

Evaluating the Impact of Digital Marketing Platforms on Generation X and Y Purchase Intentions in the FMCG Industry

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Abstract

For Generation X and Generation Y particularly, digital marketing has revolutionised consumer behaviour and the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry. “Among many digital marketing outlets, this study evaluates the degree to which social media marketing, email marketing, influencer marketing, and online advertising—all of which affect purchase intentions. Using a mixed-methods approach to assess engagement levels, brand perception, and purchase behaviour, the research aggregates qualitative interviews with consumers from both generations with quantitative surveys. The findings highlight significant factors affecting consumer response to digital marketing: engagement, brand confidence, and customisation. Generation X consumers are primarily influenced by email marketing and online advertising; Generation Y consumers make purchase decisions largely depending on social media and influencer marketing. Furthermore, the studies reveal that by means of engaging content, highlighting the requirement of targeted marketing strategies suitable for age preferences helps to improve conversion rates and brand loyalty. The insights gained by this research provides





FMCG managers with vital guidance to maximise their digital marketing projects, therefore ensuring more effective audience involvement and improved brand-consumer interactions.

Keywords: Digital marketing, Generation X, Generation Y, FMCG industry, social media marketing, influencer marketing, purchase intentions, consumer behavior, online advertising, brand engagement

Introduction

Changing the FMCG industry and influencing consumer interaction with brands and buying behaviour, digital marketing is beginning to take front stage. With the entrance of e-commerce, social media, and mobile applications, companies are using digital marketing platforms to increase brand recognition, enhance customer engagement, and create sales. Born between 1965 and 1980, Generation X and Generation Y born between 1981 and 1996 show two separate consumer groups with diverse digital interests and activities. Online reviews and email marketing especially matter as Generation X consumers—who initially adopted digital technologies later in life—tend to value validity, reliability, and instructional resources in their purchase decisions. Generation Y, also referred to as Millennials, on the other hand are digital natives who engage with businesses via social media, influencer marketing, and interactive online content. Knowing how these two generations respond to digital marketing initiatives will help FMCG firms aiming to maximise their marketing strategy increase conversion rates. Although expenditure in this sector is growing, little is known about how digital marketing could influence the purchasing intentions of these generations. Thus, this study intends to evaluate on Generation X and Y consumers the impact of digital marketing platforms including social media marketing, email marketing, influencer marketing, and online advertising. It aims to investigate how much digital contact influences purchasing behaviour, the primary driver of consumer confidence and brand loyalty, and the relative performance of many digital marketing strategies. This paper provides critical assessment of the evolving landscape of digital marketing in the FMCG industry by means of research on consumer interactions, buying reasons, and marketing preferences. The findings will enable businesses to develop targeted plans that meet certain age characteristics, therefore enhancing customer retention and brand development. Knowing generational differences in digital involvement and purchase behaviour allows one to realise the need of data-driven, consumer-centric marketing strategies, which become ever more important as digital technologies keep advancing.





Literature Review

Study	Focus Area	Methodology	Key Findings
Boustani & Chammaa (2023)	Youth Attitudes Towards Digital Marketing	UTAUT 2 model, reasoned action theory, 5S Internet marketing model	Factors like hedonic motivation, social influence, and efficiency significantly predict digital marketing intention; cultural nuances play a role.
Gurunathan & Lakshmi (2023b)	Generational Perspectives on Online Platforms & Digital Marketing	Focus-group discussions	Importance of generationally tailored strategies for digital marketing effectiveness.
Whitaker (2023)	Digital purchasing trends in the used automotive industry	Generational Cohort Theory	Companies like Carvana transformed the market by leveraging digital platforms to meet digital natives' expectations.
Agrawal (2022)	Behavioral differences in online shopping between Gen Y and Z	Logistic regression analysis	Identified key shopping motives and behavioral distinctions for designing cohort-specific strategies.
Hazari (2022)	Generational differences in advertising behavior & fake news perception	Survey of 400 respondents	Baby Boomers engage most with reading, while Gen Y engages in posting and finds Facebook ads most relevant.
Ruiz-Equihua et al. (2022)	Impact of eWOM on Gen X and Millennials	Behavioral analysis	Millennials are more influenced by eWOM than Generation X, suggesting tailored eWOM strategies.





