serve as powerful digital marketing platforms, providing immediate access to information, booking platforms, and social media channels. Social media marketing enables tourists to share their experiences and influence others, while content marketing and SEO showcase destinations and increase organic traffic to tourism websites.

Previous studies have underscored the importance of digital marketing and DMCs in enhancing business performance. Yasmin et al. (2015) found that digital marketing elements, such as online and social media marketing, are correlated with increased sales. Mkwizu (2019) highlighted the emotional, social, and economic benefits of social media marketing (SMM) in the tourism industry. However, gaps remain in the literature. Mkwizu (2019) identified a lack of understanding regarding audience preferences on social media platforms and the effectiveness of different marketing strategies in industries such as wine. Bitakou et al. (2024) called for further research into the socio-economic impacts of digital competence and sustainable tourism practices on local communities. Another significant gap is the need for comprehensive studies on the long-term implications of digital transformation strategies. Mistilis et al. (2014) emphasised the importance of innovative technologies for visitor engagement but noted the necessity of further research into the evolution of these strategies and how stakeholders can adapt to changing technological landscapes. The literature on DMCs indicates that public sector organisations, including local governments, can harness digital technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Capabilities allow local governments to adjust resource configurations to meet real-time marketing needs, thereby enhancing operational efficiency and service effectiveness. Studies by Labanauskaitė et al. (2020) and Schönherr et al. (2023) demonstrate that digital technologies, such as social media and SEO, enable local governments to reach a broader audience and more effectively promote tourist destinations. Digital marketing has proven to be a powerful tool in destination promotion, especially through targeted advertising and tourist engagement on social media platforms. This reinforces the idea that DMCs can positively influence destination promotion. DMCs not only assist in promotion but also enhance overall organizational performance by improving stakeholder interactions and facilitating more effective communication. Additionally, DMCs enable local governments to adopt technology across various operational processes, leading to increased satisfaction among constituents and stakeholders. Other research, such as that by Masrianto et al., (2021) reveals that DMCs can improve stakeholder interactions, positively impacting the efficiency and effectiveness of organisations. Based on the statements above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1a: Digital marketing capabilities positively affect efficiency and effectiveness.

Hypothesis 1b: Digital marketing capabilities positively affect organizational performance.

Hypothesis 1c: Digital marketing capabilities positively affect destination branding.

DMCs are crucial for improving business performance and customer engagement. Although significant progress has been made in understanding the impact of digital marketing, there are still gaps that warrant further exploration. Future research should address these gaps by investigating the long-term effects of digital transformation strategies, understanding audience preferences, and exploring the socio-economic impacts of digital marketing practices.

### *Organizational performance*

Organisational performance refers to the extent to which an organisation achieves its objectives. This performance is measured using various financial and non-financial metrics, including net income, return on assets (ROA), market share, and product quality (Agarwal & Shaw, 2017; Salamzadeh et al., 2023; Li & Wang, 2024; Amoako et al., 2022). Accurate performance measurement is critical to ensuring effective managerial decision-making (Li & Wang, 2024; Amoako et al., 2022). Several factors influence organisational performance, such as organisational culture, employee commitment, job satisfaction, innovation, and organisational learning (Imran et al., 2022). For example, a strong organisational culture can enhance performance by increasing employee commitment and job satisfaction (Imran et al., 2022). Organisational performance

measurement can be categorised into efficiency, effectiveness, and adaptability Florido-Benítez (2024). Keats (1988) classified performance measurement into multivariate and univariate effectiveness measures. Kaplan & Norton (1996) introduced the balanced scorecard as a tool to measure overall organisational performance, which encompasses four dimensions: internal business processes, customers, growth, and learning. In the context of local governments and communities, performance is essential for ensuring the efficient and effective delivery of public services. Innovation and stakeholder collaboration can significantly enhance public sector organisational (PSO) performance (Kennedy, 2019). Additionally, leveraging digital technologies and digital marketing capabilities (DMCs) can improve social network efficiency (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000; Masrianto et al., 2021; Jaka et al., 2022), market analysis (Walsh, 1994), and stakeholder engagement (Mistilis et al., 2014; Wang, 2020).

