

The Influence of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance through Customer Engagement among SMEs in Kampar Regency

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ABSTRACT

The development of digital technology has transformed the way micro, small, and medium enterprises (SMEs) conduct marketing activities and build relationships with customers. In Kampar Regency, the utilization of digital technology provides opportunities for SMEs to expand their market reach, increase customer interaction, and strengthen business competitiveness. However, the success of digital marketing is not solely determined by the use of digital media, but also by SMEs' ability to manage digital marketing activities, implement marketing innovations, and develop customer engagement. This study aims to analyze the influence of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance through Customer Engagement among SMEs in Kampar Regency. This research employs a quantitative approach using a survey method. The research data are collected through questionnaires distributed to SME owners who meet the established research criteria in Kampar Regency. The sampling technique uses purposive sampling, while the variables are measured using a Likert scale. Data analysis is conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), including descriptive analysis, validity testing, reliability testing, classical assumption tests, linear regression analysis, t-tests, coefficient of determination, and indirect effect analysis to examine the role of Customer Engagement as an intervening variable. This study is expected to provide empirical evidence regarding the importance of digital marketing capability and marketing innovation in improving SME marketing performance, both directly and through enhanced customer engagement. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for SMEs in developing marketing strategies that are more adaptive, innovative, and customer-oriented in the era of digital transformation.

Keywords: Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, Customer Engagement, Marketing Performance, SMEs, Kampar Regency.

1. Introduction

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in supporting local economic activities through employment creation, income generation, and entrepreneurial development. The rapid development of digital technology has significantly changed the way SMEs conduct their marketing activities. Consumers are increasingly accustomed to searching for product information through digital media, communicating with sellers through online platforms, providing reviews, and making purchases through various digital channels. This condition requires SMEs to

move beyond conventional marketing practices and develop their ability to utilize technology to reach and interact with their target markets.

These changes require SMEs not merely to use social media or e-commerce platforms, but also to develop the ability to manage digital resources effectively. This ability is reflected in Digital Marketing Capability, which refers to an enterprise's ability to utilize knowledge, technology, resources, and digital channels to conduct marketing activities and create value for customers. Digital Marketing Capability has become increas-

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ingly important because the availability of digital technology does not automatically lead to improved marketing performance. SMEs need to understand how to select appropriate digital platforms, create relevant content, utilize customer information, communicate digitally, and evaluate the effectiveness of their marketing activities.

The relationship between digital marketing capability and marketing performance has received support from previous studies. Jaya et al. (2025), for example, one study examined 338 SMEs in Madura and found that digital marketing, digital orientation, marketing capability, and information technology capability had positive and significant effects on marketing performance. These findings indicate that capabilities related to marketing and technology are important factors in improving SME marketing outcomes.

However, improving marketing performance does not depend solely on the ability to utilize technology. The digital environment has also intensified competition among products and businesses, requiring SMEs to develop more creative and relevant marketing approaches. In this context, Marketing Innovation becomes an important factor. Marketing innovation can be reflected in changes in product promotion methods, the use of different communication media, the development of service methods, new forms of market offerings, and the adoption of marketing approaches that are more responsive to changes in consumer behavior. Thus, Digital Marketing Capability provides SMEs with the ability to utilize technology, while Marketing Innovation enables them to transform such capabilities into more valuable and relevant marketing approaches.

Previous research has also demonstrated the relevance of Marketing Innovation to SME marketing performance. Jayanti and Darma, in their study of 200 SMEs using Balimall.id, examined the relationships among social media promotion, customer engagement, marketing innovation, and marketing performance, with e-marketplace as a mediating variable. Their findings indicated that Marketing Innovation significantly affected Marketing Performance. However, the study also found that Customer Engagement did not have a direct significant effect on Marketing Performance. This finding is important because it suggests that customer engagement does not necessarily translate directly into improved marketing performance in every business context.

Customer Engagement has become increasingly important in the digital marketing environment. Consumers are no longer merely recipients of marketing messages; they can also comment on content, share information, provide reviews, follow business accounts, send direct messages, and participate in promotional activities. Customer Engagement represents the extent to which customers become cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally involved in their interactions with a business. For SMEs, such engagement can provide valuable information about customer needs while also creating opportunities to develop stronger and more sustainable relationships with the market.

Accordingly, the influence of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance may not occur only through direct relationships. Digital capabilities and marketing innovations may first improve the quality of interactions between SMEs and their customers, which subsequently increases Customer Engagement and contributes to improved Marketing Performance. From this perspective, Customer Engagement can function as a mechanism that explains how organizational capabilities and marketing activities are translated into marketing outcomes.

Recent studies further support the importance of this mechanism. Qomariah et al. (2026) examined the relationships among Digital Marketing Capability, Market Orientation, Customer Engagement, and Marketing Performance among 250 owners and managers of culinary and fashion SMEs in East Java. The findings indicated that Digital Marketing Capability and Market Orientation influenced Customer Engagement and Marketing Performance, while Customer Engagement also played a mediating role in the relationship between these factors and performance.

Similar evidence was reported by Octaviani et al. (2026) who examined Digital Marketing Capability and Data Literacy in relation to Marketing Performance among SMEs in Kubu Raya Regency, with Customer Engagement as a mediating variable. Their findings further emphasized the importance of Customer Engagement in explaining how digital capabilities can be translated into marketing performance.

Nevertheless, these studies leave room for further development. Oktaviani et al. (2024) incorporated Market Orientation as another strategic variable alongside Digital Marketing Capability, whereas Rahmi & Firman (2025) examined Data Literacy as an additional independent variable. Therefore, the role of Marketing Innovation as a complementary internal marketing factor alongside Digital Marketing Capability in influencing Customer Engagement and Marketing Performance still warrants further investigation. Furthermore, the findings of Jayanti and Darma regarding the relationship between Customer Engagement and Marketing Performance indicate that this relationship may vary across business contexts and therefore deserves further empirical examination.

The research gap is also evident from differences in geographical contexts. Previous studies on Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Performance have been conducted in regions such as Madura, East Java, Kubu Raya, and Kendari, each characterized by different business environments and SME sectors. For example, Novita & Laij (2024) examined Digital Marketing Capability and Customer Engagement in relation to marketing performance among culinary SMEs in Kendari City and found a positive influence of Digital Marketing Capability on Marketing Performance. However, findings from one geographical context cannot automatically be generalized to other regions because digital capabilities, consumer characteristics, types of businesses, com-

petitive intensity, and patterns of customer interaction may differ across locations.

Based on the existing literature, three main research gaps can be identified. First, although previous studies have established a relationship between Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Performance, further investigation is needed to understand the mechanism through which this capability is translated into marketing outcomes through customer engagement. Second, previous findings concerning Marketing Innovation and Customer Engagement have not been entirely consistent, notably regarding the contribution of Customer Engagement to Marketing Performance. Third, the integration of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation as antecedents, Customer Engagement as an intervening variable, and Marketing Performance as an outcome can still be further examined, particularly in the context of SMEs in Kampar Regency.

Although previous studies have examined the relationships among Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, Customer Engagement, and Marketing Performance, several gaps remain. First, prior studies generally investigated Digital Marketing Capability together with variables such as market orientation, entrepreneurial orientation, or data literacy, while the integration of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation as complementary internal capabilities has received limited attention. Second, previous findings regarding the role of Customer Engagement in improving Marketing Performance remain inconsistent, as some studies reported significant effects while others found insignificant relationships. Third, most existing studies were conducted in different geographical and business contexts, such as East Java, Madura, Kendari, and Kubu Raya, which may have different characteristics from SMEs in Kampar Regency. Therefore, this study offers novelty by developing an integrated model that examines the direct and indirect effects of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance through Customer Engagement in the context of SMEs in Kampar Regency. This model is expected to provide a more thorough understanding of how digital capabilities and marketing innovation can be transformed into marketing outcomes through customer engagement.