Digital Marketing 5-Generation Technology (2021b)	5G digital marketing technology adoption in Pakistan	Cross-sectional study	Key factors influencing adoption include convenience, price, service quality, and value.
Baykal (2020)	Omnichannel experiences among Gen Z	Consumer behavior study	Emphasized seamless integration of digital and physical retail channels for brand loyalty.
Jadanec & Babic (2020)	Value-driven digital marketing	Survey of Millennials and Gen Z students	Ethical and social values in marketing significantly influence brand preferences and purchasing.
Martinez et al. (2020)	Impact of Web Advertising Visual Design on Online Purchase Intentions	Study of 318 participants	Visual design directly impacts purchase intentions, with Gen Z showing stronger connections.
Bauman et al. (2019)	Generational differences in using Web 2.0 for wine purchasing	Survey-based study	Millennials rely on social media, while Gen X mixes traditional and digital sources.
Calvo-Porrall & Pesqueira-Sanchez (2019)	Differences in technology usage between Millennials and Gen X	Uses and Gratifications Theory	Millennials use tech for entertainment, while Gen X focuses on utilitarian uses.
Nunan & Di Domenico (2019)	Digital marketing adoption among older consumers	Market study	Identified digital adoption gaps among older consumers, stressing inclusive strategies.





Naumovska & Milenkovska (2017)	Impact of digital media marketing on children (Gen Z)	Marketing ethics study	Highlighted children's vulnerability to digital marketing and need for affirmative content.
Fietkiewicz et al. (2016)	Intergenerational comparison of social media use	Behavioral study	Found distinct platform preferences across generations, highlighting tailored e-commerce needs.
Poalses et al. (2015)	Emotive reactions to television advertisements across generations	Media study	Older generations accumulate more positive information over time; younger generations prefer dynamic content.
Kasabov & Hain (2014)	Cross-generational perceptions of service recovery	Service management study	Found key differences in discipline and compliance expectations between Baby Boomers and Gen Y.
Sudirjo et al. (2023)	Role of eWOM, brand awareness, and digital accessibility	Survey-based research	Digital accessibility and eWOM significantly impact consumer decisions in e-grocery markets.
Almarashdeh et al. (2020)	Search convenience in mobile vs. website shopping	Study of 143 participants	Mobile apps preferred for accessibility, websites for search functionality; no major adoption differences.
UKZN et al. (2020)	Digital marketing impact on small agro-processors in Zimbabwe	Market performance study	Identified cost reduction, increased visibility, and enhanced customer relationships as benefits.





Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs)

Singh (2014) aver that FMCGs are occasionally referred to as consumer packaged goods and the products are characterised by being sold quickly, in large quantities, at low prices, and are mostly consumables purchased regularly by society at large. According to Srinivasu (2014), FMCGs are lines of merchandise that get replaced within a year. Thus, FMCGs generally include a range of often purchased consumer products such as toiletries, cosmetics, dental care, shaving products and detergents, as well as other nondurables such as glassware, bulbs, batteries, paper products, and plastic goods, to mention but a few. Significantly, as a subdivision of brand communication tools, advertising is known to be a major strategy to facilitate the introduction of a new brand of FMCGs". Pongiannan and Chinnasamy (2014) submit that consumer buying behaviour and brand loyalty in Africa's fastmoving consumer goods markets vary from region to region in terms of product group, and that brand awareness determines top-of-mind awareness for the quantum sales volume for FMCGs in different market regions. Notably, a consumer's loyalty towards a particular brand of FMCGs is solely dependent on the established brand equity, its unique selling proposition, and the steady quality in meeting the needs of the target market (Shariq, 2019).