Both external and internal factors shape corporate and organisational performance. Comprehensive performance measurement and effective stakeholder collaboration are critical for improving performance, especially in public sector organisations such as local governments. To better understand these relationships, the following conceptual model has been developed. This model illustrates the hypothesised connections between digital marketing capability, efficiency and effectiveness, and organisational performance within the context of regional tourism promotion. Kaplan and Norton (1996) asserted that efficiency and effectiveness are key components of the balanced scorecard, which assesses overall organisational performance. Efficiency refers to the optimal use of resources, while effectiveness measures the extent to which organisational goals are achieved—both are indicators of successful organisational performance (Keats, 1988). Previous research by Walsh (1994) also demonstrated that improvements in operational efficiency contribute to enhanced organisational performance, particularly in the public sector. Based on the aforementioned concepts, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 2: Efficiency and effectiveness positively affect organisational performance.

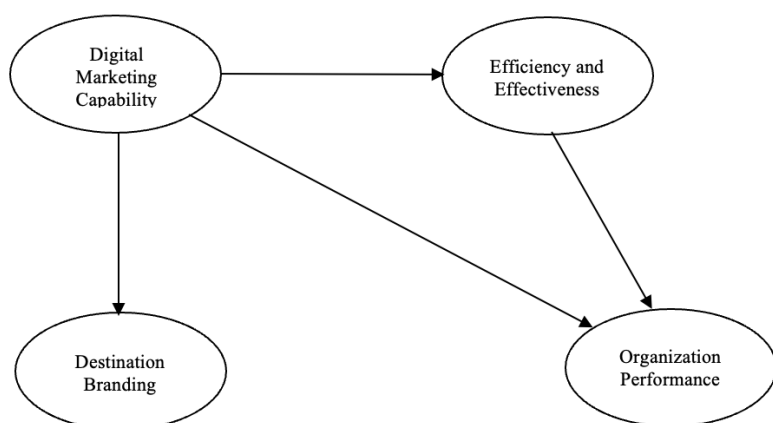


Figure 1: Conceptual model

### Materials and methods

A quantitative approach was employed in this study to test hypotheses and examine causal relationships among variables within the digital marketing capability model. Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Lisrel software. SEM was selected for its ability to test complex relationships among variables and evaluate the overall fit of the model. Furthermore, SEM is valuable for analysing data from a measurement theory perspective (Hair et al., 2019). The analysis process involved several stages, including reliability and validity tests, to ensure that the instruments accurately and consistently measured the intended constructs. Table 1 summarises the variables, dimensions, and indicators used in this study. Data from 185 respondents were collected between September 2023 and April 2024 through an online questionnaire distributed to representatives from various sectors, including local government, local communities, village leaders, tourism awareness groups, village tourism managers, and tour guides. The data collection process was conducted meticulously, with respondents systematically selected to ensure they accurately represented the target population. This approach ensured that all relevant groups involved in the management and promotion of village tourism were represented, allowing the data to provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the dynamics and conditions on the ground. The study utilized a 1-5 Likert scale, where 1 indicated "Strongly Disagree," 2 "Disagree," 3 "Neutral," 4 "Agree," and 5 "Strongly Agree." This method was employed to offer a deeper understanding of digital marketing effectiveness and the interaction of related variables within the context of village tourism.