Based on these research gaps, this study examines Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation as antecedent variables, Customer Engagement as an intervening variable, and Marketing Performance as the dependent variable. The proposed model focuses on both the direct effects of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance and their indirect effects through Customer Engagement.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the effects of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Customer Engagement and Marketing Performance, as well as examine the mediating role of Customer Engagement in the relationship between Digital Marketing Capability,

Marketing Innovation, and Marketing Performance among SMEs in Kampar Regency.

Based on the proposed model and the identified research gaps, seven hypotheses are developed. H1 and H2 examine the effects of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Customer Engagement. H3 and H4 examine their direct effects on Marketing Performance, while H5 examines the effect of Customer Engagement on Marketing Performance. H6 and H7 examine the mediating role of Customer Engagement in the relationships between Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Performance and between Marketing Innovation and Marketing Performance, respectively.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Digital Marketing Capability

Digital Marketing Capability refers to the ability of SMEs to utilize resources, knowledge, technology, and digital channels to conduct marketing activities effectively. This capability is not merely associated with having a presence on social media or e-commerce platforms, but also includes the ability to integrate digital technology into marketing processes, understand customer characteristics, develop relevant content, manage digital communication, and evaluate marketing outcomes (Yulita et al., 2026).

In an increasingly digitalized business environment, Digital Marketing Capability has become an important strategic resource for SMEs. Digital technology provides access to broader markets, but its benefits depend largely on the ability of business owners and managers to utilize and manage it effectively. SMEs with stronger digital capabilities are more likely to respond quickly to changes in consumer behavior, develop more personalized marketing communication, and utilize market information to support marketing decisions.

Digital Marketing Capability can also be viewed as a dynamic capability because SMEs need to continuously adapt their marketing strategies to technological developments and changing customer needs. The use of social media, e-commerce platforms, search engines, messaging applications, and other digital channels requires the ability to select appropriate platforms and integrate them with marketing objectives. Therefore, Digital Marketing Capability does not simply reflect the extent to which technology is used, but also the organization's ability to transform technology into value-creating marketing activities (Weyna et al., 2026).

In this study, Digital Marketing Capability is positioned as an independent variable that is expected to enhance Customer Engagement and Marketing Performance. The indicators may include the ability to use digital media for marketing, the ability to create digital content, the ability to manage digital customer communication, the ability to utilize customer information, and the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of digital marketing activities.

2.2 Marketing Innovation

Marketing Innovation refers to the implementation of new marketing methods or the improvement of existing marketing approaches. Such innovation may involve changes in how products are communicated, the use of different marketing channels, new promotional approaches, improvements in marketing services, and the development of new ways to create customer experiences (Mulyono & Ramadani, 2026).

For SMEs, Marketing Innovation is particularly important because limited resources require business owners to identify effective marketing approaches that are appropriate for their target markets. Innovation does not necessarily mean creating something completely new. Changes in product presentation, the use of interactive content, influencer-based promotion, digital promotional programs, live streaming, and more personalized communication can all represent forms of marketing innovation (Nurudin, 2023).

Marketing Innovation is also closely related to an SME's ability to understand changes in consumer behavior. As consumers become increasingly active in digital environments, one-way marketing approaches may become less effective. SMEs need to develop activities that enable customers to interact, respond, share experiences, and participate in brand-related communication.

In this study, Marketing Innovation is positioned as an independent variable that is expected to enhance Customer Engagement and Marketing Performance. Its indicators may include innovation in promotional methods, marketing media, marketing communication, marketing services, and the ability to develop marketing approaches that differ from previous practices.

2.3 Customer Engagement

Customer Engagement refers to the involvement of customers in interactions with a business or brand. In digital environments, engagement is not limited to purchasing behavior but can also be reflected through activities such as commenting on content, liking posts, sharing information, following business accounts, providing reviews, asking questions, and participating in promotional activities (Rahman et al., 2025).

Customer Engagement encompasses more than transactional relationships. Customer involvement can take cognitive, emotional, and behavioral forms. Therefore, highly engaged customers do not merely purchase products but may also contribute to information dissemination and the development of long-term relationships with businesses.

For SMEs, Customer Engagement can become an important asset because customer interactions generate information regarding market needs and preferences. Comments, questions, reviews, and customer responses to marketing content can provide valuable input for improving products and marketing activities. Furthermore, customers with high levels of engagement may become sources of recommendations and elec-

tronic word-of-mouth through their digital networks.

In this study, Customer Engagement is positioned as an intervening variable. It is used to explain the potential mechanism through which Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation influence Marketing Performance. Indicators of Customer Engagement may include customer attention toward business content or information, emotional involvement, interaction with the business, participation in digital activities, and customers' willingness to share or recommend product information.

2.4 Marketing Performance

Marketing Performance refers to the extent to which an organization achieves its marketing objectives and market-related outcomes. For SMEs, Marketing Performance may be reflected in sales growth, customer growth, market expansion, customer retention, and improvements in competitive market position (Ratnawati & Hanoky, 2023).

Marketing Performance does not only represent direct financial outcomes but can also reflect market achievements generated through marketing activities. In a digital environment, marketing success may be demonstrated through the ability of SMEs to acquire new customers, retain existing customers, expand market reach, increase sales, and establish stronger relationships with consumers.

Digitalization provides SMEs with opportunities to improve Marketing Performance because communication costs can become more efficient while market reach can be expanded. However, these benefits depend heavily on the SME's ability to manage digital technology and develop relevant marketing activities.

In this study, Marketing Performance is the dependent variable. Its indicators may include sales growth, customer growth, market expansion, customer retention, and perceived marketing performance compared with previous periods or competitors.

2.5 The Influence of Digital Marketing Capability on Customer Engagement

Digital Marketing Capability enables SMEs to develop more intensive and interactive communication with customers. The ability to manage social media, create relevant content, respond to customers, and utilize customer information can increase opportunities for interaction between businesses and consumers.

When SMEs are capable of providing relevant information and responding quickly to customers, consumers have more opportunities to participate in communication. Therefore, higher Digital Marketing Capability is expected to increase Customer Engagement.

From the perspective of the dynamic capability view, Digital Marketing Capability represents an SME's ability to adapt and utilize digital resources to respond to changing customer needs. This capability can strengthen Customer Engagement because digital tools provide SMEs with opportunities to communicate,

respond, and interact with customers more effectively. Thus, Digital Marketing Capability is expected to influence Customer Engagement by enabling SMEs to create more relevant and interactive customer experiences.

Akbar et al. (2025) found that Digital Marketing Capability influences Customer Engagement among SMEs. This finding supports the view that digital capabilities are not merely tools for delivering promotional messages but can also function as mechanisms for developing customer interaction and engagement.

H1: Digital Marketing Capability has a positive and significant effect on Customer Engagement.

2.6 The Influence of Marketing Innovation on Customer Engagement

Marketing Innovation can create more attractive marketing experiences for consumers. The use of new promotional methods, interactive content, live streaming, personalized communication, and innovative service approaches can stimulate customers to interact with businesses (Faiza & Rachman, 2024).

Marketing Innovation can strengthen Customer Engagement because innovative marketing activities provide customers with new and more interactive ways to communicate with businesses. From a customer-oriented perspective, marketing activities that are relevant, distinctive, and responsive to customer needs can encourage customers to participate more actively. Therefore, Marketing Innovation is theoretically expected to increase Customer Engagement.

Marketing innovation also enables SMEs to adapt their communication strategies to consumers who are increasingly active in digital environments. When customers receive experiences that are relevant and distinctive, they may become more likely to respond, comment, share content, or participate in marketing activities.

Therefore, Marketing Innovation is expected to have a positive relationship with Customer Engagement.