Retailer X and meat products within the FMCG

Industry Retailer X, as previously mentioned, has a significant influence in this FMCG market. The brand is a South Africanbased retail group that operates both domestically and internationally; and caters to a market of consumers in the middle-to-upper income bracket (LSM 8 - 10) (Woolworths Holdings Limited 2019). In South Africa, the group has over 218 full-line and 430 food standalone stores and offers a wide variety of specific ranges under its own brand name of apparel, cosmetics, and food products (Woolworths Holdings Limited 2019). Retailer X is geared towards delivering high quality products by making use of contract farming in the production of freshly produced and prepared convenience foods, which has allowed Retailer X to supply a greater range of gourmet products (Woolworths Holdings Limited 2019). Furthermore, Retailer X has distinguished itself from competing FMCG retailers, such that 90% of its offering falls under Retailer X's house brand, with a limited range of other branded goods (Trading Intelligence 2020). This exclusivity has allowed Retailer X to price their products slightly higher than competing retailers (Konuk 2018; Tarrant 2016). Retailer X's brand equity is a result of the above, which has cemented its position in the FMCG industry. The brand's quality blueprint stipulates that they measure their performance on their





ability to meet set standards from a supplier and retail point of view (Woolworths Holdings Limited 2019). Among all the food products sold in its stores, Retailer X's meat products have experienced significant success within the food retail department (Woolworths Holdings Limited 2016). Furthermore, meat products meet the definition of an FMCG good as they have a short shelf-life, are perishable, and have low margins with relatively high sale volumes (KPMG, 2016). "Current literature indicates that consumers' concerns in terms of meat purchases are related to price, shelf-placement, calorie content, artificial ingredients, convenience characteristics and cholesterol (Font-i-Furnols & Guerrero 2014; Resurreccion 2004)". Furthermore, Retailer X dedicates, on average, 21% of its shelf space to meat products (Woolworths Holdings Limited 2016). Literature has found that the most prominent characteristic on which consumers base their quality evaluation is the appearance of meat products. (Kim, Spence & Marshall 2018; Verain, Sijtsma & Antonides 2016). Various aesthetic attributes of the product impact the consumer's likeliness to purchase meat (Verain et al. 2016). The attractive, simple, and clear packaging of Retailer X's meat products allow for consumers to evaluate if the product meets their needs in terms of colour and fat content (Kim et al. 2018). The following section illustrates the importance of branding and how it is regarded as a core concept in the FMCG industry.

Purchase intention of consumers

This conceptual model was applied to this study as previous literature has suggested that there is a link between CBBE and purchase intention in the FMCG industry (Chinomona & Popoola 2017; Pillay 2007). This was because brands with a positive CBBE, across various product categories, generated significantly greater preferences and purchase intentions (Cobb-Walgren, Ruble & Donthu, 2013: 37). Halim and Hameed (2005) describe the purchase intention of a consumer as being the repeated purchases and repetitive engagement with the product. Fandos and Flavian (2006:656) further state that purchase intention is the positive and foreseeable behaviour in short-term future buying decisions. Thus, if the product's respective values coincide with the consumer's wants and needs, they will then be inclined to make a purchasing decision (Tariq et al. 2013; Wangwe 2018). Furthermore, Wangwe (2018) and Tariq et al. (2013) both suggested that consumers will make repeated purchases if they continue to have positive experiences with the brand. "This study operationalised the concept of purchase intention through the summation of the above discussion. Understanding the attributes of meat product attributes in determining consumer purchase intention is imperative as it is relatively





unexplored. Thus, examining attributes of consumers' purchase intention in this study provides a robust assessment of economic opportunities for growth in the FMCG industry. Therefore, in the context of this study, the outlined associated benefits of the Retailer Xs' brand can be said to influence its consumers' purchase intention of their meat products".