**Table 1: Variables, dimensions, and indicators**

Variable	Dimension	Indicators
Destination Branding (DB)	Destination Brand Identity	1. Logos and slogans are crucial elements of a destination brand's identity.
		2. Visual imagery shapes perceptions of the destination brand.
		3. Local values and culture are key components of a destination brand's identity.
		4. Uniqueness and differentiation are essential characteristics of a destination brand's identity.
	Marketing Communication	5. Advertising campaigns play a significant role in marketing communication.
		6. Social media presence enhances destination marketing communication.
		7. Publicity and media relations build a positive brand image for destinations.
		8. Participation in exhibitions and events is an effective strategy in destination marketing communication.
Digital Marketing Capability (DMC)	Digital Marketing Strategy	9. Digital campaign planning is critical to digital marketing strategies.
		10. Utilizing social media is a key component of digital marketing.
		11. Customer data analysis helps understand customer needs and preferences.
		12. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) improves online visibility.
	Technology and Infrastructure	13. Content management platforms facilitate effective digital content management.
		14. Using web analytics tools is essential for understanding website performance.
		15. Integrating technology into operations improves business efficiency.
		16. Data security and privacy are crucial aspects of technology and infrastructure.
Efficiency and Effectiveness (EE)	Operational Efficiency	17. Cost reduction is an important indicator of operational efficiency.
		18. Optimal resource utilization helps achieve efficiency.
		19. Fast response times are key to operational efficiency.
		20. Increased productivity indicates good operational efficiency.
	Outcome Effectiveness	21. Meeting sales targets demonstrates result effectiveness.
		22. Customer satisfaction is a primary measure of result effectiveness.
		23. Product or service quality determines the level of result effectiveness.
		24. Competitive advantage is evidence of result effectiveness.
Organization Performance (OP)	Financial Performance	25. Revenue growth indicates strong financial performance.
		26. Effective cost management is key to healthy financial performance.
		27. Profitability is a major indicator of financial performance.
		28. Return on Investment (ROI) shows the success rate of investment returns.
	Non-Financial Performance	29. Employee satisfaction reflects positive non-financial performance.
		30. Company reputation is an important asset in non-financial performance.
		31. Product innovation indicates strong non-financial performance.
		32. Relationships with stakeholders are crucial to non-financial performance.

## Results

### Validity and reliability testing

The validity test correlates the value of an indicator's statement with the total construct value. In this study, the Smart PLS software was used to assess the outer loading values of each indicator. An instrument is considered valid if the outer loading value exceeds 0.7, although values between 0.5 and 0.6 are deemed acceptable for preliminary research. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value must be greater than 0.5. The AVE measures the extent to which the latent variable represents the original data scores; the higher the AVE value, the better it reflects the indicators measuring the latent variable. The AVE should be above 0.5 to demonstrate good convergent validity. Based on the initial data analysis, it was found that all indicators are valid (outer loading > 0.5), allowing for further data processing, including reliability testing. In SEM-PLS methodology, the reliability of an instrument is assessed using Composite Reliability. This metric evaluates both internal consistency and Cronbach's Alpha. The same threshold applies for both Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha, with a value of >0.7 considered reliable. As shown in Table 2, the Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables exceed 0.7, indicating that the research instrument is reliable and meets the necessary criteria.

### Discriminant validity testing

The next step involves testing discriminant validity, which examines the correlation between a construct and other variables. This is done using reflective indicators assessed through cross-loadings of measurements with the construct. A construct's correlation with its own indicators should be higher than its correlation with other constructs, demonstrating that the latent variable predicts its indicators more effectively than those of other variables.

### Path coefficient testing

The first step in evaluating the relationship between variables is analyzing the path coefficient, which indicates the direction of the relationship between variables. This analysis is guided by the hypotheses, with the coefficient value calculated using the t-test via bootstrapping in Smart PLS. The results show that the path coefficient values are positive, suggesting a positive relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables. This finding supports the theoretical foundations of the research hypotheses.

### R<sup>2</sup> testing

Following the path coefficient analysis, the R<sup>2</sup> value is examined to explain the influence of endogenous variables on exogenous variables. R<sup>2</sup> values are categorized as strong (R<sup>2</sup> > 0.60), moderate (R<sup>2</sup> > 0.33), or weak (R<sup>2</sup> > 0.19). The model developed in this study falls into the moderate category (0.33 < R<sup>2</sup> < 0.60).

### Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using a two-tailed t-test with a criterion of 1.96 at a significance level of 0.05. The t-table value serves as a benchmark for accepting or rejecting the hypotheses. The bootstrap method results in Smart PLS show that all hypotheses are accepted, as the t-test values exceed the t-table value of 1.96 at the 0.05 significance level.