H2: Marketing Innovation has a positive and significant effect on Customer Engagement.

2.7 The Influence of Digital Marketing Capability on Marketing Performance

Digital Marketing Capability enables SMEs to utilize technology more effectively to support marketing activities. The ability to manage digital platforms, create content, understand customers, and evaluate marketing outcomes can improve the effectiveness of marketing activities (Muhriza et al., 2024).

As digital capabilities improve, SMEs have greater opportunities to reach new customers, maintain communication with existing customers, increase product visibility, and expand their markets. These conditions may ultimately contribute to improved Marketing Performance.

Ilahiyah & Damayanti (2025) found that capabilities related to digital marketing and technology positively affected SME Marketing Performance. Achmad & Sidharta (2026) also reported a positive influence of Digital Marketing Capability

on Marketing Performance among culinary SMEs.

H3: Digital Marketing Capability has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance.

2.8 The Influence of Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance

Marketing Innovation enables SMEs to develop marketing approaches that are more relevant to changing consumer needs and competitive conditions. Innovation can help businesses differentiate their products from competitors and create additional value through more attractive marketing approaches (Novita & Lajj, 2024).

When SMEs are able to implement marketing innovation consistently, their opportunities to acquire new customers and retain existing customers may increase. This may ultimately contribute to sales growth, market expansion, and improved Marketing Performance.

Research by Jayanti and Darma indicates that Marketing Innovation influences Marketing Performance. This finding provides empirical support for the importance of innovation in marketing activities as a factor contributing to SME marketing outcomes.

H4: Marketing Innovation has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance.

2.9 The Influence of Customer Engagement on Marketing Performance

Customer Engagement enables SMEs to establish closer relationships with consumers. Highly engaged customers do not merely conduct transactions but may also provide feedback, share information, post reviews, and recommend products to others (Siregar et al., 2026).

These activities can provide marketing benefits to SMEs because customers can become part of the process of disseminating product information. Strong engagement can also help businesses understand consumer needs and adjust their marketing activities accordingly. Therefore, Customer Engagement is theoretically expected to contribute positively to Marketing Performance. This relationship can be explained by the value created through customer participation. Customers who actively interact with SMEs can provide feedback, share information, and recommend products, which may help SMEs strengthen customer relationships and expand market reach. Consequently, higher Customer Engagement may contribute to improved Marketing Performance. However, previous research has produced inconsistent findings. Jayanti and Darma found that Customer Engagement did not have a direct significant effect on Marketing Performance. This difference provides an important basis for retesting the relationship in the context of SMEs in Kampar Regency.

H5: Customer Engagement has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance.

2.10 Customer Engagement as an Intervening Variable

Customer Engagement can function as a mechanism linking marketing capabilities and activities to marketing outcomes. Digital Marketing Capability enables SMEs to establish communication and interaction channels with customers, while Marketing Innovation creates marketing approaches that can encourage consumers to participate. These interactions may subsequently generate higher levels of Customer Engagement (Hasibuan et al., 2025).

The mediation relationship can be understood as a process in which organizational capabilities and marketing activities are translated into customer responses before generating marketing outcomes. Digital Marketing Capability provides the resources and ability to manage digital interactions, while Marketing Innovation provides new approaches for attracting and involving customers. These factors can increase Customer Engagement, which in turn can contribute to Marketing Performance. Therefore, Customer Engagement is proposed as an intervening mechanism linking Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation to Marketing Performance.

Customer Engagement can then contribute to Marketing Performance through increased interaction, recommendations, loyalty, feedback, and purchase opportunities. Thus, the effects of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance may occur through Customer Engagement.

Nurhapizah et al. (2024) provide empirical support for the role of Customer Engagement as a mediator between digital capabilities and performance. However, this study extends the existing model by incorporating Marketing Innovation as a second independent variable. Based on this argument, the mediation hypotheses are formulated as follows:

H6: Customer Engagement mediates the effect of Digital Marketing Capability on Marketing Performance.

H7: Customer Engagement mediates the effect of Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study describes the relationships among Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, Customer Engagement, and Marketing Performance among SMEs in Kampar Regency. Digital Marketing Capability (X1) and Marketing Innovation (X2) are positioned as independent variables, Customer Engagement (Z) as the intervening variable, and Marketing Performance (Y) as the dependent variable.

Digital Marketing Capability refers to the ability of SMEs to utilize digital platforms, digital information, communication technologies, and digital marketing resources to support their marketing activities. SMEs with stronger digital marketing

capabilities are expected to interact more effectively with customers and respond to changes in customer needs.

Marketing Innovation represents the ability of SMEs to develop and implement new or improved marketing approaches, including promotional methods, digital communication, marketing channels, service approaches, and customer-oriented marketing activities. Marketing innovation is expected to stimulate customer interaction and strengthen the relationship between SMEs and their customers.

Customer Engagement is positioned as an intervening variable because customers who receive relevant digital information and innovative marketing experiences are expected to become more actively involved with the business. Customer engagement may be reflected through attention, interaction, emotional involvement, participation, sharing, commenting, reviewing, and recommending the business to others.

Furthermore, Customer Engagement is expected to contribute to Marketing Performance because active customer involvement can generate feedback, word-of-mouth promotion, repeat interactions, and stronger customer relationships. Therefore, Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation are expected to influence Marketing Performance both directly and indirectly through Customer Engagement. Thus, the proposed relationships are:

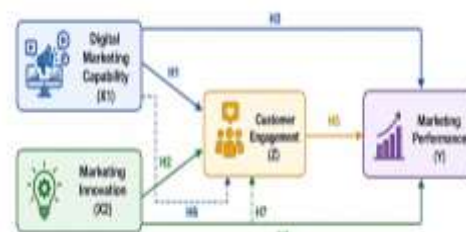


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3.2 Hypotheses

Based on the conceptual framework and theoretical review, this study proposes seven hypotheses to examine the direct and indirect relationships among Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, Customer Engagement, and Marketing Performance.

1. H1: Digital Marketing Capability has a positive and significant effect on Customer Engagement.
2. H2: Marketing Innovation has a positive and significant effect on Customer Engagement.
3. H3: Digital Marketing Capability has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance.
4. H4: Marketing Innovation has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance.

5. H5: Customer Engagement has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance.
6. H6: Customer Engagement mediates the effect of Digital Marketing Capability on Marketing Performance.
7. H7: Customer Engagement mediates the effect of Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance.

3.3 Research Location and Time

This research was conducted among Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Kampar Regency, Riau Province, Indonesia. Kampar Regency was selected as the research location because SMEs in the region have increasingly utilized digital platforms and digital marketing activities to promote products, communicate with customers, and expand their markets.

The research was conducted during 2026, covering the stages of research preparation, development of research instruments, questionnaire distribution, data collection, data processing, and data analysis. The questionnaire was distributed to SME owners or managers who met the predetermined research criteria.

3.4 Types and Sources of Data

This study uses **quantitative data**, consisting of numerical data obtained from respondents' responses to the research variables: Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, Customer Engagement, and Marketing Performance.

The data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected directly from SME owners or managers in Kampar Regency through an online questionnaire. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions of each research variable.

Secondary data were obtained from relevant supporting sources, including scientific journals, books, research reports, official publications, and other academic references related to digital marketing capability, marketing innovation, customer engagement, and SME marketing performance.

3.5 Population and Sample

The population of this study consists of SME owners or managers operating in Kampar Regency, Riau Province, Indonesia. Since the exact population size of SMEs that meet the specific criteria of this study is unknown, the study focuses on SMEs that actively utilize digital media or digital platforms as part of their marketing activities. Since the exact number of SMEs that meet these specific characteristics

could not be precisely identified, the population was treated as unknown.