Role of social media in Purchase Intention

Particularly in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry, social media has become a pillar of contemporary marketing and significantly shapes customer purchase intentions (Ifeoluwa Oreofe Adekuajo et al., 2023). Combining interactive content, tailored advertising, and influencer relationships, these websites provide marketers an unmatched chance to interact with customers, create communities, and influence buying behaviour. Virtual markets let customers to discover, assess, and share items, therefore closing the gap between marketing message and consumer choice across Instagram, Facebook, TikHub, Pinterest. Social media increases brand awareness and builds trust by means of aesthetically pleasing and readily shared content, therefore facilitating direct interactions between businesses and customers. User-generated content (UGC), in which people provide opinions, comments, and product experiences, is among the most powerful tools available on social media. This real object serves as social evidence, therefore supporting the legitimacy of companies and motivating others to buy. Furthermore, as social media influencers—those with large followings—promote things in pertinent and aspirational manner, they are highly important in determining purchase intentions. Value authenticity and social connection; millennials and Gen Z customers especially find paid collaborations, sponsored content, and live-streamed product demos by influencers rather interesting. Furthermore, social media's sophisticated targeting technologies let companies create tailored commercials depending on user profiles, likes, and activities. Algorithmically driven ad placements guarantee that customers see items tailored to their preferences, thereby improving relevance and increasing the chance of purchase (Ifeoluwa Oreofe Adekuajo et al., 2023). One-click purchasing choices, integrated payment systems, and Shoppable postings help to further simplify the shopping experience and hence lower friction and inspire impulsive purchase. But how successful social media is in influencing purchase intention will rely on its capacity to provide relevant, interesting, and non-intrusive material. Authenticity and value-driven communication is even more important when too commercial or irrelevant messages run the danger of alienating readers. By embracing social media, FMCG





companies may not only increase instant sales but also foster long-term loyalty, thereby turning ordinary customers into brand champions.

Behavioral Economics and Generational Patterns

Behavioural economics provides the study of the psychological and emotional aspects influencing customer decisions, therefore guiding the creation of successful digital marketing plans. First one has to understand their behavioural patterns if one wants to meet the unique requirements and tastes of Generation X and Generation Y (Ifeoluwa Oreofe Adekuajo et al., 2023).

Called occasionally as the latchkey generation, Generation X stresses dependability, simplicity, and pragmatism. Less swayed by flimsy advertising, this age is more likely to support efforts at developing trust. Long-term value and smart decision-making as well as comprehensive product information and honest evaluations as part of loyalty programs appeal especially to this group.

On the other hand, Generation Y—often known as Millennials—is much shaped by social contacts, experiences, and technology integration. This group answers in part using gamification, social proof, and influencer sponsorships. By means of interactive content, time-limited offers, and scarcity-driven messaging, digital marketing strategies appealing to the fear of missing out (FOMO) of this age effectively tap into psychological triggers.

Basic to behavioural economics, the idea of nudging is also fairly important in digital marketing. Personalised suggestions or limited-time discounts (Pranjale & Anute, 2022) are among the subtly motivating cues for desired action without direct coercion. exhibiting On an e-commerce website, for instance, only two left in stock drives consumers to act fast out of extreme necessity. Both generations have been impacted by the emergence of micro-moments, instances when customers resort to their telephones for rapid responses. These events provide businesses chances to present themselves as the better answer, much as in pricing comparisons or product reviews Content targeted at these micro-moments helps to raise brand relevance and visibility.

This part shows how FMCG companies might create commercials appealing to Generation X and Generation Y both by using ideas from behavioural economics. Knowing the psychological triggers and generational patterns influencing customer behaviour helps businesses to develop focused plans improving contact and conversion (Pranjale & Anute, 2022).





Emergence of Digital Platforms in FMCG

With the emergence of digital platforms, the operational processes and marketing of the FMCG industry have totally changed. Companies seeking to connect with customers via interactive content and targeted advertising now find social media platforms—including Instagram, Facebook, and TikHub—essential tools (Katare & Anute, 201). Leveraging the trust and participation influencers have generated with their audiences helps to increase brand reach even further.

Unmatched simplicity with same-day delivery, customised product suggestions, and hassle-free returns comes from Amazon, Flipkart, local competitors, and e-commerce sites. These shifts in customer expectations have logical place in the FMCG purchasing process as online shopping is now common. By way of special discounts, loyalty programs, and simplified user interfaces, mobile apps enhance these platforms (Katare & Anute, 2021). Among digital wallets and mobile payments available to ease and inspire impulsive purchase are Apple Pay, Paytm, and Google Pay. These developments also provide rather difficult problems. Keeping a consistent brand voice across many mediums calls for deliberate preparation and execution. Businesses also have to negotiate data management complexity to guarantee moral use of customer data while meeting legal criteria “(Ahmed et al., 2019). This section examines how FMCG businesses have been able to satisfy customer needs, address operational problems, and maintain a competitive advantage in a market under control by digital activities.