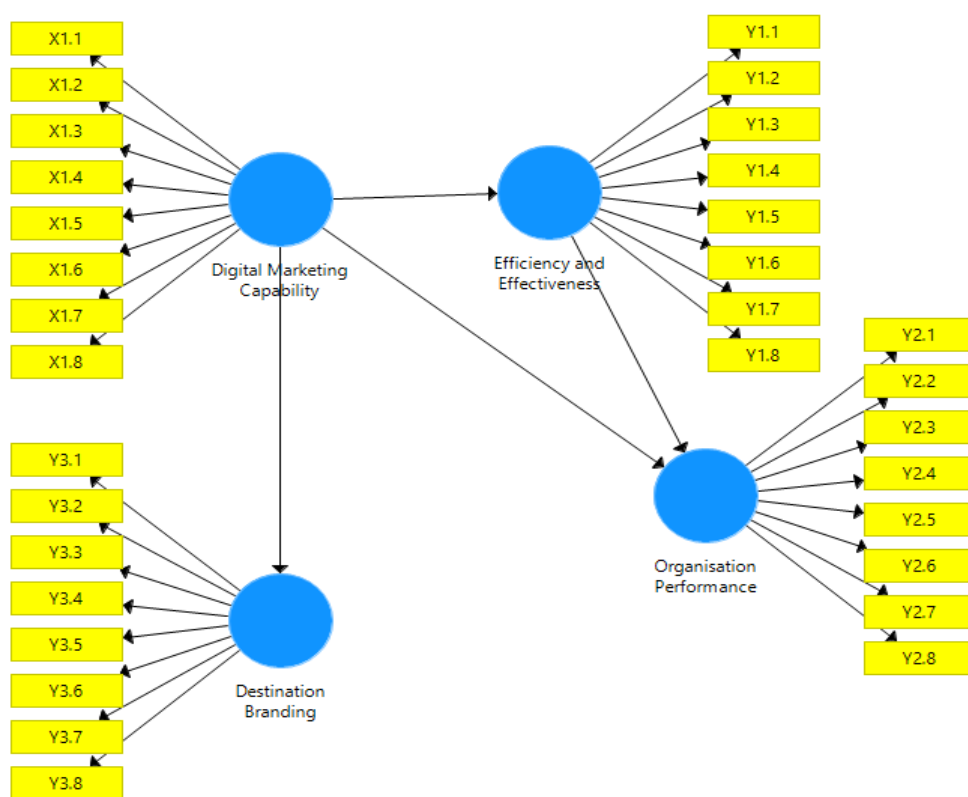
**Table 2: Measurement model testing results**

Variable	Indicators	Code	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (C.R.)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Destination Branding	Destination Brand Identity	Y3.1	0.740	0.947	0.957	0.735
	Marketing Communication	Y3.2	0.837			
Digital Marketing Capability	Digital Marketing Strategy	X1.1	0.818	0.914	0.931	0.627
	Technology and Infrastructure	X1.2	0.849			
Efficiency and Effectiveness	Operational Efficiency	Y1.1	0.711	0.910	0.926	0.613
	Outcome Effectiveness	Y1.2	0.876			
Organization Performance	Financial Performance	Y2.1	0.859	0.944	0.953	0.718
	Non-Financial Performance	Y2.2	0.880			

**Table 3: Hypothesis testing**

No	Hypothesis	Coefficient Estimate	t-Stat	R <sup>2</sup>	Hypothesis	Conclusion
1	DMC --> DB	0.746*	22.824	0.556	H3	Accepted
2	DMC --> EE	0.710*	17.020	0.503	H1	Accepted
3	DMC --> OP	0.232*	9.236	0.807	H2	Accepted
4	EE --> OP	0.719*	30.256	0.807	H2	Accepted

\*Significant in  $\alpha = 0.05$  (t table 1.96)



**Figure 2: Structural model analysis**

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the relationship between digital marketing capability, operational efficiency and effectiveness, and organisational performance in the context of sustainable tourism. This section presents an analysis and interpretation of the research findings based on the proposed hypotheses, discusses their implications, and highlights the challenges and limitations of the research design.