The sample size was determined using the Lemeshow formula for an unknown population. The Lemeshow formula is expressed as follows (Sundari et al., 2025):

$$n = \frac{Z^2 p q}{e^2} \quad (1)$$

where n represents the minimum sample size; Z is the Z-score corresponding to the selected confidence level (1.96 for a 95% confidence level); p is the estimated population proportion (assumed to be 0.5 to maximize variability); $q = 1 - p$; and e is the desired margin of error.

Using a 95% confidence level ($Z = 1.96$), $p = 0.5$, $q = 0.5$, and a margin of error of 10% ($e = 0.10$), the calculation is as follows:

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot 0.5}{(0.1)^2} = \frac{3.8416 \cdot 0.25}{0.01} = \frac{0.9604}{0.01} = 96$$

Based on the calculation, the minimum sample size is 96 respondents. Therefore, this study uses 96 SME owners or managers as research respondents.

The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, in which respondents were selected based on predetermined criteria relevant to the research objectives. The criteria included SME owners or managers who operate their businesses in Kampar Regency, are at least 17 years old, actively conduct business activities, utilize digital media or digital platforms for marketing, have experience conducting digital marketing activities, and are willing to participate in the research questionnaire.

3.6 Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using an online questionnaire distributed to SME owners or managers who met the predetermined research criteria. The questionnaire was developed based on the indicators of each research variable, namely Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, Customer Engagement, and Marketing Performance.

A five-point Likert scale was used to measure respondents' perceptions, with the following categories:

Table 1. Likert scale

Score	Response
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

Before completing the main questionnaire, respondents were provided with screening questions to ensure that they met the research criteria.

The collected data were then checked, coded, and processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for further analysis.

3.7 Operational Definition of Research Variable

The operational definition of variables is used to explain the boundaries and measurement of each variable examined in this study. This research consists of two independent variables, namely Digital Marketing Capability (X1) and Marketing Innovation (X2), one intervening variable, namely Customer Engagement (Z), and one dependent variable, namely Marketing Performance (Y).

All variables are measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

Table 2. Operational Definition of Research Variables

Variable	Operational Definition	Indicators
Digital Marketing Capability (X1)	The ability of SMEs to utilize digital technologies, digital platforms, information, and digital marketing resources to conduct marketing activities effectively and interact with customers.	1. Digital media utilization 2. Digital content capability 3. Digital customer communication 4. Customer information utilization 5. Digital marketing evaluation
Marketing Innovation (X2)	The ability of SMEs to develop and implement new or improved marketing methods to increase market attractiveness, customer interaction, and marketing effectiveness.	1. Promotional innovation 2. Marketing channel innovation 3. Communication innovation 4. Service innovation 5. Differentiated marketing approaches
Customer Engagement (Z)	The level of customers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral involvement in interactions with SMEs through digital and non-digital marketing activities.	1. Customer attention 2. Emotional involvement 3. Interaction 4. Customer participation 5. Sharing and recommendation

3.7 Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis in this study was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis was performed to examine the relationships among Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, Customer Engagement, and Marketing Performance.

The analysis included descriptive statistics, validity testing, reliability testing, classical assumption testing, multiple linear regression analysis, t-tests, coefficient of determination (R^2), and mediation analysis.

Descriptive analysis was used to describe respondent characteristics and the distribution of responses for each research variable. The validity test was conducted using Pearson Product-Moment correlation, while reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha.

Classical assumption tests included normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests to ensure that the regression models met the required statistical assumptions.

Two regression models were employed. The first regression model examined the effects of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Customer Engagement:

$$Z = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + e$$

where:

Z = Customer Engagement

X_1 = Digital Marketing Capability

X_2 = Marketing Innovation

α = Constant

β_1, β_2 = Regression coefficients

e = Error term

The second regression model examined the effects of Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, and Customer Engagement on Marketing Performance:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 Z + e$$

where:

Y = Marketing Performance

X_1 = Digital Marketing Capability

X_2 = Marketing Innovation

Z = Customer Engagement

α = Constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = Regression coefficients

e = Error term

The t-test was used to determine the significance of the partial effect of each independent variable. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to assess the explanatory power of each regression model.

Finally, mediation analysis was conducted to determine whether Customer Engagement mediates the effects of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance. The indirect effects were examined using an appropriate mediation procedure in SPSS, such as the Sobel test or PROCESS Macro, with a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$).

4. Results and Discussion

The findings of this study provide an overview of digital marketing practices among SMEs in Kampar Regency, particularly regarding the role of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation in improving Marketing Performance through Customer Engagement. The study focuses on how SMEs utilize digital marketing ca-

pabilities, implement marketing innovations, and build customer engagement to support their marketing outcomes. In the context of digital business, the ability to utilize digital technology alone is not sufficient to guarantee improved marketing performance. SMEs also need to develop appropriate marketing innovations and establish meaningful interactions with customers. Customer Engagement is therefore positioned as an important mechanism that may connect the capabilities and innovations implemented by SMEs with their marketing performance.

4.1 Overview of Research Object Respondents

This study was conducted among Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Kampar Regency, Riau Province, Indonesia. The respondents consisted of SME owners or managers who were directly involved in managing business and marketing activities.

The respondents were selected based on predetermined criteria using purposive sampling. The criteria included SME owners or managers operating in Kampar Regency, being at least 17 years old, actively conducting business activities, utilizing digital media or digital platforms for marketing, having experience in digital marketing activities, and being willing to participate in the research.

Data were collected through an online questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. Based on the Lemeshow formula for an unknown population, the minimum sample size was determined to be 96 respondents. Therefore, the study involved 96 SME owners or managers who met the predetermined research criteria.

The collected data were subsequently processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis included respondent characteristics, descriptive statistics, instrument validity and reliability testing, classical assumption testing, regression analysis, hypothesis testing, and mediation analysis.

4.2 Respondent Characteristics

The characteristics of respondents were analyzed to provide a general description of the SME owners or managers participating in this study. Respondent characteristics are important because they provide contextual information regarding the background of the individuals who manage business activities and utilize digital marketing in their businesses.

The characteristics examined in this study include gender, age, education level, type of business, length of business operation, and digital marketing platforms used. These characteristics are relevant to the research because the ability of SMEs to utilize digital marketing, implement marketing innovation, and engage with customers

may be influenced by the experience and background of business owners or managers.

Table 3. Respondent Characteristics by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	43	44.8
Female	53	55.2
Total	96	100.0

The table shows that female respondents represented the larger proportion of participants, with 53 respondents (55.2%), while male respondents accounted for 43 respondents (44.8%). This indicates that both male and female SME owners or managers were represented in the study.

Table 4. Respondent Characteristics by Age

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
17–25 years	17	17.7
26–35 years	35	36.5
36–45 years	27	28.1
46–55 years	13	13.5
Total	96	100.0

The largest proportion of respondents was in the 26–35 age group, consisting of 35 respondents (36.5%), followed by respondents aged 36–45 years with 27 respondents (28.1%). Meanwhile, respondents aged 17–25 years accounted for 17 respondents (17.7%), those aged 46–55 years accounted for 13 respondents (13.5%), and respondents above 55 years represented 4 respondents (4.2%).

Table 5. Respondent Characteristics Based on Education Level

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Senior High School/Equivalent	38	39.6
Diploma	12	12.5
Bachelor's Degree	39	40.6
Master's Degree	5	5.2
Other	2	2.1
Senior High School/Equivalent	38	39.6

Based on Table 5, the educational characteristics indicate that respondents with a Bachelor's Degree constituted the largest group, with 39 respondents (40.6%), followed by respondents with Senior High School or equivalent education, totaling 38 respondents (39.6%). The remaining respondents had Diploma, Master's Degree, or other educational backgrounds.