ANOVA^a

Digital marketing has a significant relationship on purchase intention among Generation X and Y consumers in the FMCG.

Model Summary ^b						
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1		.924 ^a	0.854	0.854	0.37242	
ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	404.929	1	404.929	2919.471	.000 ^b
	Residual	69.072	498	0.139		





	Total	474.002	499		
a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Purchase Intention					
b. Predictors: (Constant), Digital Marketing					

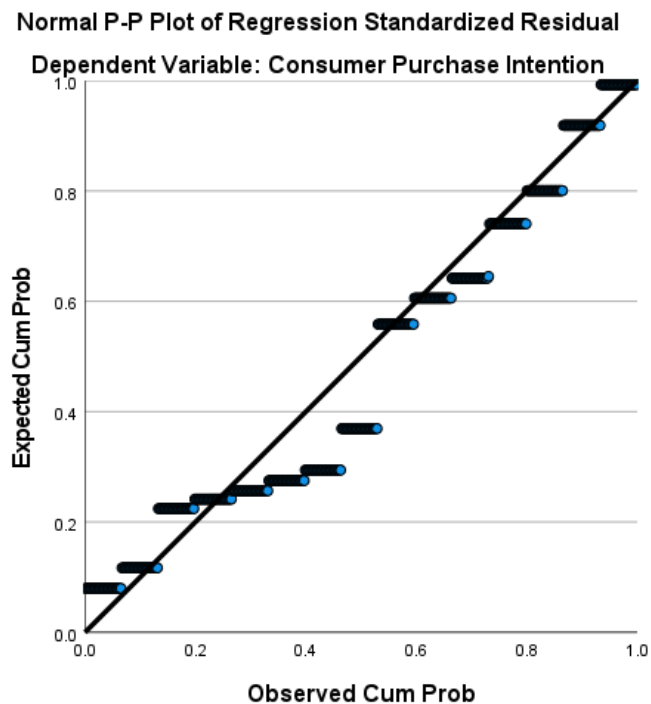
The results strongly support Hypothesis 3, affirming that digital marketing has a significant relationship with purchase intention among Generation X and Y consumers in the FMCG sector. The R value (0.924) indicates a very strong positive correlation between digital marketing and consumer purchase intention, suggesting that digital marketing efforts play a substantial role in influencing purchasing decisions within these generational cohorts.

The R Square value (0.854) highlights that 85.4% of the variance in purchase intention can be explained by digital marketing, demonstrating the high predictive power of the model. The Adjusted R Square (0.854) further confirms the reliability of the model by accounting for any potential overfitting. Additionally, the standard error of the estimate (0.37242) is relatively low, indicating that the predictions made by the model are accurate and consistent.

The ANOVA results strengthen these findings, with a highly significant F-statistic ($F = 2919.471, p < 0.001$) confirming that the relationship between digital marketing and purchase intention is not due to random chance. The regression sum of squares (404.929) accounts for the majority of the total variability in purchase intention, leaving only a small residual variance (69.072), which emphasizes the model's effectiveness.

Overall, these results validate the hypothesis and underscore the critical role of digital marketing in shaping purchase intentions among Generation X and Y consumers. This insight has significant practical implications, suggesting that businesses in the FMCG sector should prioritize and optimize their digital marketing strategies to effectively capture and influence these consumer groups.





Conclusion

The decision of purchase intentions of Generation X and Y FMCG customers depends much on digital marketing”. This research shows that while Generation Y is more involved in social media and influencer marketing, Generation X reacts better to email marketing and internet advertising. Mostly customer involvement and conversion are promoted by interaction, brand trust, and personalising power. Using the most successful digital platforms, companies have to develop customised plans to suit every generation. New developments include artificial intelligence-driven marketing and how they affect changing customer behaviour in the FMCG industry should be investigated in further studies.

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