**Digital marketing capability and efficiency and effectiveness**

The hypothesis that digital marketing capability affects operational efficiency and effectiveness is supported, with a coefficient of 0.710 and a t-statistic of 17.020. This result indicates that the adoption of digital technologies optimises operational processes, reduces costs, and enhances productivity. These findings align with the initial hypothesis that digital marketing contributes to improving operational efficiency and reducing carbon footprints—an important consideration in sustainable tourism. This is supported by Li et al. (2020), who highlight the significance of environmental awareness and digital financial inclusion in enhancing efficiency. However, challenges remain in understanding the interactions between digital platforms and the variability of their effects across different locations. Future research should focus on long-term analyses and the specific impacts of emerging technologies.



### ***Digital marketing capability and organizational performance***

The findings demonstrate that digital marketing capability positively influences organisational performance, with a coefficient of 0.232 and a t-statistic of 9.236. This result supports the hypothesis that investment in digital marketing improves organizational outcomes, such as increased sales, enhanced customer satisfaction, and expanded market share. It underscores the vital role of digital marketing in promoting both the economic and operational sustainability of tourism destinations. Research by Zhang et al. (2024) aligns with these results, highlighting the impact of digital transformation on supply chain performance. However, gaps remain in understanding the specific tools and strategies involved, and controversies exist regarding the optimal level of investment required for digital transformation. Future research could explore the role of emerging digital tools, such as blockchain and big data analytics, in enhancing supply chain transparency.

### ***Digital marketing capability and destination branding***

The results indicate that the hypothesis regarding the positive relationship between digital marketing capability and destination branding is supported, with a coefficient of 0.746 and a t-statistic of 22.824. This confirms that effective digital marketing strategies, including social media and search engine optimisation (SEO), significantly enhance a destination's brand identity. The findings reinforce the hypothesis that strengthening destination branding through digital marketing can improve a destination's image and attract visitors who are increasingly aware of environmental and social issues. Supporting this, Bitakou et al. (2024) and Beyari & Garamoun (2024) provide empirical evidence on the role of social media and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) in fostering brand loyalty and shaping consumer purchase intentions. Nonetheless, limitations in understanding audience preferences, the effectiveness of various strategies, and controversies surrounding the use of influencers suggest the need for further research. Tailoring digital marketing strategies to specific audience characteristics and platforms is essential for optimising their impact.

### ***Efficiency and effectiveness on organisational performance***

The hypothesis that operational efficiency and effectiveness influence organisational performance is validated, with a coefficient of 0.719 and a t-statistic of 30.256. Enhanced operational efficiency contributes significantly to improved organizational performance by supporting better resource management and reducing environmental impacts. This finding highlights the role of operational efficiency in managing environmental and social concerns within sustainable tourism. Kusumastuti et al. (2024) suggest that innovation and smart tourism development contribute to increased efficiency and organizational success. However, the study faces limitations in analysing long-term effects and the use of a single case study design. Future research should incorporate broader and longitudinal studies to provide a more comprehensive understanding.

## **Discussion**

The findings from this study reveal that digital marketing capability significantly impacts various critical aspects of organizations and tourism destinations, particularly in relation to sustainable tourism. Digital marketing capability improves operational efficiency and effectiveness, with a coefficient value of 0.710 and a t-statistic of 17.020. The use of digital technology in marketing optimises operational processes and reduces costs, aligning with the principles of sustainable tourism. High operational efficiency can mitigate environmental impact and enhance social responsibility, contributing to reduced carbon footprints and increased community support. For instance, Li et al. (2022) emphasised the importance of digitalisation and environmental awareness in enhancing operational outcomes, which aligns with the findings of this study. Furthermore, operational efficiency and effectiveness significantly enhance organisational performance, with a coefficient value of 0.719 and a t-statistic of 30.256. Technological improvements in operational efficiency reduce resource consumption and environmental impact, supporting sustainable tourism by fostering more environmentally responsible practices. This is consistent with the study by Li et al. (2020) which emphasised the importance of digitalisation in improving operational efficiency and environmental awareness to support better operational outcomes. Technological improvements in operational efficiency reduce resource consumption and environmental impact, supporting sustainable tourism by promoting more environmentally responsible practices Kusumastuti et al. (2024). Digital marketing capability positively influences organizational performance, with a coefficient value of 0.232 and a t-statistic of 9.236. Organisations that develop digital marketing capabilities experience improvements in sales, customer satisfaction, and market share. In the context of sustainable tourism, this allows organisations to achieve economic benefits while implementing practices that support environmental and social sustainability. Digital marketing capability enhances destination branding, a key factor in promoting sustainable tourism. With a coefficient value of 0.746 and a t-statistic of 22.824, the results demonstrate that investment in digital marketing effectively strengthens a destination's brand identity. This is vital for sustainable tourism, as robust branding can increase awareness of environmentally friendly practices and support for local communities. Previous research by Yasmin et al. (2015) also showed that digital marketing elements, such as online and social media marketing, are linked to increased sales, supporting the findings of this study.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study demonstrate that digital marketing capabilities significantly impact operational efficiency, organisational performance, and destination branding, particularly within the context of sustainable tourism. Effective digital marketing strategies, such as social media and SEO, strengthen a destination's brand identity, consistent with the findings of