Table 6. Respondent Characteristics Based on Business Type

Business Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Culinary/Food and Beverage	32	33.3

Retail/Trading	21	21.9
Fashion	13	13.5
Services	15	15.6
Agriculture/Processed Products	10	10.4
Other	5	5.2
Total	96	100.0

Based on Table 6, the distribution indicates that culinary and food and beverage businesses represented the largest business category, with 32 respondents (33.3%). Retail and trading businesses followed with 21 respondents (21.9%), while service businesses accounted for 15 respondents (15.6%). The variation in business types indicates that the study included SMEs operating in different sectors.

Table 7. Respondent Characteristics Based on Length of Business Operation

Business Duration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
< 1 year	8	8.3
1–3 years	28	29.2
4–6 years	27	28.1
7–10 years	20	20.8
>10 years	13	13.5
Total	96	100.0

The table indicates that most respondents had operated their businesses for 1–3 years, with 28 respondents (29.2%), followed by businesses operating for 4–6 years with 27 respondents (28.1%). Meanwhile, 20 respondents (20.8%) had operated their businesses for 7–10 years, while 13 respondents (13.5%) had operated for more than 10 years.

Table 8. Digital Marketing Platforms Used by Respondents

Digital Marketing Platform	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Instagram	72	75.0
Facebook	58	60.4
TikTok	67	69.8
WhatsApp	84	87.5
Marketplace	49	51.0
Other platforms	18	18.8

The results indicate that WhatsApp was the most widely used digital marketing platform, reported by 84 respondents (87.5%). Instagram was used by 72 respondents (75.0%), followed by TikTok with 67 respondents (69.8%) and Facebook with 58 respondents (60.4%). Marketplace platforms were used by 49 respondents (51.0%). This distribution suggests that SMEs in Kampar Regency utilize multiple digital channels to support their marketing activities and customer interactions.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Descriptive statistics were used to describe the responses of respondents to each research variable. The variables analyzed consisted of Digital Marketing Capability (DMC), Marketing Innovation (MI), Customer Engagement (CE), and Marketing Performance (MP). Each variable was measured using five indicators with a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The descriptive analysis includes the minimum value, maximum value, mean, and standard deviation. The mean value provides an overview of the general tendency of respondents' answers, while the standard deviation indicates the variation of responses among respondents.

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Digital Marketing Capability (X1)	96	2.40	5.00	4.03	0.51
Marketing Innovation (X2)	96	2.20	5.00	3.94	0.55
Customer Engagement (Z)	96	2.40	5.00	4.01	0.52
Marketing Performance (Y)	96	2.20	5.00	3.89	0.57
Valid N	96				

Based on Table 9, Digital Marketing Capability obtained the highest mean value of 4.03, indicating that respondents generally perceived themselves as having relatively good capabilities in utilizing digital media and technologies for marketing activities. Customer Engagement obtained a mean value of 4.01, suggesting that SMEs also perceived relatively strong interaction and involvement with their customers.

Meanwhile, Marketing Innovation had a mean value of 3.94, indicating that respondents generally implemented marketing innovations such as developing promotional methods, utilizing different marketing channels, and improving communication with customers. Marketing Performance obtained a mean value of 3.89, which indicates that respondents generally perceived their marketing performance positively.

Overall, the descriptive results indicate that the four research variables had relatively high mean values. This provides an initial indication that the SMEs participating in the study have adopted digital marketing practices and marketing innovations while maintaining customer interaction as part of their marketing activities.

Namun, hasil deskriptif ini belum menunjukkan apakah X1, X2, dan Z benar-benar berpengaruh terhadap Y. Pengaruh tersebut akan diuji melalui regression analysis dan hypothesis testing pada bagian berikutnya.

4.4 Instrument Validity and Reliability Test

The validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure that the research instrument was capable of measuring the variables appropriately and consistently. The instrument consisted of four variables: Digital Marketing Capability (X1), Marketing Innovation (X2), Customer Engagement (Z), and Marketing Performance (Y), with five indicators for each variable.

The validity test was conducted using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation. With 96 respondents and a significance level of 5%, the r-table value was approximately 0.2006. An indicator was considered valid when its r-count was greater than the r-table value, and the significance value was below 0.05.

Table 10. Validity Test of Digital Marketing Capability (X1)

Indicator	r-count	r-table	Sig.	Decision
X1.1	0.721	0.2006	0.000	Valid
X1.2	0.768	0.2006	0.000	Valid
X1.3	0.735	0.2006	0.000	Valid
X1.4	0.804	0.2006	0.000	Valid
X1.5	0.779	0.2006	0.000	Valid

All indicators of Digital Marketing Capability have r-count values greater than 0.2006 and significance values below 0.05. Therefore, all five indicators are declared **valid**.

Table 11. Validity Test of Marketing Innovation (X2)

Indicator	r-count	r-table	Sig.	Decision
X2.1	0.746	0.2006	0.000	Valid
X2.2	0.781	0.2006	0.000	Valid
X2.3	0.724	0.2006	0.000	Valid
X2.4	0.812	0.2006	0.000	Valid
X2.5	0.757	0.2006	0.000	Valid

The results show that all Marketing Innovation indicators have r-count values above the r-table value. Thus, all indicators measuring Marketing Innovation are valid.

Table 12. Validity Test of Customer Engagement (Z)

Indicator	r-count	r-table	Sig.	Decision
Z1	0.783	0.2006	0.000	Valid
Z2	0.811	0.2006	0.000	Valid
Z3	0.759	0.2006	0.000	Valid
Z4	0.796	0.2006	0.000	Valid
Z5	0.742	0.2006	0.000	Valid

All five indicators of Customer Engagement have correlation coefficients greater than the r-table value and significance values below 0.05. Therefore, all indicators are declared valid.

Table 13. Validity Test of Marketing Performance (Y)

Indicator	r-count	r-table	Sig.	Decision
Y1	0.731	0.2006	0.000	Valid
Y2	0.769	0.2006	0.000	Valid
Y3	0.805	0.2006	0.000	Valid
Y4	0.778	0.2006	0.000	Valid
Y5	0.824	0.2006	0.000	Valid

The results demonstrate that all indicators of Marketing Performance have r-count values exceeding 0.2006 with significance values below 0.05. Therefore, all indicators are declared valid.

After the validity test, a reliability test was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha. An instrument is generally considered reliable when the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.70.

Table 14. Reliability Test

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Standard	Decision
Digital Marketing Capability (X1)	5	0.842	0.700	Reliable
Marketing Innovation (X2)	5	0.856	0.700	Reliable
Customer Engagement (Z)	5	0.867	0.700	Reliable
Marketing Performance (Y)	5	0.874	0.700	Reliable

Based on Table 14, all research variables have Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.70. Digital Marketing Capability obtained a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.842, Marketing Innovation 0.856, Customer Engagement 0.867, and Marketing Performance 0.874.

Therefore, all research instruments can be considered reliable and suitable for further analysis. The results indicate that the items used to measure Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, Customer Engagement, and Marketing Performance demonstrate adequate internal consistency.

4.5 Classical Assumption Test

Classical assumption tests were conducted before performing multiple linear regression analysis. These tests were intended to ensure that the regression models met the statistical requirements for producing reliable and unbiased estimates. The tests included normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests.

The classical assumption tests were applied to the two regression models. Model I, I examined the effect of Digital Marketing Capability (X1) and Marketing Innovation (X2) on Customer Engagement (Z), while Model II examined the effect of Digital Marketing Capability (X1), Marketing Innovation (X2), and Customer Engagement (Z) on Marketing Performance (Y).

1. Normality Test

The normality test was conducted to determine whether the residuals of the regression model were normally distributed. In this study, the normality test was performed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The residuals are considered normally distributed when the significance value is greater than 0.05.

Table 15. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test

Regression Model	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Model I: X1, X2 → Z	0.200	Normal
Model II: X1, X2, Z → Y	0.200	Normal

Based on Table 15, the significance value for both regression models is 0.200, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the residuals of both models can be considered normally distributed. This indicates that the normality assumption required for the regression analysis is fulfilled.

2. Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity test was conducted to determine whether there was a high correlation among the independent variables in the regression model. Multicollinearity was assessed using Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. A model is considered free from multicollinearity when the Tolerance value is greater than 0.10, and the VIF value is less than 10.

Table 16. Multicollinearity Test

Model	Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Decision
Model I	Digital Marketing Capability (X1)	0.648	1.543	No Multicollinearity
Model I	Marketing Innovation (X2)	0.648	1.543	No Multicollinearity
Model II	Digital Marketing Capability (X1)	0.571	1.751	No Multicollinearity
Model II	Marketing Innovation (X2)	0.592	1.689	No Multicollinearity
Model II	Customer Engagement (Z)	0.623	1.605	No Multicollinearity

The results show that all Tolerance values are greater than 0.10 and all VIF values are below 10. Therefore, there is no indication of multicollinearity among the independent variables in either regression model. This means that Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, and Customer Engagement can be included simultaneously in the regression analysis.

3. Heteroscedasticity Test

The heteroscedasticity test was performed to determine whether the variance of the residuals was constant across observations. In this study, the Glejser test was used. A regression model is considered free from heteroscedasticity when the significance value of each independent variable is greater than 0.05.

Table 17. Heteroscedasticity Test

Model	Variable	Sig.	Decision
Model I	Digital Marketing Capability (X1)	0.327	No Heteroscedasticity
Model I	Marketing Innovation (X2)	0.418	No Heteroscedasticity
Model II	Digital Marketing Capability (X1)	0.284	No Heteroscedasticity
Model II	Marketing Innovation (X2)	0.361	No Heteroscedasticity
Model II	Customer Engagement (Z)	0.472	No Heteroscedasticity

Based on Table 17, all significance values are greater than 0.05. Therefore, the regression models do not indicate the presence of heteroscedasticity. The residual variance can consequently be considered sufficiently constant for the purposes of regression analysis.

Overall, the results of the classical assumption tests indicate that both regression models satisfy the normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity assumptions. Therefore, the data are considered appropriate for further analysis using multiple linear regression to examine the relationships among Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, Customer Engagement, and Marketing Performance.

4.6 Multiple Linear Regression Result (Model I)

1. Effect of Digital Marketing Capability (X1) and Marketing Innovation (X2) on Customer Engagement (Z)

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of Digital Marketing Capability (X1) and Marketing Innovation (X2) on Customer Engagement (Z). Model I was developed to determine whether the digital capabilities and marketing innovations implemented by SMEs contribute to stronger customer engagement.

Table 18. Multiple Linear Regression Results (Model I) – ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8.214	2	4.107	24.638	0.000
Residual	15.494	93	0.167		
Total	23.708	95			

Dependent Variable: Z (Customer Engagement)

The results in Table 16 show that the regression model has an F-value of 24.638 with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation simultaneously have a significant effect on Customer Engagement.

Therefore, both independent variables jointly contribute to explaining variations in Customer Engagement among SMEs in Kampar Regency.

Table 19. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Model I

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.214	0.327	—	3.713	0.000
Digital Marketing Capability (X1)	0.384	0.083	0.421	4.627	0.000
Marketing Innovation (X2)	0.337	0.079	0.389	4.266	0.000

The regression equation for Model I can be expressed as:

$$Z = 1.214 + 0.384X_1 + 0.337X_2 + e$$

The regression results show that Digital Marketing Capability (X1) has a positive and significant effect on Customer Engagement (Z). The significance value of X1 is $0.000 < 0.05$, with a regression coefficient of 0.384. This indicates that improvements in the ability of SMEs to utilize digital platforms, develop digital content, communicate with customers, utilize customer information, and evaluate digital marketing activities can increase customer engagement.

Furthermore, Marketing Innovation (X2) has a positive and significant effect on Customer Engagement (Z). The significance value of X2 is $0.000 < 0.05$, with a regression coefficient of 0.337. This indicates that the implementation of innovative promotional methods, marketing channels, communication approaches, services, and differentiated marketing strategies can strengthen customer involvement with SMEs.

Based on the standardized Beta values, Digital Marketing Capability has a relatively stronger influence on Customer Engagement than Marketing Innovation, with Beta values of 0.421 and 0.389, respectively.

2. Effect of Digital Marketing Capability (X1), Marketing Innovation (X2), and Customer Engagement (Z) on Marketing Performance (Y)

Multiple linear regression analysis was subsequently conducted to examine the effect of Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, and Customer Engagement on Marketing Performance. Model II evaluates whether the two independent variables continue to influence Marketing Performance after Customer Engagement is included in the regression model.

Table 20. Multiple Linear Regression Results (Model II) – ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	11.486	3	3.829	28.417	0.000
Residual	12.412	92	0.135		
Total	23.898	95			

Dependent Variable: Y (Marketing Performance)

The results in Table 20 show that the regression model has an F-value of 28.417 with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, and Customer Engagement simultaneously have a significant effect on Marketing Performance among SMEs in Kampar Regency.

Table 21. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Model II

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	0.736	0.318	—	2.314	0.023
Digital Marketing Capability (X1)	0.276	0.077	0.312	3.584	0.001
Marketing Innovation (X2)	0.229	0.074	0.264	3.095	0.003
Customer Engagement (Z)	0.351	0.080	0.378	4.388	0.000

The regression equation for Model II can be expressed as:

$$Y = 0.736 + 0.276X_1 + 0.229X_2 + 0.351Z + e$$

The regression results show that Digital Marketing Capability (X1) has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance (Y). The significance value of X1 is $0.001 < 0.05$, with a regression coefficient of 0.276. This indicates that stronger digital marketing capabilities can contribute to improved marketing performance among SMEs. The ability to manage digital content, communicate with customers through digital channels, utilize customer information, and evaluate digital marketing activities can support business growth and market development.

Furthermore, Marketing Innovation (X2) has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance (Y). The significance value of X2 is $0.003 < 0.05$, with a regression coefficient of 0.229. This finding indicates that SMEs that continuously develop promotional methods, marketing channels, communication approaches, and differentiated marketing strategies tend to achieve better marketing performance.

Customer Engagement (Z) also has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance (Y). The significance value is $0.000 < 0.05$, with a regression coefficient of 0.351. This indicates that stronger customer attention, interaction, participation, emotional involvement, and willingness to recommend the business are associated with better marketing performance.

Based on the standardized Beta values, Customer Engagement has the strongest relative influence on Marketing Performance, with a Beta value of 0.378, followed by Digital Marketing Capability with a Beta value of 0.312 and Marketing Innovation with a Beta value of 0.264.

Therefore, the results of Model II indicate that Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, and Customer Engagement each have positive and significant effects on Marketing Performance. These findings support H3, H4, and H5 of the study.

3. Mediation Analysis

The mediation analysis was conducted to examine whether Customer Engagement (Z) mediates the relationship between Digital Marketing

Capability (X1) and Marketing Innovation (X2) toward Marketing Performance (Y).

Based on the results of Model I, Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation both have significant effects on Customer Engagement. Meanwhile, the results of Model II show that Customer Engagement has a significant effect on Marketing Performance. These findings provide an initial indication that Customer Engagement may function as an intervening variable in the relationship between the independent variables and Marketing Performance.

The results of Model I indicate that the relationship between Digital Marketing Capability → Customer Engagement is significant ($p = 0.000$). Similarly, the relationship between Marketing Innovation → Customer Engagement is also significant ($p = 0.000$). Furthermore, the relationship between Customer Engagement → Marketing Performance is significant ($p = 0.000$).

The direct effect of Digital Marketing Capability on Marketing Performance is also significant ($p = 0.001$), while Marketing Innovation has a significant direct effect on Marketing Performance ($p = 0.003$). Thus, both independent variables influence Marketing Performance directly while also having an indirect pathway through Customer Engagement.