Bitakou et al. (2024) who emphasized the role of social media in building brand loyalty. Additionally, prior research has shown that e-WOM significantly influences consumer perceptions and purchase intentions, as supported by Beyari & Garamoun (2024). The implementation of digital marketing capabilities also enhances operational efficiency, aligning with the work of Li et al (2022) who stressed the importance of digitalisation and environmental awareness in improving operational outcomes. Digital marketing adoption helps organizations reduce costs and carbon footprints, a key aspect of sustainable tourism. Moreover, the study supports the hypothesis that digital marketing capabilities positively affect organisational performance, particularly in terms of sales, customer satisfaction, and market share. Zhang et al. (2024) found that digital transformation plays a crucial role in enhancing supply chain performance, consistent with the present findings. Nevertheless, challenges remain in understanding the most effective digital strategies, as well as debates over the required investment level for optimal digital transformation. In the context of sustainable tourism, digital marketing capabilities also have significant implications for managing environmental and social impacts. Improved operational efficiency can reduce resource use and mitigate environmental impacts, as demonstrated by Kusumastuti et al. (2024) regarding smart tourism innovations. Overall, this study underscores the importance of digital marketing capabilities in enhancing organisational performance and promoting sustainability in tourism. Investing in digital technologies can help tourism organisations strengthen their brand identity and achieve broader sustainability goals.

This study reinforces the theory that digital marketing capability is pivotal in destination branding, with results showing that strategies such as SEO and social media can significantly improve a destination's brand identity. These findings align with existing literature that emphasises the importance of digital marketing in building and reinforcing destination brands, as noted by Bitakou et al. (2024). Furthermore, the research supports the theory that digital marketing can enhance operational efficiency, reduce costs, and increase productivity, consistent with the views of Kusumastuti et al. (2024). The positive relationship between digital marketing and organisational performance also validates the theory that investment in digital marketing enhances business outcomes, including sales and customer satisfaction. This reflects organisational performance theories focused on sustainability and innovation, as outlined by Li & Wang (2024). Lastly, the study confirms that operational efficiency contributes significantly to organisational performance, supporting the theory that increased efficiency enhances resource management and environmental impact. From a practical perspective, the findings provide valuable insights for tourism practitioners regarding the implementation of digital marketing strategies to strengthen destination branding. Destinations seeking to improve their image should leverage social media, SEO, and digital analytics to attract environmentally and socially conscious visitors. The results also highlight the importance of integrating digital technologies into operations to boost efficiency, increase productivity, reduce costs, and minimise carbon footprints. Organisations are encouraged to adopt digital marketing to improve performance in sales, customer satisfaction, and resource management. To better manage environmental and social impacts, organisations should focus on enhancing operational efficiency. Furthermore, the study emphasises the need for further research to explore the long-term effectiveness of new digital technologies and cross-cultural practices in digital marketing strategies.

However, the limitations of this study, including its single case study design and restricted data, highlight the need for further research, such as longitudinal studies and broader contextual analyses. Future research should explore how digital marketing can specifically promote sustainable tourism practices. Investigating its role in supporting sustainability initiatives and proposing strategies for integrating sustainability into marketing campaigns could provide additional insights. Revisiting core ideas with a new understanding of digital marketing's impact on sustainable tourism will open opportunities to develop more holistic strategies that benefit local communities and the environment.

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