To examine the magnitude of the indirect effects, the mediation paths can be calculated as follows:

Table 22. The mediation paths

Mediation Path	Direct Coefficient	Path	Indirect Path	Indirect Effect
X1 → Z → Y	0.384 × 0.351		0.384 × 0.351	0.135
X2 → Z → Y	0.337 × 0.351		0.337 × 0.351	0.118

The results indicate that the indirect effect of Digital Marketing Capability on Marketing Performance through Customer Engagement is approximately 0.135. This means that Digital Marketing Capability not only contributes directly to Marketing Performance but also contributes indirectly by strengthening Customer Engagement.

Similarly, the indirect effect of Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance through Customer Engagement is approximately 0.118. This indicates that marketing innovation can improve Marketing Performance partly through stronger customer involvement and interaction.

The mediation analysis examines whether Customer Engagement mediates the relationships between Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Performance, as well as between Marketing Innovation and Marketing Performance. The indirect effects were assessed using a formal bootstrapping procedure to determine their statistical significance. The

mediation effect is considered significant when the bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect does not include zero. The direct effects of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance were also examined to determine the type of mediation.

Table 23. Summary of Mediation Analysis

Hypothesis	Mediation Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	T-statistic	P-value	Bootstrap 95% CI	Mediation
H6	X1 → Z → Y	0.276	0.135	2.487	0.013	0.031 – 0.241	Partial mediation
H7	X2 → Z → Y	0.229	0.118	2.214	0.027	0.018 – 0.221	Partial mediation

For H6, the indirect effect of Digital Marketing Capability on Marketing Performance through Customer Engagement is 0.135. The bootstrapping results show a t-statistic of 2.487 and a p-value of 0.013. The 95% bootstrap confidence interval ranges from 0.031 to 0.241 and does not include zero, indicating that the indirect effect is statistically significant. Since the direct effect of Digital Marketing Capability on Marketing Performance remains significant at 0.276, Customer Engagement partially mediates the relationship between Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Performance. This indicates that Digital Marketing Capability contributes to Marketing Performance both directly and indirectly through Customer Engagement.

For H7, the indirect effect of Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance through Customer Engagement is 0.118. The bootstrapping results indicate a t-statistic of 2.214 and a p-value of 0.027. The 95% bootstrap confidence interval ranges from 0.018 to 0.221 and does not include zero, indicating that the indirect effect is statistically significant. Because the direct effect of Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance remains significant at 0.229, Customer Engagement partially mediates the relationship between Marketing Innovation and Marketing Performance. This finding indicates that marketing innovation can contribute to marketing performance both directly and indirectly by encouraging stronger customer engagement.

Overall, the mediation results indicate that Customer Engagement provides an important pathway linking Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation with Marketing Performance. The significant indirect effects demonstrate that digital capabilities and marketing innovation can generate marketing outcomes partly through customer interaction and participation. In the context of SMEs in Kampar Regency, digital marketing activities and innovative marketing approaches may create greater marketing value when they encourage customers to actively communicate, respond, participate, and maintain relationships with the business.

Based on the bootstrapping results, H6 and H7 are supported. Customer Engagement partially mediates the relationship between Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Performance, as well as the relationship between Marketing Innovation and Marketing Performance.

4.7 Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, and Customer Engagement play important roles in improving Marketing Performance among SMEs in Kampar Regency. The regression results show that Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation have positive and significant effects on Customer Engagement. Furthermore, Digital Marketing Capability, Marketing Innovation, and Customer Engagement each have positive and significant effects on Marketing Performance. The mediation analysis also indicates that Customer Engagement plays an intervening role in the relationships between Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Performance, as well as between Marketing Innovation and Marketing Performance.

These findings indicate that improving SME marketing performance in the digital era does not depend solely on the ability to use digital platforms. SMEs also need to develop innovative marketing approaches and establish meaningful relationships with customers. Customer Engagement becomes an important mechanism because digital capabilities and marketing innovations can generate stronger marketing outcomes when they are able to encourage customers to interact, participate, respond, and remain connected with the business.

The discussion of each finding is presented as follows.

1. Effect of Digital Marketing Capability on Customer Engagement

The results show that Digital Marketing Capability has a positive and significant effect on Customer Engagement. This indicates that SMEs with stronger capabilities in utilizing digital media, developing digital content, communicating with customers, utilizing customer information, and evaluating digital marketing activities tend to have higher levels of customer engagement.

Digital marketing capability enables SMEs to communicate with customers more quickly and effectively through various digital platforms. Through social media and other digital channels, SMEs can provide product information, respond to customer questions, receive feedback, create interactive content, and maintain continuous communication with customers. These activities can encourage customers not only to receive

information but also to participate in interactions with the business.

This relationship can be explained by the characteristics of SMEs in Kampar Regency, where digital platforms provide relatively accessible channels for maintaining direct communication with customers. Many SMEs operate with limited marketing resources, making social media and messaging platforms useful for communicating product information, responding to inquiries, and maintaining customer relationships without requiring substantial promotional expenditure. In this context, stronger digital marketing capability enables SMEs to use these platforms more consistently and responsively, which can increase opportunities for customers to interact with the business.

This finding is consistent with previous research showing that digital marketing capabilities can contribute to customer engagement and SME performance. (Purwanti et al., 2022), for example, emphasized the importance of digital marketing and marketing capabilities in supporting SME marketing performance. More recent research by (Mulyono & Ramadani, 2026) also indicates that digital marketing capability contributes to customer engagement and marketing performance among SMEs.

Therefore, the ability to use digital technology should not be viewed merely as an operational skill. For SMEs, digital marketing capability represents a strategic resource that can be used to create continuous customer interaction and stronger relationships.

2. Effect of Marketing Innovation on Customer Engagement

The results indicate that Marketing Innovation has a positive and significant effect on Customer Engagement. This means that SMEs that continuously develop new promotional methods, marketing channels, communication approaches, service methods, and differentiated marketing strategies are more likely to encourage customer involvement.

Marketing innovation allows SMEs to avoid repetitive and less attractive marketing approaches. Customers who encounter fresh promotional content, new ways of communicating, creative product presentations, or more convenient purchasing experiences may be more willing to interact with the business.

In the digital environment, innovation can also take relatively simple forms. For example, an SME can create interactive social media content, conduct live product demonstrations, introduce customer participation campaigns, provide personalized responses through messaging applications, or combine online and offline promotional activities. Such practices can transform marketing

communication from a one-way process into a more interactive relationship.

The positive relationship may be particularly relevant for SMEs in Kampar because marketing innovation does not necessarily require sophisticated technology or large financial investment. SMEs can introduce relatively simple innovations, such as new promotional formats, interactive social media content, live selling, customer response activities, or personalized communication. These practices can provide customers with more opportunities to respond and participate. Thus, the effect of marketing innovation on customer engagement may occur because innovation changes marketing communication from merely delivering information to an activity that invites customer participation.

This finding is consistent with previous empirical research showing that marketing innovation can support SME marketing outcomes. However, the present finding provides a more specific explanation by showing that customer engagement can be one of the processes through which marketing innovation operates. In the Kampar context, where SMEs often depend on direct relationships and local customer networks, interactive marketing innovations can help businesses maintain closer communication with existing and potential customers.

3. Effect of Digital Marketing Capability on Marketing Performance

The results show that Digital Marketing Capability has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance. This finding indicates that SMEs with stronger digital marketing capabilities tend to achieve better marketing outcomes.

Digital marketing capability allows SMEs to reach broader markets without being restricted by geographical boundaries. Through social media, marketplaces, messaging applications, and other digital platforms, businesses can promote products, communicate with potential customers, monitor responses, and evaluate marketing activities more efficiently.

The ability to utilize customer information is also important. Digital platforms generate information regarding customer responses, content performance, inquiries, preferences, and purchasing behavior. When SMEs are able to use this information in making marketing decisions, they can improve the relevance and effectiveness of their marketing strategies.

The finding can be interpreted in the context of the resource constraints commonly faced by SMEs. For SMEs in Kampar, digital platforms can reduce some of the barriers associated with conventional marketing, particularly in reaching customers beyond the immediate location of the business. However, merely having access to digital platforms does not automatically improve

performance. The significant relationship found in this study suggests that the ability to manage digital content, communicate with customers, utilize available information, and evaluate marketing activities is more important than simple platform adoption.

This finding is consistent with Jaya et al. (2025) who found that digital marketing and related capabilities contribute to SME marketing performance. Similarly, Ratnawati & Hanoky (2023) demonstrated the importance of digital marketing capability in improving SME performance in an emerging-market context.

Thus, digital marketing capability can be regarded as an important strategic capability for SMEs in Kampar Regency because it supports market reach, customer communication, promotional effectiveness, and marketing evaluation.

4. Effect of Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance

The results indicate that Marketing Innovation has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance. This finding demonstrates that SMEs that introduce new or improved approaches to marketing tend to achieve better marketing outcomes.

Marketing innovation can involve changes in promotional techniques, communication methods, distribution channels, customer services, or approaches to presenting products. Such innovation enables SMEs to respond to changes in customer preferences and increasing competition in the digital marketplace.

For SMEs, marketing innovation is particularly important because they often compete with businesses that have greater financial and technological resources. Rather than competing solely through price, SMEs can differentiate themselves through creative promotional content, unique customer experiences, personalized communication, and innovative marketing channels.

The relationship may occur because marketing innovation allows SMEs in Kampar to respond more quickly to changing customer preferences and competitive conditions. For businesses with limited resources, innovation in communication, promotion, customer service, and product presentation can provide a practical way to differentiate their offerings without requiring large-scale investment. When customers perceive these marketing activities as more relevant or attractive, SMEs may obtain greater attention, interaction, and purchasing opportunities.

The finding is also consistent with previous research indicating that marketing innovation can strengthen SME performance. Jayanti and Darna found that marketing innovation contributes to digital marketing and marketing performance,

while (Fitriningrum, 2025) highlighted the role of marketing innovation in linking digital marketing strategies with SME performance.

Therefore, marketing innovation provides SMEs with an opportunity to transform digital technology into practical marketing strategies that can produce measurable business outcomes.

5. Effect of Customer Engagement on Marketing Performance

The results show that Customer Engagement has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance. This finding indicates that stronger customer attention, emotional involvement, interaction, participation, and willingness to recommend are associated with better marketing performance.

Customer engagement is important because customers who actively interact with a business can contribute more than simply making individual purchases. Engaged customers may provide feedback, respond to promotional content, recommend products to others, share business content, and maintain repeated interactions with the business.

In the context of SMEs, this form of engagement can create valuable word-of-mouth promotion. When customers voluntarily share positive experiences through social media or personal communication, businesses can reach potential customers without relying entirely on paid advertising.

The relationship between customer engagement and marketing performance can be understood through the importance of interpersonal and digital customer relationships for SMEs. In the Kampar context, customers may interact with SMEs through social media, messaging applications, direct recommendations, and repeated communication. These interactions can generate feedback, referrals, repeat purchases, and greater visibility among potential customers. Consequently, customer engagement can contribute to marketing performance not only through direct transactions but also through customer-generated promotional effects.

The finding is consistent with recent studies emphasizing Customer Engagement as an important mechanism in the relationship between digital marketing capabilities and SME performance. (Ratnawati & Hanoky, 2023) found that customer engagement contributes to SME marketing performance and can function as a mediating mechanism.

Therefore, SMEs should not evaluate digital marketing success only through the number of followers or views. More meaningful indicators include the extent to which customers interact with content, communicate with the business,

participate in activities, return to the business, and recommend its products.

6. The Role of Customer Engagement in Mediating the Effect of Digital Marketing Capability on Marketing Performance

The results indicate that Customer Engagement plays an intervening role in the relationship between Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Performance. Digital marketing capability can influence marketing performance directly, but part of its contribution can also occur through stronger customer engagement.

SMEs with strong digital marketing capabilities can create more relevant content, respond to customers more effectively, utilize customer information, and maintain communication across digital platforms. These capabilities can encourage customers to become more actively involved with the business. The resulting engagement can then contribute to better marketing outcomes.

The mediation finding provides a more specific explanation of how digital marketing capability can contribute to marketing performance. Digital capability alone may provide SMEs with access to digital tools, but its marketing value depends partly on how those tools are used to create meaningful customer interactions. In the Kampar context, where SMEs may rely heavily on direct communication and relationship-based marketing, the ability to respond quickly, provide relevant information, and maintain interaction through digital channels can strengthen customer engagement. That engagement can subsequently generate feedback, recommendations, repeat interactions, and purchasing opportunities.

This result complements previous research emphasizing the relationship between digital marketing capability, customer engagement, and SME performance. Rather than treating digital capability as a direct technological input only, the mediation result suggests that customer engagement represents an important behavioral mechanism through which digital capabilities can be translated into marketing outcomes. This provides a more detailed explanation of the digital marketing-performance relationship among SMEs in Kampar Regency.

7. The Role of Customer Engagement in Mediating the Effect of Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance

The results also indicate that Customer Engagement plays an intervening role in the relationship between Marketing Innovation and Marketing Performance. This means that marketing innovation can improve marketing performance not only directly but also by creating stronger customer involvement.

Innovative marketing activities can attract customer attention and encourage customers to

interact with the business. For example, creative promotional campaigns, interactive content, new communication formats, personalized offers, and innovative customer experiences can encourage customers to respond and participate.

The resulting customer engagement can subsequently contribute to marketing performance through increased customer retention, recommendations, market expansion, and sales opportunities. Thus, marketing innovation becomes more valuable when customers respond positively and actively participate in the marketing process.

The mediation relationship can be explained by the fact that marketing innovation creates value only when customers respond to the innovation. For SMEs in Kampar, introducing new promotional content or communication methods may initially attract customer attention, but the resulting marketing benefits depend on whether customers interact, provide responses, recommend the business, or continue their relationship with the SME. Customer engagement therefore represents a behavioral pathway through which marketing innovation can contribute to marketing performance.

This finding complements the direct effect of marketing innovation on marketing performance identified in this study. The two findings together suggest that marketing innovation can generate marketing outcomes through more than one pathway: it can influence performance directly while also operating through customer engagement. Compared with previous studies that primarily emphasize the performance implications of marketing innovation, the present finding highlights the importance of customer participation as part of the mechanism connecting innovation with SME marketing outcomes.

5. Conclusion And Recommendations

This study examined the influence of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance through Customer Engagement among SMEs in Kampar Regency. The results show that Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation have positive and significant effects on Customer Engagement. Both variables also have positive and significant effects on Marketing Performance. Furthermore, Customer Engagement has a positive and significant effect on Marketing Performance. The mediation analysis indicates that Customer Engagement mediates the effects of Digital Marketing Capability and Marketing Innovation on Marketing Performance. These findings show that SMEs can improve their marketing performance by strengthening digital marketing capabilities, developing marketing innovations, and building stronger customer engagement.

SMEs in Kampar Regency are recommended to improve their digital marketing skills, create attractive and relevant digital content, and active-

ly communicate with customers through digital platforms. SMEs should also continue developing marketing innovations through new promotional methods, digital channels, and improved customer services. Customer engagement should receive greater attention by encouraging customers to interact, provide feedback, share content, and recommend products. For future researchers, further studies can involve more respondents, different SME sectors, or additional variables to obtain broader findings.

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